

Immanuel Kant's Theory of Experience

by



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Abstract

The goals of this thesis are, firstly, to critically explicate the role of the understanding in making experience possible (where *experience* is defined as 'empirical knowledge of objects'), and, secondly, to argue that Kant's conclusion regarding the possibility of experience is not tenable.

My argument is essentially that the schematism of the pure concepts does not succeed in bridging the gap between sensibility and understanding. I suggest that not only does the schematism not succeed in providing the pure concepts with sensible content, but that nothing could provide them with such content.

I Introduction

The general aim of this thesis is to explicate and critically discuss Kant's notion of experience. We will take as a starting point the definition which Kant frequently gives of experience, namely empirical knowledge of objects.

In other words, they [viz. the categories] serve only for the possibility of *empirical knowledge*, and such knowledge is what we entitle experience. (B147)

And:

All synthesis, therefore, even that which renders perception possible, is subject to the categories; and since experience is knowledge by means of connected perceptions, the categories are conditions of the possibility of experience, and are therefore valid *a priori* for all objects of experience. (B161)¹

How, on Kant's view, is empirical knowledge to be understood, and what are objects of knowledge, given that for Kant they are distinct from other types of objects, such as appearances? In answering this question I will focus upon those sections of the *Critique of Pure Reason* in which Kant argues for the connection between the categories and judgments, and for their necessary role in making it possible for us to

¹ Although these passages are both from the "B" edition of the *Critique*, Kant gives a similar account of experience in the "A" edition, though he does not so precisely formulate it. For example, in *The System of the Principles of Pure Understanding*, Kant says: "Accordingly, since experience, as empirical synthesis, is, in so far as such experience is possible, the one species of knowledge which is capable of imparting reality to non-empirical synthesis, this latter, as knowledge *a priori*, can possess truth, that is, agreement with the object, only in so far as it contains nothing save what is necessary to synthetic unity of experience in general." (A157-8/B197-7)

have empirical knowledge of objects.² Since I intend to make the understanding my concern in this thesis, I shall not take up the arguments in the Aesthetic, but will, for the sake of discussion, proceed by taking as granted Kant's conclusion that space and time are forms of *a priori* intuition.

Based upon the importance which Kant gives to the origin and use of concepts, the three main chapters of this thesis will follow this notion. In the first chapter, their derivation from judgment forms is considered. In the second chapter, their application is examined in a way which distinguishes what Kant calls (in the *Prolegomena*) judgments of experience, and judgments of perception. The third chapter is concerned with the Schematism, which of course is where Kant demonstrates that by combination with the form of time, pure concepts may have application within sensibility. The overall goal of this approach is to provide a critical examination of these important areas of Kant's thought, and to set straight certain pieces of secondary literature which I believe have misinterpreted Kant's thinking on the subject.

Secondly, this thesis will seek to answer an evaluative question, namely whether Kant's theory is a valid one. I shall lay out this theory in a way which culminates in the Schematism chapter, which is where I believe that the theory becomes untenable, not only because time cannot serve as the "third thing" which

² Kant's discussion of these topics is found mainly in book one of the *Transcendental Analytic*.

may schematize the categories, but also because nothing at all could serve as such a thing.

II Kant's Derivation of the Categories from the Forms of Judgment

Kant divides knowledge into its form and content. The matter of knowledge is that with which the knowledge is concerned. Consider the matter of an appearance as an example. Kant says that this is that "in the appearance which corresponds to sensation" (A20 / B34). On the subject of the form and content which eventually goes into knowledge, Kant says the following:

Before we can analyze our representations, the representations must themselves be given, and therefore as regards *content* no concepts can first arise by way of analysis. (A77 / B103)

The content of knowledge is therefore the "stuff" given from sensibility, or sensation.

The form of knowledge is that other part which constitutes its abstract structure, like a blueprint.

That experience contains two very dissimilar elements, namely, the *matter* of knowledge [obtained] from the senses, and a certain *form* for the ordering of this matter, [obtained] from the inner source of the pure intuition and thought which, on occasion of the sense-impressions, are first brought into action and yield concepts. (A86 / B118)

The subject which concerns us here is the form of knowledge. The parts of the *Critique of Pure Reason* which are most specifically devoted to this subject are the "Clue" and the Transcendental Deduction. In the first, Kant identifies the clue for the discovery of pure concepts of the understanding, and in the second he attempts to demonstrate the role of the categories in rendering experience possible. Although Kant splits up the understanding into kinds of sub-faculties, the main focus of the

metaphysical deduction is the relation between pure concepts and judgment. About judgment Kant says the following:

... all judgments are functions of unity among our representations. ... Now we can reduce all acts of the understanding to judgments, and the *understanding* may therefore be represented as a *faculty of judgment*. (A69 / B93-94)

If we can reduce all acts of the understanding to judgment, we may infer that judgment is necessary for us to be able to know anything at all.

Thus the concept of body means something, for instance metal, which can be known by means of that concept. It is therefore a concept solely in virtue of its comprehending other representations, by means of which it can relate to objects. It is therefore the predicate of a possible judgment, for instance, 'every metal is a body'. (A69 / B94)

So a concept is such because it comprehends other representations, the latter providing the means by which the concept can relate to objects. Kant concludes by claiming that:

The functions of the understanding can, therefore, be discovered if we can give an exhaustive statement of the functions of unity in judgments.(ibid.)

If, we grant this, the issue of concern becomes the derivation of the table of categories from the table of judgments.

In comparing the functions of unity in judgments and in intuitions, Kant says the following:

The same function which gives unity to the various representations *in a judgment* also gives unity to the mere synthesis of various representations *in an intuition*; and this unity, in its most general expression, we entitle the pure concept of the understanding. (A79 / B104-105)

Kant then goes on to claim that:

The same understanding, through the same operations by which in concepts, by means of analytic unity, it produced the logical form of judgment, also introduces a transcendental content into its representations, by means of the synthetic unity of the manifold in intuition in general. On this account we are entitled to call these representations pure concepts of the understanding, and to regard them as applying *a priori* to objects—a conclusion which general logic is not in a position to establish. (A79 / B105)

If the understanding is that which provides unity in a judgment, and can be equated with the faculty of judgment, and also be said to provide the same function with respect to the categories, we are forced to conclude that the function in the faculty of judgment and the function in a pure concept are **the very same thing**.³ This, I

³ This is the conclusion arrived at by some Kant scholars. See, for example, Hubert Schwyzer's *The Unity of Understanding*. And Henry Allison writes the following. "We are thus led to the conclusion that the pure concepts of the understanding, which introduce the requisite transcendental content, are nothing other than the logical

think, is the most defensible conclusion to be drawn from the intimate relation between pure concept and judgment, and it is in fact even more explicitly stated later, in the “B” Deduction.

Now the *categories* are just these functions of judgment, in so far as they are employed in determination of the manifold of a given intuition. (B143)

Not only does this conclusion follow quite logically from what Kant says, and indeed from the general view of the obviously dual role played by the understanding, but it also has the distinct advantage of having a great deal of explanatory power. It explains, for example, why Kant refers, sometimes rather awkwardly, to the two features of the understanding as if they were one, and it explains why there exists such an intimate relation between the two tables, which permits the one to be derived from the other. The table of judgments, that is, serves as the principle from which the table of categories is derived. Kant, as usual, demands certainty and systematicity from the derivation.

This division is developed systematically from a common principle, namely the faculty of judgment (which is the same as the faculty of thought). (A80-81 / B106)

In sum, the two tables (i.e. the table of judgments and the table of categories) are different expressions of the same function in the understanding, and the one is

functions of judgment viewed in connection with the manifold of intuition.” (*Kant’s*

derived on the basis of the other. However, this statement (i.e. that categories are derived from judgment) is not at all helpful if it is meant to explain how the categories apply to objects. For Kant's critical philosophy is based upon the rather ambitious claim that pure concepts not only apply to objects, but that only by their means is experience possible. Demonstrating this amounts to demonstrating that the categories have what Kant will call *objective validity*. And this argument is found in the Transcendental Deduction.

Kant begins the "B" Deduction with the principle of the synthetic unity of apperception. As an introduction to the argument, Kant claims that we are beings of discursive understanding which acts upon the data of the senses, or the manifold in intuition.

An understanding which through its self-consciousness could supply to itself the manifold of intuition — an understanding, that is to say, through whose representation the objects of the representation should at the same time exist — would not require, for the unity of consciousness, a special act of synthesis of the manifold. For the human understanding, however, which thinks only, and does not intuit, that act is necessary. (B138-139)

The act about which Kant is speaking is an act of synthesis by the understanding, which is the starting point of the "B" Deduction. Kant notices that there must be some combination of the manifold in intuition in order for any representations to be

possible, and that this combination cannot have come through sensibility. In other words, there must be some order brought to the “data” which we receive from the senses, an activity for which the understanding must be responsible.

For where the understanding has not previously combined, it cannot dissolve, since only as having been combined *by the understanding* can anything that allows of analysis be given to the faculty of representation. (B130)

Kant claims that combination is the representation of the synthetic unity of the manifold (B131). He calls the unity *synthetic*⁴ because it is an act of the understanding, rather than a representation received from the senses. Furthermore, upon examination of what is contained under the concept of combination, Kant concludes that the combination presupposes a unity, which is logically prior to the category *unity*, and so which must come from a still higher source.

This unity, which precedes *a priori* all concepts of combination, is not the category of unity; for all categories are grounded in logical functions of judgment, and in these functions combination, and therefore unity of given concepts, is already thought. (B131)

This higher source, we soon discover, is none other than the transcendental unity of apperception, which Kant calls the supreme principle of the understanding

⁴ Kant is stressing the point that *syn-thesis* is a putting together. See B130.

(see section 17). The proof for the transcendental unity of apperception⁵ (the details of which are not relevant to our concerns) lays the foundation for the structuring influence which the understanding will bring to bear on intuition. The result of the argument is that only by virtue of the transcendental unity of apperception is knowledge possible.

The synthetic unity of consciousness is, therefore, an objective condition of all knowledge. It is not merely a condition that I myself require in knowing an object, but is a condition under which every intuition must stand in order *to become an object for me*. For otherwise, in the absence of this synthesis, the manifold would *not* be united in one consciousness. (B138)

The unity of apperception stands in the same relation to the understanding as *a priori* intuition stands to sensibility. Just as the *a priori* intuition gives the form of space and time to sensibility, so the unity of apperception gives structure to the content of experience, or all that falls within the domain of the understanding. Kant reasons that the structure which is found in experience cannot originate in the objects of experience themselves, and concludes we must contribute such structure.⁶ This

⁵ This proof is found primarily in the first three sections of the “B” Deduction.

⁶ For the sake of argument, Kant considers an alternative to this conclusion at B167. He suggests that our Creator brought it about that the categories are subjective dispositions which exactly match the (independent) course of nature. Kant of course then rejects this hypothesis, on the grounds that we would be unable to regard the categories as being a necessary condition of experience.

structure is the model for the manifold in intuition, and eventually for knowledge itself.

This knowledge consists in the determinate relation of given representations to an object; and an *object* is that in the concept of which the manifold of a given intuition is *united*. Now all unification of representations demands unity of consciousness in the synthesis of them. Consequently it is the unity of consciousness that alone constitutes the relation of representations to an object, and therefore their objective validity and the fact that they are modes of knowledge; and upon it therefore rests the very possibility of the understanding. (B137)

It is possible to anticipate what Kant's strategy is going to be here. If he can demonstrate that the unity of apperception is required for any thought, and that judgment and the categories are conditions of the understanding, then he will be able to conclude that the function of judgment is a necessary condition for the possibility of objects of experience. Indeed, after introducing the unity of apperception, Kant begins to move in just this direction.

I find that judgment is nothing but the manner in which given modes of knowledge are brought to the objective unity of apperception. (B141)

The human understanding, being discursive, must be in possession of a means by which concepts are connected to intuitions and to objects. When Kant says that

judgment is “the mediate knowledge of an object” (A68 / B93), he is trying to sketch out the relation of judgment to concept, and concept to object. He says:

In every judgment there is a concept which holds of many representations, and among them of a given representation that is immediately related to an object. Thus in the judgment, ‘all bodies are divisible’, the concept of the divisible applies to various other concepts, but is here applied in particular to the concept of body, and this concept again to certain appearances that present themselves to us. These objects, therefore, are mediately represented through the concept of divisibility. (Ibid.)

Judgment therefore connects the two concepts in it, which themselves have appearances under them. Since knowledge depends upon more than a simple verbal expression, like “car” for example,⁷ judgment is vital to the possibility of any knowledge, since it is what connects any two things, whatever kinds of concepts are connected by their means. In the example Kant gives, certain appearances (those that are bodies) are organized by the predicate *divisible* in such a way as to make knowledge of that class of objects possible. Thus Kant concludes that:

all judgments are functions of unity among our representations; instead of an immediate representation, a *higher* representation, which comprises the immediate representation and various others, is used in knowing the object, and thereby much possible knowledge is collected into one. (A69 / B93-93)

⁷ That is, the possibility of meaning something by uttering *car* which could be translated into a judgment notwithstanding.

Judgment clearly functions with much the same end as that of the unity of apperception, that is, bringing unity to a manifold.⁸ With our prior identification of judgment and category, we can, by extension, identify category with the unity of apperception. In simpler terms, judgment is the essential way in which our minds operate, so prior to this activity there is no thought (let alone thought about something), or knowledge. In this light, the demonstration of the objective validity of the categories ought to be a relatively straight-forward matter. Since its possibility seems to turn on the notion of judgment, Kant need only link the categories to judgment. And according to R.C.S. Walker⁹, this is the approach that Kant takes during and after the completion of the “B” Deduction.

As time went on Kant got increasingly clear about how the argument ought to go. The version in B is a great improvement on that in A, but his subsequent statements of it are clearer still and very considerably shorter. It occupies only about a page [the Prize Essay in the *Advances of Metaphysics*]—though he did indeed suggest in the *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science* (1786) that the argument could be presented even more economically, ‘for’, he said, ‘it can be carried out almost in a single step from the precisely specified definition of a *judgment* in general (as an action through which given

⁸ I shall leave this statement vague, as apperception and judgment are each concerned with a different manifold, and I am concerned with the points of analogy between the two, not the points of disanalogy.

⁹ Walker, R.C.S. *Kant*.

representations first become knowledge of an object)'. (Ibid, p.77)

If Kant thought (at least eventually) that the objective validity of the categories could be shown on the basis of judgment alone, why is he so preoccupied with apperception in the first part of the "B" Deduction?

One possible answer to this question is suggested by the inconsistent ways in which he treats the relationship between the categories and apperception. For example, we have seen that Kant places apperception higher and prior to the categories where the combination of the manifold is concerned (B131). He says, in other words, that the categories presuppose the combination of the manifold, which is effected by the original synthetic unity of apperception. By the time we get to sections 20 and 21 (of the Deduction), Kant has turned this relationship on its head. On the following, he is consistent:

The manifold given in a sensible intuition is necessarily subject to the original synthetic unity of apperception, because in no other way is the *unity* of intuition possible. (B143)

But now notice what he says.

But that act of understanding by which the manifold of given representations (be they intuitions or concepts) is brought under one apperception, is the logical function of judgment. All the manifold, therefore, so far as it is given in a single empirical intuition, is *determined* in respect of one of the logical functions of judgment, and is thereby brought into one consciousness.

Now the *categories* are just these functions of judgment, in so far as they are employed in determination of the manifold of a given intuition. Consequently, the manifold in a given intuition is necessarily subject to the categories. (B143)

Briefly, in section 15 Kant says that the categories presuppose the activity of the synthetic unity of apperception, and in section 20 that the synthetic unity of apperception is subject to the categories, since only by their means can the manifold in intuition be determined. And in section 21 Kant is even more explicit.

In what follows it will be shown, from the mode in which the empirical intuition is given in sensibility, that its unity is no other than that which the category prescribes to the manifold of a given intuition in general. (B144-145)

Since Kant intends to equate category with judgment, it would not be a huge leap for him to say that the activity of the categories is the same thing as that of the unifying act of apperception. And Kant says something in section 24 which looks very much like doing just this.

Apperception and its synthetic unity is, indeed, very far from being identical with inner sense. The former, as the source of all *combination*, applies to the manifold of *intuitions in general*, and in the guise of the *categories*, prior to all sensible intuition, to *objects in general*. (B154)

However, equating apperception with the categories is not unproblematic. Consider, for example, the rather different tasks that each should be expected to perform. The unity of apperception amounts to the rather uncontroversial claim that the “I” must

be a single subject if it is to be able to unify a manifold of representations (or, in less Kantian terms, if it is able to think single complex thoughts). On the other hand, the categories are those things which are expected to permit us to have knowledge of objects. Knowledge of objects of course depends upon our being able to have representations, but something must act upon them with the aim of preserving the essential distinction between representation as subjective experience (as in mental phenomena, for example) and actual objects. If the categories were conditioned by the unity of apperception, we might expect that everything which was unified in the manifold by apperception would count as an object, which would amount to a kind of phenomenalism in the extreme. As Paul Guyer points out, this kind of strategy is seriously flawed.

[T]here is also the danger that Kant can identify the categories as the necessary conditions for self-consciousness only by equating self-consciousness with knowledge of objects and deriving the categories from the latter ... blocking the possibility for the contrast between mere representations and objects altogether. (Ibid, p. 127)

I do not think that Kant himself adopted this kind of strategy. Since (at least part of) the concern of the Deduction is with proving the objective validity of the categories, it is of no small interest that such a comparatively large part of it would be concerned with a demonstration of the self-identity of the self. Indeed, we might suppose that Kant's preoccupation with apperception in a section of the *Critique* which is meant to demonstrate the validity of the categories is good reason for

thinking that apperception were going to play an integral role in this demonstration. But the result of this demonstration ought not collapse the distinction above, namely between fictional objects and experiential objects, for this would lead directly to a phenomenalist conclusion. That Kant was cognisant of this danger is, arguably, what lead him to begin to de-emphasize the role of apperception in the Deduction. Paul Guyer says the following.

In any case, the unity of apperception plays no further role in Kant's account of the transcendental deduction after 1787. Moreover, the heart of Kant's subsequent arguments for the objective validity of the categories lies precisely in showing that the use especially of the relational categories of substance, causation, and interaction are necessary conditions for objective knowledge of the determinate positions of objects and events in *a single, objective space and time*.(Ibid, p.154)

This argument is located in section 26 of the Deduction. Kant says that in perceiving something, like a house for example, one must:

draw as it were the outline of the house in conformity with this synthetic unity [the necessary unity of space and of outer sensible intuition] of the manifold of space.(B162)

He continues:

But if I abstract from the form of space, this same synthetic unity has its seat in the understanding, and is the category of the

synthesis of the homogeneous in an intuition in general, that is, the category of *quantity*. (Ibid)¹⁰

Guyer argues, therefore, that Kant's inconsistency on the subject of apperception and the categories is explained by the fact that Kant noticed that all was not well with apperception, and that he therefore abandoned his attempt to equate the two, focusing upon the argument of the latter part of the "B" Deduction. There is, however, at least one alternative explanation.

The differences in the parts of the Deduction might be explained by the fact that in one part Kant is concerned to demonstrate the *objective validity* of the categories, and in the other he is trying to demonstrate their *objective reality*¹¹, which is the approach which Henry Allison takes. He suggests that the differences in the sections of the "B" Deduction can be explained by the fact that Kant's motives are different between sections 15 to 21 as compared with sections 24 to 26. The former

¹⁰ At B163 Kant uses an example in which time figures prominently. He concludes that "my apprehension of such an event, and therefore the event itself, considered as a possible perception, is subject to the concept of the *relation* of *effects* and *causes*, and so in all other cases."

¹¹ Allison, pp. 133ff. Allison conceives of objective validity as pertaining to judgments, specifically to their capacity to be true or false. "To say that the categories are objectively valid is to claim that they make possible, 'ground,' or 'legitimate' an objectively valid synthesis of representations, that is, a judgment." (Ibid p. 135) Thus a judgment could be objectively valid, even if its referents picked out no real things in the world. Objective reality, on the other hand, refers to whether a concept (or judgment) picks out real things in the world. See below.

set is concerned with the objective validity of the categories, and the latter set with their objective reality. Allison conceives of objective reality in the following way.

[T]he notion of objective reality has an ontological sense. To claim that a concept has objective reality is to claim that it refers or is applicable to an actual object. Thus a fictional concept, such as 'unicorn,' would not have objective reality, although it could very well function as a predicate in an objectively valid judgment, such as 'unicorns do not exist.' (Ibid, p. 135)

Allison's argument is based at least partly upon the terminology which Kant uses. At times, according to Allison, Kant uses the term *Objekt* and at others he uses the term *Gegenstand*. The former is a broad term which could serve as anything like a subject in a judgment, while the term *Gegenstand* brings with it the sense of a real external object. (Ibid, p. 135)¹² Presumably, if Kant equates the weaker¹³ notion of an object (*Objekt*) with apperception, and the stronger sense of object (*Gegenstand*) with the role of judgment, he would not run the risk (that Guyer refers to) of collapsing the distinction between mere representations and external objects. However, a discussion of the notion of an object in Kant is the subject of the second chapter, so it shall be deferred until then. The issue which ought to be resolved here is whether Kant succeeds in demonstrating that the categories have necessary application to

¹² This distinction is noticed by others. See, for example, *Kant*, by R.C.S. Walker, pp.76ff. Henry Allison himself calls this distinction 'commonplace' in the literature.

¹³ I say *weaker* here only to indicate the lack of any ontological commitment in this sense.

experience and actually make it possible. And there does seem to be some consensus that the success of this project, if it is even successful, will not lie in the doctrine of apperception.¹⁴

There is little difficulty granting Kant the applicability of the categories to objects considered as objects of a judgment. This follows almost trivially from the conclusion that the categories are the fundamental tools of the faculty of judgment. But what of the applicability of the categories to the content of human sensibility? Allison's use of the concept 'unicorn' (above) shows a distinction between objective validity and objective reality, although there is a serious point of disanalogy between this concept and the categories.¹⁵ The categories, as they appear in the Deduction, are pure concepts and are not meant to (nor can they) apply to sensible intuition without mediation; they are pure forms with no sensible content. The introduction of such content must wait until the chapter on Schematism, and to expect it at the Deduction stage is perhaps misguided. Notice, for example, what Kant says at the beginning of the chapter on Schematism.¹⁶

¹⁴ Allison, Walker and Guyer all seem to agree on this point. All argue that the evaluation of the argument ought to focus upon the second part of the "B" Deduction. See Allison pp170-172, Guyer pp 154-155 and Walker pp. 82ff.

¹⁵ I certainly do not intend to suggest that Allison did not recognize this point.

¹⁶ The Schematism chapter is the subject of chapter three, so will be taken up in detail then.

In all subsumptions of an object under a concept the representation of the object must be *homogeneous* with the concept; in other words, the concept must contain something which is represented in the object that is to be subsumed under it. This, in fact, is what is meant by the expression, 'an object is contained under a concept'. ... But pure concepts of understanding being quite heterogeneous from empirical intuitions, and indeed from all sensible intuitions, can never be met with in any intuition. (A137 / B176)

However, Kant certainly lays the ground for the Schematism in the Deduction, for the key to the schematism of the categories is their combination with the form of inner sense, namely time. And part of the focus of the second part of the "B" Deduction is showing that the categories are necessary for objective knowledge of things in a single objective space and time.¹⁷ So while the categories apply to whatever can be found in time and space, inner sense also makes possible the applicability of categories, as concepts, to sensible things, by means of the schematized categories.

The issue before us is whether the categories do, in fact, necessarily apply to objects and make experience possible. There does seem to be some consensus that Kant's project in the Deduction is at least a partial success. Paul Guyer, for example, says that although the Deduction is formally a failure¹⁸, and at best "sets the agenda

¹⁷ This is Guyer's position, for example, stated above.

¹⁸ Guyer, p.155.

for the detailed demonstration of the role of the categories in the determination of the empirical relations in space and especially time" , it has the virtue that Kant:

clearly saw that both self-knowledge and knowledge of objects were intrinsically judgmental and necessarily involved logical structures as well as empirical inputs. (Ibid.)

Allison says the following.

First, in spite of the analytic nature of its basic claims, the first part of the argument provides a good "beginning," because it establishes a necessary connection between the unity of consciousness and the representation of an object in the judgmental sense. This lays the foundation for the remainder of the argument, since it makes possible the subsequent connection between the unity of consciousness and the categories as concepts of an object in general. (p.172)¹⁹

Allison goes on to conclude that although the argument for the objective validity of the categories cannot be considered a success, the objective reality of them can be, and that the Deduction is, on this basis, at least a partial success. However, for my purposes this conclusion must await a consideration of the chapter on Schematism, where the actual relation between the categories and objects is established. Since the

¹⁹ I have presented a view which de-emphasized the role of the unity of apperception. This ought not be misunderstood, however. I do not wish to suggest this *in general*, but rather with specific attention to the proof of the objective validity of the categories. I simply find Paul Guyer's conclusion compelling, that Kant saw that all was not well with apperception in this project, and began to revise his view. However, this ought not affect the role which apperception plays with respect to the unification of a manifold in representations in general.

introduction of content does not take place until this chapter, a conclusion on this subject would be premature. I will therefore postpone a conclusion here until the third chapter, where we will consider the Schematism in detail.

For the time being, let us turn to the actual tables in question in order to see how unity is brought about, and to see if we can discover how the sameness of function is manifest in the similarities in the two tables. In comparing the two tables, we might keep in mind that the concepts listed here are not actually concepts of objects. Until the Schematism, these concepts specify only the formal features that objects must have if they are to be thought or known. Kant lists the table of judgments in the “Clue”. This table, he claims, is the result of abstracting from the content of a judgment and considering “only the mere form of understanding” (A70 / B95). The table classifies judgments initially under four headings: quantity, quality, relation and modality. Each of these is then broken down further into three types. The resulting ‘table of judgments’ is nothing more than a regimentation of the different types of judgment recognized in classical logic. The structure is meant to reflect the following facts about the nature of judgment form. Judgments must say something about either all dogs, some dogs or an individual dog, for example. These exhibit the *quantity* of a judgment. Further, a judgment must be either affirmative, negative or infinite (the infinite referring to a proposition containing the *complement* of a term, such as “All fish are non-animals”). These exhibit the *quality* of a judgment. Third, all judgments have either a categorical, hypothetical or disjunctive

form.²⁰ These exhibit the relation of a judgment. Finally, a judgment must be either possibly true, true as a matter of fact, or true as a matter of necessity. These exhibit the modality of a judgment. The table of judgments is therefore constructed as follows.

²⁰ The table of judgments is probably a result of Kant's architectonic obsession, and is not without difficulties, which in any case are taken up towards the end of this thesis.

Quantity	
Universal	
Particular	
Singular	
Quality	Relation
Affirmative	Categorical
Negative	Hypothetical
Infinite	Disjunctive
Modality	
Problematic	
Assertoric	
Apodeictic	

Following upon the heels of the table of judgments is the table of categories. I will list these as well in order to make reference to them easy.

Of Quantity		
Unity		
Plurality		
Totality		
Of Quality		Of Relation
Reality		Of Inherence and Subsistence
Negation		Of Causality and Dependence
Limitation		Of Community
Of Modality		
Possibility—Impossibility		
Existence—Non-Existence		
Necessity—Contingency		

There are examples which intuitively bear out the relation between the table of categories and judgments, such as the *categorical — inherence & subsistence* dyad. Kant describes the categorical judgment by saying that in it “we consider only two concepts” (A73 / B98), namely the subject and the predicate. In this judgment a subject is related to a predicate, as in the case of “All bodies are divisible” (B128). If we imagine the Venn diagram for a categorical proposition, we see that it locates within the sphere of the predicate all the members of the subject. The function of the

judgment is identical to that of the category. When we say of something that it inheres in another, we say of a subject that it has a given attribute, and by predicating something of a subject, we say of the attribute that it subsists by virtue of the fact that it is predicated of something. The *categorical* judgment form thus functions in the same way as the *inherence and subsistence* category.

A further example of a dyad within which it is easy to see the match-up is the *Hypothetical — Causality and Dependence* pair. Kant identifies the general features of the relations of thought in the judgments of Relation.

All relations of thought in judgments are (a) of the predicate to the subject, (b) of the ground to its consequence, (c) of the divided knowledge and of the members of the division, taken together, to each other. (A73 / B98)

Later in the same paragraph, while referring to an example of a hypothetical proposition (viz. 'If there is a perfect justice, the obstinately wicked are punished'), Kant identifies the form of the judgment by saying "[i]t is only the logical sequence which is thought by this judgment" (Ibid). Another way to describe this might be 'succession according to a rule'. This rule would exclude, for example, the possibility of the antecedent of a hypothetical judgment preceding the consequent. In fact, this is almost exactly the way in which Kant characterizes the category causality later in the *Critique*.

The schema of cause, and of the causality of a thing in general, is the real upon which, whenever posited, something else

always follows. It consists, therefore, in the succession of the manifold, in so far as that succession is subject to a rule. (A144 / B183) ²¹

The match-up between the remaining members of the tables is not as easy to see as these mentioned, however the idea of the deduction as Kant intended it is clear. We shall proceed, therefore, with the subject of the second chapter, namely how the categories make possible objects of experience and objectivity.

²¹ This passage, of course, is taken from the Schematism, which is taken up in detail in chapter three. However, this passage is used at this point because Kant describes the categories in a concrete manner in the Schematism. This is as we might expect, since the schematized categories have the sensible content required for application to sensible objects, and are therefore easier to comprehend than purely intellectual categories.

III Pure Concepts and Kant's Notion of Objectivity

The most clearly discernible thread running through the *Critique of Pure Reason* is that we can have no access whatsoever to things in themselves. Kant obviously intends to be able to speak meaningfully about referring our private perceptions to external objects, while maintaining the denial of access to things in themselves. This gives rise to an interesting question, namely how is the notion of objectivity to be maintained, assuming that we have access only to the data of the senses? This is, for the most part, the question I wish to consider in this chapter. An answer to this question will preclude, I shall argue, an interpretation like that of J. Michael Young, namely that the categories are necessary for the representation, not of external objects, but of these objects as they are **objectively**.²²

Before we turn to the very notion of objectivity found in the *Critique of Pure Reason* let us consider the subject introduced in the first sections of the “B” Deduction. The conclusion which Kant intended to establish there was that the self is single and unified, and a necessary condition for any experience at all. According to H.J. Paton, Kant’s conclusion was meant to be a refutation of the account of the self which David Hume had given.

Mr. David Hume anticipated modern discoveries by analysing the mind into a number of distinct existences between which he

²² This argument is found in “Kant’s Notion of Objectivity” *Kant Studien*, 1979. pp. 131-148, and will be taken up later in this chapter.

could discover no real connexions. It was this doctrine among others which Kant set himself to refute.²³

It is of no small importance that Kant demonstrate the existence and simplicity of the self, since it is this self which is responsible for the connection and organization of the manifold in intuition. We may easily remind ourselves of the ambitious project which Kant has set himself. Notice the following statements from both editions of the Deduction, for example.

Thus the order and regularity in the appearances, which we entitle *nature*, we ourselves introduce. We could never find them in appearances, had not we ourselves, or the nature of our mind, originally put them there. (A125)

We have now to explain the possibility of knowing *a priori*, by means of *categories*, whatever objects may *present themselves to our senses*, not indeed in respect of the form of their intuition, but in respect of the laws of their combination, and so, as it were, of prescribing laws to nature, and even of making nature possible. (B159-160)

That Kant succeeds in demonstrating the singularity of the subject is a conclusion shared by many Kant scholars, including Henry Allison and H.J. Paton.

Taken on this basis it seems to me that Kant's argument is unanswerable, and his conclusion sound. There must be one self which is the same in its different apprehensions, if there is to

²³ Paton, H.J. "Self-Identity" in *Mind*. XXXVIII, 1929. pp312-329.

be apprehension of any temporal object, and still more if there is to be knowledge of an objective and ordered world.²⁴

Before turning from this issue it would be well to consider what Kant says on this subject in the Paralogisms in order to avoid the possibility of misunderstanding the idea of the simplicity of the subject. In this section (A341 / B399) Kant claims that the nature of human reason gives rise to an illusion regarding the nature of the soul. The fact which should interest us most is the claim that while the subject is simple, it is not thereby a simple *substance*.

That the 'I' of apperception, and therefore the 'I' in every act of thought, is *one*, and cannot be resolved into a plurality of subjects, and consequently signifies a logically simple subject, is something already contained in the very concept of thought, and is therefore an analytic proposition. But this does not mean that the thinking 'I' is a simple *substance*. That proposition would be synthetic. The concept of substance always relates to intuitions which cannot in me be other than sensible, and which therefore lie entirely outside the field of the understanding and its thought. (B407-408)

Kant sums up the problem of rational psychology as follows.

[I]t is evident that rational psychology owes its origin simply to misunderstanding. The unity of consciousness, which underlies the categories, is here mistaken for an intuition of the subject as object, and the category of substance is then applied to it. But this unity is only unity in *thought*, by which alone no object is

²⁴ Paton, op.cit. See also *Kant's Transcendental Idealism*, Henry Allison, pp. 137ff.

given, and to which, therefore, the category of substance, which always presupposes a given *intuition*, cannot be applied. (B421-422)

Having demonstrated that the subject is simple, therefore, we must not thereby assume or infer that it is a simple substance.

In order for this subject to have experience both sensibility and understanding must be at work.

Our knowledge springs from two fundamental sources of the mind; the first is the capacity of receiving representations (receptivity for impressions), the second is the power of knowing an object through these representations (spontaneity [in the production of] concepts). Through the first an object is *given* to us, through the second the object is *thought* in relation to that [given] representation (which is a mere determination of the mind). (A50 / B74)

Generally speaking, Kant will argue that the data of the senses are received through sensibility and run through and determined by the understanding. Since the structure of this “process” can easily give rise to misunderstanding, it might be useful briefly to distinguish temporal from logical priority.

In examining the elements of Kant’s theory of experience it is natural to start with the impressions we receive through sensibility and work our way through until we arrive at what Kant calls experience, or empirical knowledge of objects. It is therefore also natural to think that Kant has provided us with a psychological theory which follows a temporal progression, a tendency which Paton urges us to avoid.

Many commentators nevertheless have, to a greater or less degree, put a temporal interpretation on his [Kant's] words, and have supposed him to be giving an account of psychological development. To adopt this view, whether in crude or in a subtle form, is to reduce Kant's theory to absurdity.²⁵

With this warning in mind, I propose to consider briefly the threefold synthesis which appears in section two of the "A" edition of the Transcendental Deduction. By way of introducing this discussion, we ought to acknowledge the fact that this threefold synthesis does not appear in the "B" edition of the Deduction, which of course raises the question of why we should feel justified in considering it at all. One natural interpretation is that in writing the second edition of *The Critique of Pure Reason* Kant realized that the threefold synthesis was an untenable view which he gave up subsequent to the writing of the "A" edition. There is another possibility, however. This is that Kant decided that the threefold synthesis was not necessary for the argument relevant to a deduction of the categories.

Here is how I propose the issue be viewed: In the "A" edition of the *Critique*, Kant thought that the starting point of the deduction was the synthesis of the manifold in intuition, namely the threefold synthesis. He thought, that is, that the deduction of the categories should start with the objects in intuition to which they would eventually apply. But in section three of the "A" Deduction, Kant says that

²⁵ Paton, *Kant's Metaphysic of Experience*, Volume 1, pp. 79-80.

[i]f, now, we desire to follow up the inner ground of this connection of the representations to the point upon which they have all to converge in order that they may therein for the first time acquire the unity of knowledge necessary for a possible experience, we must begin with pure apperception. Intuitions are nothing to us, and do not in the least concern us if they cannot be taken up into consciousness, in which they may participate either directly or indirectly. (A116)

And much of the focus of the *Summary Representation of the Correctness of this Deduction of the pure Concepts of Understanding, and of its being the only Deduction possible* (A128-130) is upon the unity of apperception as the guiding principle which justifies the deduction of the pure categories.

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

What Kant seems to be getting at towards the end of the “A” Deduction is that the unity of apperception is the key to the deduction of the categories, and that the threefold synthesis is irrelevant to this goal. Indeed, by the time Kant writes the second edition of the *Critique*, he has dropped the threefold synthesis and cuts

straight to the unity of apperception.²⁶ On this interpretation, the threefold synthesis should not be seen as a principle which was rejected by Kant sometime between the two editions of the Critique, but as one which Kant deemed irrelevant to the deduction of the pure categories, which in any case is not our rationale for exploring it. Instead, we should hope to get some glimpse into the way in which the “raw data” are turned into representations which in turn are referred to objects.

The three stages of this synthesis are *apprehension*, *reproduction* and *recognition* (A98). The first of these stages assumes that all the origins of representations must be subject to the form of inner sense. The reasoning which Kant uses here explains how the raw data are turned into possible objects. All the impressions, he says, must somehow be unified. These impressions must be subject to the form of inner sense, since it is only by means of temporal relations that we will be able to bring an order to the impressions. And bringing order to the impressions is necessary if there is to be any unified object produced by the impressions. But in order for these impressions to be brought together, they must be distinguished from other impressions. Since the impressions are found in the mind, they are organized by virtue of an inner, rather than outer, function.

²⁶ Of course, as we suggested in chapter one, Kant did not seem happy in the long run with the unity of apperception as the guiding principle of the deduction of the categories either.

Whatever the origin of our representations, they must all, as modifications of the mind, belong to inner sense. All our knowledge is thus finally subject to time, the formal condition of inner sense. (A99)

Time thus provides the means by which each representation is distinguished from the others. As Kant says (A99-100), the manifold of intuitions can only be represented as such in so far as the mind is able to distinguish the succession of one impression upon another.

In order that unity of intuition may arise out of this manifold (as is required in the representation of space) it must first be run through and held together. This act I name the *synthesis of apprehension*. (A99)

This act is one of three by which data are objectively determined. By virtue of the second²⁷ function, we are able to hold the parts of a succession in our minds, so that we may make sense out of the very succession. For example, if we hear a clock chime ten times, we must be able to hold the sounds together in order to be able to recognize the chimes as signifying ten o'clock. Otherwise we would simply be hearing unrelated chimes, which anything with ears would be equally capable of doing. Kant says, more generally, that experience presupposes the reproducibility of appearances.

²⁷ Again, this is meant to designate the logically second function, rather than psychologically.

[I]f I were always to drop out of thought the preceding representations (the first parts of the line, the antecedent parts of the time period, or the units in the order represented), and did not reproduce them while advancing to those that follow, a complete representation would never be obtained: none of the above-mentioned thoughts, not even the purest and most elementary representations of space and time, could arise. (A102)

The final stage is what Kant calls the synthesis of recognition in a concept. As Kant frequently insists, we are discursive beings and can have no knowledge without concepts. This being the case, it is presupposed in my counting the chimes of a clock that I am in possession of various concepts, including number and time²⁸ in this case.

If, in counting, I forget that the units, which now hover before me, have been added to one another in succession, I should never know that a total is being produced through this successive addition of unit to unit, and so would remain ignorant of the number. For the concept of the number is nothing but the consciousness of this unity of synthesis. (A103)

As a concluding remark about this threefold synthesis, let us recall again that it is tempting to call this a progression or a process, much like the function of a kind of factory. And Kant's language does sometimes lend itself to this sort of reading insofar as he speaks of object production and generation. But I would again defer to H. J. Paton:

We are not explaining how consciousness of change in time develops out of isolated momentary sensations. Rather we begin with apprehension of change in time, and attempt to analyse the different elements which are necessarily involved in it. ("Self Identity", p. 316)

Interestingly enough, much of the discussion in the section of the "A" Deduction entitled *The Synthesis of Recognition in a Concept* is not on this specific subject, but rather on the idea of the transcendental object. There is much debate about this subject, since, according to R.C.S. Walker, it is thought by some to be a relic of Kant's early belief that things in themselves were the objects of perception.²⁹ As Kemp-Smith has pointed out, the transcendental object is something which Kant de-emphasizes in the second edition of the *Critique* and leaves out altogether in his work after that.³⁰ And there are passages in the *Critique* which support the reading which Walker claims Kemp-Smith to have supported. Notice the following passage in a section of the *Critique* in which a reference to the transcendental object was not removed in the second edition.

²⁸ By time here is clearly meant the concrete measure of time in hours and minutes etc., rather than time as a universal or a priori intuition, for example.

²⁹ Walker, *Kant* p.106.

³⁰ Norman Kemp-Smith *A Commentary to Kant's 'Critique of Pure Reason'*, pp 204ff. Walker points out, however, that the transcendental object does appear in the *Opus Postumum*, which is written much later than the *Critique*. See *Kant* p.106.

Now immediately I unfold the transcendental meaning of my concepts of an object, I realise that the house is not a thing in itself, but only an appearance, that is, a representation, the transcendental object of which is unknown. (A190-1 / B235-6)

From this passage one might understand that the transcendental object is that which causes the appearances in the sense of being a thing in itself which affects the senses. And this possible reading is reinforced in a much later section (also not re-written in the “B” Edition) entitled ‘Concepts of Reflection’.

In the process of warning the latter [viz. sensibility] that it must not presume to claim applicability to things-in-themselves but only to appearances, it [understanding] does indeed think for itself an object in itself, but only as transcendental object, which is the cause of appearance and therefore not itself an appearance, and which can be thought neither as quantity nor as reality nor as substance, etc. (A288 / B344)

However, in the “A” Deduction I think that Kant can be read as claiming something quite different. Notice the role played by the *transcendental object* = x in the following, for example.

But it is clear that, since we have to deal only with the manifold of our representations, and since that x (the object) which corresponds to them is nothing to us — being, as it is, something that has to be distinct from all our representations — the unity which the object makes necessary can be nothing else than the formal unity of consciousness in the synthesis of the manifold of representations. (A105)

In this passage, Kant clearly means that the transcendental object supplies us with the concept of an object in general, by means of which a manifold can be united and represented through a concept as any *particular* object. The object is transcendental because we cannot abstract it from experience. Kant's writing suggests this reading later in an "A" Edition passage in *Phenomena and Noumena*.

This transcendental object cannot be separated from the sensible data, for nothing is then left through which it might be thought. Consequently it is not in itself an object of knowledge, but only the representation of appearances under the concept of an object in general — a concept which is determinable through the manifold of these appearances. (A250-1)

Walker interprets Kant as claiming the following.

What enables me to unite these actual and possible perceptions together is the non-empirical conception of an object, as something which underlies the perceptions and provides a focus around which they can be united. The conception is non-empirical in the same way that the concept of cause is: it is not to be acquired by abstraction from experience, and we cannot verify that it applies just by an appeal to the empirically given. (*Kant*, p. 107)

The threefold synthesis and the transcendental object, then, give us the first stages of experience, at least, insofar as the process is considered logically. We shall proceed, then, with the guiding focus of Kant's concerns in both editions of the *Deduction*, namely objectivity. Now we have already seen Kant dealing with at least one notion of objectivity insofar as the manifold of an intuition is united in the concept of an

object. However, the stronger sort of objectivity Kant is concerned with relates to *knowledge* of objects, i.e. experience. And for experience to be possible, Kant argues that the categories must be employed.

It must be granted that it is quite easy to lose sight of the kind of object Kant is talking about in any given example. As we noted in chapter one, there are different ways in which the term 'object' can be understood, depending upon whether Kant has used the German term *Objekt* or *Gegenstand*. Henry Allison, for example, suggests that when Kant uses the former, he usually intends to designate a general object, like an object in a judgment for example, and when he uses the latter, he generally intends to designate a real external object.³¹ In any case, the problem is exacerbated in English, where the term object is used to cover both German expressions. For example, judgment is one of the key elements in experience. If I utter a judgment, often I mean to say something about something in the world, i.e. some object (for example that it is pink and lives in water). However, one must make (at least) a two-fold distinction in the meaning of object, insofar as there is an object in the world (the public object), and a grammatical object (like 'salmon' in the sentence: 'I see a salmon'). If we say, for example, that the categories are necessary for the representation of objects, we must be clear in so saying whether we mean by object 'external public object' or merely 'grammatical' object.

³¹ See Allison p. 135. For a more detailed account of this distinction, see "Two Kinds of Transcendental Objectivity: Their Differentiation", by Charles Sherover.

We have already seen that the categories are employed by means of judgment. What must now be shown is how the categories contribute to the possibility of experience. Since the bulk of this discussion will revolve around Kant's distinction between judgments of perception and judgments of experience, let us consider it first.

In the *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics* Kant distinguishes between these two types of judgment. Judgments of perception do not require the pure concepts, and have therefore only subjective validity. Judgments of experience are necessarily subject to the pure concepts because they are to count as judgments about experiential objects, and therefore have objective and universal validity. In footnote 12 to §20 of the *Prolegomena*, Kant gives an example of a judgment of perception which becomes a judgment of experience with the addition of the pure concepts.

As an easier example, we may take the following: when the sun shines on the stone, it grows warm. This judgment, however often I and others may have perceived it, is a mere judgment of perception and contains no necessity; perceptions are only usually conjoined in this manner. But if I say: the sun warms the stone, I add to the perception a concept of the understanding, viz., that of cause, which necessarily connects with the concept of sunshine that of heat, and the synthetic judgment becomes of necessity universally valid, viz., objective, and is converted from a perception into experience. (§20 fn.12)

Now what is Kant actually saying about objectivity here? To begin with, the addition of the concept 'cause', at least as far as the example is concerned, serves to establish a relation between the two elements of the judgment, apart from any relation the subject (he who makes the judgment) has to the elements. Notice that the relation established by the judgment of perception (namely 'when the sun shines on the stone it grows warm') is mediated by the subject, because the two events (the sun shining on the stone and the latter becoming warm) are only related insofar as they are found in perception. If we try to ascertain whether any 'objective' relation exists³², we are bound to be disappointed, because we will find that there is no rule connecting them. When the concept 'cause' is added, the claim made by the judgment is about things in the world and about the relation between them. In this case, the judgment holds universally, because the rule will govern the relation between the sun and the stone, independently of any particular disposition of the subject. We thus have a judgment which will be objectively valid, because there is no dependence in the subject, and universally valid, because the events must always be the same for everybody.

³² By this we should be taken to mean any relation considered entirely apart from the subject. There is of course a sense in which this claim is almost nonsensical, since perceptions are dependent upon the subject and can obviously not be considered to have any independent existence. However, we are not trying to argue that they have such an existence.

However, as we noted above, there is a variety of ways in which we might interpret the use of the word *object*. And although Kant is discussing the notion of *objectivity* and not *objects* as such, the sort of objects which are represented in Kant's examples are of importance in considering Kant's claim. Clearly, in the context of a judgment, the objects in that judgment are at least grammatical objects. Further, when Kant says that the things referred to by the statement 'when the sun shines on the stone, it grows warm' are perceptions, we are thus led to conclude that the objects such as the sun and the stone are perceptual objects. However, objects of perception should not be taken to have any real external existence, whereas the objects represented in the judgment of experience are external public objects.³³

If we ignore how the relevant objects are related, it looks as if the objects represented in the judgment of perception (the sun and the stone) are the same as the sun and the stone represented in the judgment of experience. In the examples which Kant gives (again, the ones cited above from footnote 12, §20), he is not so much interested in the objects themselves, for in any case his intention in this section seems to be to show how perceptions are subsumed under concepts. However, we

³³ Kant's discussion here bears directly upon a consideration of how he resolves the problem of distinguishing truth from illusion. Kant insists upon the criteria of necessity and universality as a means to distinguish between judgments of experience and judgments of perception, which of course depend upon the employment of the categories. Real public objects are those which have satisfied the criteria of necessity and universality, while the internal/external distinction is one to be made within sensibility, since space and time are both forms of *a priori* intuition. This distinction is laid out in more detail in the concluding chapter.

might suppose, on the basis of the apparent identity between the objects represented in the judgment of perception and the objects represented in the judgment of experience, that there are, in fact, public objects represented in the judgment of perception, and that the addition of the categories is not to make possible the representation of a public object, but rather, as J. Michael Young suggests, to make possible the representation of the object as it is *objectively*. Before I suggest an alternate reading, it would be useful to consider Young's position, so it is clear exactly what interpretation of Kant's text I suggest we **not** adopt.³⁴

In 'Kant's Notion of Objectivity', Young argues against what he calls the generally accepted view of the role of the categories in the representation of external public objects. Young characterizes this 'commonly accepted' view in the following way:

[T]he generally received view seems to be that when Kant says that the categories are presupposed in the representation of objects of experience, he means that the employment of the categories is what makes it possible for us to represent such things as tables and trees — that apart from this employment we possess only the awareness of sensory data which, for one reason or another, cannot qualify as representations of things such as these. (Ibid, p.132)

³⁴ This overview of Young's position is not intended to be a thorough analysis of Young's arguments, but rather of the general position. I will not take issue with each of the arguments, but will show that there is much textual evidence to suggest that Young's basic position is ill-founded.

Contrary to this generally accepted view, Young's thesis is the following:

Kant seeks to distinguish between merely being presented with such things as tables and trees, and representing them objectively, or as objects. He holds that the categories are presupposed, not in the representation of things, but in the representation of things as objects. What this distinction comes to in the long run ... is a distinction between things regarded as merely observed or perceived, and things regarded as objects of scientific knowledge. (Ibid, p. 137)

Young draws support for his thesis from the *Prolegomena* as well as the *Critique*. In the *Prolegomena*, Young focuses upon the sections where Kant distinguishes the judgments of perception from judgments of experience. Young points out that the examples which Kant uses to illustrate the difference between the two (which I shall not go into here, since in any case it is discussed in the course of this chapter), there is the suggestion that there are public objects already represented in the judgments of perception.

All our judgments are first merely judgments of perception; they hold good only for us (i.e. for our subject), and we do not till afterwards give them a new reference (to an object) and want that they shall always hold good for us and in the same way for everybody else; for when a judgment agrees with an object, all judgments concerning the same object must likewise agree among themselves, and thus the objective validity of the judgment of experience signifies nothing else than its necessary universal validity. And conversely when we have ground for considering a judgment as necessarily having universal validity (which never depends upon perception, but upon the pure

concept of the understanding under which the perception is subsumed), we must consider that it is objective also — that is, that it expresses not merely a reference of our perception to a subject, but a characteristic of the object. For there would be no reason for the judgments of other men necessarily agreeing with mine if it were not the unity of the object to which they all refer and with which they accord; hence they must all agree with one another. (*Prolegomena*, §18)

In inquiring what Kant means by saying that judgments of experience are objectively valid, Young says the following:

I will argue that his distinction between the subjective and the objective should be understood as one between appearance and reality in the empirical world, a distinction familiar from the domain of natural science.³⁵

Young uses two examples to illustrate his point. In the first, that of a card trick, we are tricked by a magician who makes a card disappear, only to make it reappear from the ear of a spectator. But as Young points out, we do not really believe that the card vanishes, because “to put it crudely, playing cards just don’t do that sort of thing” (137). In the second example, Young again draws the appearance-reality distinction with respect to a rainbow. In the seventeenth century it was discovered that light refracting through droplets of water was the cause of the rainbow, which looks like a

³⁵ “Kant’s Notion of Objectivity”, p. 137.

banner in the sky. The result of this discovery is that we are able to draw a distinction between the way a rainbow looks, and the way it really is.

It enabled us, in short, to render a judgment concerning the real nature of something. And it did so, here just as in the earlier illustration [viz. the card trick example], by enabling us to bring the thing in question under universal laws known to govern it, laws which serve to explain why it has the characteristics it does, and why it appears as it does. (Ibid, p.138)

The aim of inquiry, says Young, is to come to understand objects as they are objectively, as governed by natural laws.

It is this distinction between appearance and reality which, I believe, underlies Kant's distinction between the two types of judgments. Judgments of perception are subjective ... just in the sense that they represent things merely as they appear to us in intuition. Judgments of experience, by contrast, are objective, just because they involve the attempt to conceive these things as they are, really or objectively, i.e., to conceive them in such a way that we can comprehend them as manifesting the operation of universal law. (Ibid, p.139)

However, I think there is a reading of the text which suggests something quite different. Consider the following, for example.

All our judgments are first merely judgments of perception; they hold good only for us (i.e. for our subject), and we do not till afterwards give them a new reference (to an object) and want that they shall always hold good for us and in the same way for everybody else. (*Prolegomena*, §18)

Notice that Kant here talks about giving the judgment of perception a **new** reference. Clearly if a real public object is already represented in the judgment of perception we would not need to give it a **new** reference. Further, the thing to which it is now referred is obviously an external public object, a claim which is supported by the statement that the reference to the new object “shall always hold good for us and in the same way for everybody else”. This characterization depends upon the use of the categories as the means by which our experience (and everybody else’s) is governed by universal laws.

But if the objects in the judgments of perception are not the same as in the judgments of experience, then what are they? The best description of these objects would be as mental entities which are *in us*. This is strongly suggested by Kant in the *Prolegomena*, such as in section 19, where Kant says that “this judgment [viz. ‘air is elastic’] is as yet a judgment of perception only — [in which] I do nothing but refer two sensations in my senses to one another.” And this point is reinforced in the subsequent section of the *Prolegomena*, where Kant says the following.

The former judgment is merely a judgment of perception and is of subjective validity only; it is merely a connection of perceptions in my mental state, without reference to the object.
(§ 20)

Kant’s use of the term *object* in the last phrase must refer to the external public object, since he is contrasting it with the *mental state* object. And this supports the reading

that the objects in the judgments of perception are mental objects, since otherwise such a contrast would be completely empty.

One other point must be made on this subject for the purpose of clarification, namely how to understand the act of representing objects. In representing, the subject acts upon the manifold in intuition. This gives expression to a central feature of Kant's thinking, namely that the subject is active upon the material in intuition, as opposed to being passive. Notice the extent of this thinking, as found in section 14 of the Deduction in the *Critique*.

[R]epresentation in itself does not produce its object so far as *existence* is concerned, for we are not here speaking of its causality by means of the will. None the less the representation is *a priori* determinant of the object, if it be the case that only through the representation is it possible to *know* anything as an *object*. (A92 / B125)

In representing an object of perception, I act upon the material in sensibility and refer to the unified material which is in me. The sun and the stone which are represented in the judgment of perception (from the *Prolegomena*) are mental entities in the same way that we can represent objects to ourselves by an act of the imagination. By subsuming the judgment of perception under the categories, I represent an external object, which is an object of knowledge for the reason that it has those characteristics which are required of an external object, namely those prescribed by the categories and by outer sense. The representations in the judgment of experience refer to the same external objects for me as for everybody else, because the objects of experience

are themselves determined by the categories, and that determination will be the same for all of us, since we all share the same makeup in the understanding.

The objective validity of the categories as *a priori* concepts rests, therefore, on the fact that, so far as the form of thought is concerned, through them alone does experience become possible. They relate of necessity and *a priori* to objects of experience, for the reason that only by means of them can any object whatsoever of experience be thought. (A93 / B126)

This interpretation of the objects represented in judgments of perception versus judgments of experience supports my position against Young. In what follows I shall examine additional textual evidence which I believe will further support my position. We shall begin with a passage in the Analogies of Experience in which Kant is attempting to prove that all alterations take place in conformity with the rule of cause and effect. In this (the second) analogy Kant says the following:

Understanding is required for all experience and for its possibility. Its primary contribution does not consist in making the representation of objects distinct, but in making the representation of an object possible at all. (A199 / B244)

Before we draw any firm conclusions about this passage, can we be certain that Kant is speaking about external public objects here? There is at least one good reason for thinking that he is, and this is that in the first sentence of this passage Kant sets the context as that of experience, which, as we know, is defined as empirical knowledge of objects. (The use of the term *knowledge* of course precludes the possibility that

Kant is only talking about a perceptual object.) And when Kant talks in these terms (i.e. the structure of experience according to the pure concepts) we can be sure that he is not talking merely about mental objects.

In the following paragraph of the second Analogy Kant makes somewhat clearer what he takes to be the relation between public objects and objects of perception.

That something happens is, therefore, a perception which belongs to a possible experience. This experience becomes actual when I regard the appearance as determined in its position in time, and therefore as an object that can always be found in the connection of perceptions in accordance with a rule. This rule, by which we determine something according to succession of time, is, that the condition under which an event invariably and necessarily follows is to be found in what precedes the event. (A200 / B245-6)

Notice that in this logical analysis, the addition of the categories (in this case that of *cause and effect*) to the perception of something happening provides the condition under which this something necessarily follows some other event, with the result that an experience becomes actual. This analysis does not support the idea that we can represent objects as external public objects without the categories. This is further suggested in section twenty-five of the *Prolegomena*.

As regards the relation of appearances merely with a view to their existence, the determination is not mathematical but dynamical, and can never be objectively valid and fit for

experience, if it does not come under *a priori* principles by which the cognition of experience relative to appearances first becomes possible. Hence appearances must be subsumed under the concept of substance, which as a concept of the thing itself is the foundation of all determination of existence.... Thus *a priori* principles form the basis of objectively valid, though empirical, judgments — that is of the possibility of experience so far as it must connect objects existing in nature. (§25)

These texts suggest the following. We receive impressions from sensibility, the material from which enables us to represent to ourselves the objects of perception. We establish a 'connection' between these perceptual objects and the objects of experience by virtue of judgments of experience, which provide the *objective* form of experience, by virtue of the categories which are employed. The texts also suggest a distinction familiar in the literature, namely between the following four groups: transcendental realism, transcendental idealism, empirical realism and empirical idealism. Kant says of himself that he is a transcendental idealist, from which Kant thinks it follows that he is thereby also an empirical realist.

From the start, we have declared ourselves in favour of this transcendental idealism; and our doctrine thus removes all difficulty in the way of accepting the existence of matter on the unaided testimony of our mere self-consciousness, or of declaring it to be thereby proved in the same manner as the existence of myself as a thinking being is proved. (A370)

Kant continues:

In order to arrive at the reality of outer objects I have just as little need to resort to inference as I have in regard to the reality of the object of my inner sense, that is, in regard to the reality of my thoughts. For in both cases alike the objects are nothing but representations, the immediate perception (consciousness) of which is at the same time a sufficient proof of their reality. The transcendental idealist is, therefore, an empirical realist, and allows to matter, as appearance, a reality which does not permit of being inferred, but is immediately perceived. (A371)³⁶

Kant's thesis here, namely that matter is immediately perceived, is restated in the "B" edition, the Refutation of Idealism.

Idealism assumed that the only immediate experience is inner experience, and that from it we can only *infer* outer things—and this, moreover, only in an untrustworthy manner, as in all cases where we are inferring from given effects to determinate causes.

³⁶ These passages appear in the first, though not the second edition of the *Critique*. However, they should not on this basis be considered inappropriate, since Kant expresses these ideas in a very similar manner in the "Refutation of Idealism" (B274-279). The issue which is most important for our purposes is that Kant intends to avoid the issue of having to infer the existence of objects (a view which Kant calls empirical idealism), and that, on the contrary, his view is that these objects are immediately perceived, whence it follows that no inference is required. Although Kant's point in the "Refutation of Idealism" is essentially the same (at least as far as that part of it which concerns us goes), he does not use the same kind of terminology there. Instead, he develops more specialized ways of referring to his predecessors, such as material, problematic and dogmatic idealism (B274). Note the similarity between the position in the first edition and the "Refutation of Idealism". "But in the above proof it has been shown that outer experience is really immediate, and that only by means of it is inner experience—not indeed the consciousness of my own existence, but the determination of it in time—possible." (B276-7) Although the characterization of the view of the experience of outer objects changes, Kant's own view that it is immediate obviously survives both editions of the *Critique*.

In this particular case, the cause of the representations, which we ascribe, perhaps falsely, to outer things, may lie in ourselves. But in the above proof it has been shown that outer experience is really immediate, and that only by means of it is inner experience—not indeed the consciousness of my own existence, but the determination of it in time—possible.
(B276-7)

The difficulty (viz., that of *inferring* the existence of real objects outside us) which Kant thought plagued his predecessors is solved by making space and time forms of a *priori* intuition. Objects in space are thereby immediately perceptible, a conclusion which meets the challenge of the skeptic who doubts the legitimacy of inferences from perception. Suggestions that Kant is an empirical idealist, (see, for example, the famous statement that the understanding is the lawgiver of nature [A126]), are manifest in the fact that the objective features of objects and the experience in which they are found are supplied by a function of the understanding. Such a theory avoids the pitfalls of having to appeal to the “real” world which Kant thought Descartes dead wrong for insisting upon. After all, we need not look far to find Kant warning us against trying to apply categories to things in themselves.

As a final point about the sun and the stone example from the *Prolegomena*, although we might say that the sun causes the stone to become warm, we do not say thereby that the sun has the property of causality. What we say is that one of the sun’s properties is radiation, which reacts in perceptible ways with other objects. Cause and effect, like the other categories of relation, is brought to experience by us

and is not therefore a property which we somehow add to the objects. Nevertheless, objects **are** objects of experience because they are connected in this sort of way to other objects, in a predictable and understandable way (a fact for which judgment is responsible, in this case hypothetical).

I therefore easily comprehend the concept of cause as a concept necessarily belonging to the mere form of experience, and its possibility as a synthetic unification of perceptions in a consciousness in general; but I do not at all comprehend the possibility of a thing in general as a cause, inasmuch as the concept of cause denotes a condition not at all belonging to things, but to experience. For experience can only be an objectively valid cognition of appearances and of their succession, only so far as the antecedent appearances can be conjoined with the consequent ones according to the rule of hypothetical judgments. (*Prolegomena* §29)

In this way we might consider an analogy between Kant's theory and common sense. Kant often talks about the relation between perceptions (*Prolegomena* §29, for example) in consciousness. The perceptions may have correlates in experience, but this matter cannot be decided without the categories, for the categories give them their place in the "external" world. To call perceptions "objects" is fine as long as we understand that these "objects" do not stand in any relation to anything except us as subjects. And this, I think, is the thrust of Kant's thinking as expressed in the sections of *The Prolegomena* which deal with judgments of perception and those of experience.

Experience consists in the synthetic connection of appearances (perceptions) in consciousness, so far as this connection is necessary. Hence the pure concepts of the understanding are those under which all perceptions must first be subsumed before they can serve for judgments of experience, in which the synthetic unity of the perceptions is represented as necessary and universally valid. (*Prolegomena* § 22)

This picture suggests that Kant may have held a kind of correspondence theory of objectivity, as he often talks about perceptions being referred to external objects. However, it does not support Young's hypothesis that categories are required for the representation of objects as they are objectively (though not for the representation of the external objects themselves). The introduction of the categories by judgment provides a framework within which real external objects have relation to real subjects and to other real objects. But the very way in which one can know whether an object is one of these real external objects is by virtue of its membership within this framework. It is precisely because of this that we can utter the judgment "the sun warms the stone" and in so doing refer to external objects.

However, this picture, if it is Kant's, is far from being solid in foundation. It depends to a great extent on what Kant argues in a section following the Deduction, namely the Schematism. In this section a connection between categories and objects must be established in a manner which does not violate the rules which Kant has set himself in deriving the categories themselves. It is to a consideration of this argument that we will turn in chapter three.

IV The Schematism of the Categories

This chapter will focus upon the Schematism chapter of the *Critique*, where Kant intends to demonstrate how the categories are to acquire sensible content enough to be applicable to objects of the senses. The main question we will consider is whether the argument in the Schematism achieves the goal which Kant sets for it, namely deriving schematized concepts from categories, the former of which would have the necessary sensible content to be applicable to sensible objects. As we should recall, the categories have no such content and function at a purely intellectual level, while appearances, as objects of the senses, function in the sensible domain.

Kant opens the Schematism chapter by reminding his readers that in concept application “the representation of the object must be *homogeneous* with the concept”, meaning that “the concept must contain something which is represented in the object that is to be subsumed under it” (A137 / B176). It is this *something* for which Kant now searches, which will be homogeneous both with the intellectual (the categories) and with the sensible (objects of the senses). “We must be able to show how pure concepts can be applicable to appearances” (A138 / B177).

Hubert Schwyzer states the problem to be resolved in the Schematism and contrasts Kant’s effort with the position of some of his predecessors. Schwyzer writes:

I think Kant's procedure ... can best be seen as a response to this duality of concepts and to the philosophical question it poses. That question is this: How, given the dual nature of concept possession, are concepts of anything possible? ... Kant's starting point in response to this issue is his conviction that none of the accounts of concept possession contained or implicit in

the philosophies of his predecessors could be satisfactory. All of these earlier accounts, however different from one another in other ways, had this in common, that they explained the possession of concepts in terms, ultimately, of intuition of objects. Philosophers as diverse as Plato, Descartes, and Hume unquestioningly assume that concepts derive from objects, that the source of concepts is acquaintance with things. Thus, it is acquaintance with the form of the dog (Plato), with dogs themselves, as the intellect sees them (Descartes), with the component sensory elements of dog-perceptions (Hume), that accounts for our concept of a dog.³⁷

In this passage Schwyzer credits Kant's predecessors with an explanation of the possession of concepts in terms of acquaintance with things. He points out, however, that Kant breaks with this acquaintance model as an account of the source of concepts, and gives a better account both of the origin of concepts and of their application to objects of experience.

Kant has clearly tried to demonstrate that this notion of acquaintance is false, and that although 'acquaintance with things' may explain the origin of empirical concepts, it certainly does not explain the origin of the categories. However, it is now this sensible connection which Kant must demonstrate. The point of this chapter is to examine critically Kant's attempt to show how pure concepts can apply to objects of experience. The examination is conducted, at least in part, by a critical appraisal of a selection of the secondary literature which represents two opposed reactions to Kant's

³⁷ *The Unity of Understanding*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990, p. 23.

argument: those who argue that the schematism is a failure, and those who argue that it is successful.

Before we turn our attention to the merits of Kant's argument in the Schematism, I would like to jump ahead, as it were, in order to look briefly at the larger picture of Kant's theory of experience, or, empirical knowledge of objects. As we already know, knowledge is determined by means of the functions of the understanding, namely the employment of categories and judgment in acting upon the material from sensibility. It is tempting to speak here of a bifurcation inherent in Kant's thinking in the *Critique*—a bifurcation which also pervades the notion of experience, since as empirical knowledge of objects, experience by definition requires both sensibility and understanding.³⁸ In the Schematism, this bifurcation comes to the fore, because Kant must now limit the difference between the two faculties in order to demonstrate where schematized categories come from.

The understanding is what gives shape to experience, by structuring the world according to the metaphysical concepts, such as cause and effect. In the Preface to the *Prolegomena* Kant reminds us of the following.

The question was not whether the concept of cause was right, useful, and even indispensable for our knowledge of nature, for

³⁸ But the word *bifurcation* may be taken to suggest both a distinction between sensibility and understanding and also a separation or independence. I think this second interpretation can be ruled out, since sensibility and understanding, while distinct, are both faculties which inhere in the subject.

this Hume had never doubted; but whether that concept could be thought by reason *a priori*, and consequently whether it possessed an inner truth, independent of all experience, implying a more widely extended usefulness, not limited merely to objects of experience. This was Hume's problem. It was a question concerning the origin of the concept, not concerning its indispensability in use. (Preface to the *Prolegomena*)

Of course these concepts of metaphysics,³⁹ in their pure form, can have no application to anything, since they specify a purely intellectual function of the understanding. Without sensible content, the appearances in sensibility cannot be framed and organized by the understanding. Or, to put it in Kant's terms, any thoughts without content would be empty, and any intuitions without concepts would be blind. (A51 / B75)

This chapter addresses two questions about the schematism: the first is whether something like it is really needed in order to account for empirical knowledge; the second is whether Kant's own execution of his theory of the schematism is successful. There is a considerable amount of disagreement in the secondary literature regarding the validity of the Schematism. Some commentators think Kant's effort is successful⁴⁰, some that it is not⁴¹, and some that it fails to raise a

³⁹ This is how Kant refers to the pure concepts in the Preface to the *Prolegomena*.

⁴⁰ During the course of this chapter, I shall be using Gordon Nagel's view as a representative of such a commentator. Nagel's view is presented in *The Structure of Experience*.

real question. T.E. Wilkerson, for example, supposes that the "Schematism serves no useful purpose and can in my opinion be ignored without loss."⁴² This latter view, I believe, is not correct, though I believe that arguing this issue will take us too far afield. However, I propose to take Kant seriously, as he himself sees the Schematism as playing a very important role in his theory, a role which survives both editions of the *Critique*, even though the Deduction which precedes it is totally rewritten in the second edition.⁴³ In proceeding upon the assumption that the Schematism does raise a genuine problem, therefore, it is to Kant himself that I defer.⁴⁴ I shall try to argue, however that Kant's attempt to solve the problem is not successful.

The chapter itself begins by distinguishing two different types of subsumption ("of an object under a concept" (A137 / B176)). In one case, there is similarity without mediation, and in the other there must be a middle term which mediates the

⁴¹ I shall use Hubert Schwyzer as the commentator who holds the view that Kant's attempt to solve the problem of the Schematism is not successful. This view can be found in *The Unity of Understanding: A Study in Kantian Problems*.

⁴² *Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, Oxford University Press, 1976; p.94.

⁴³ Furthermore, Kant himself, in §34 of the *Prolegomena*, calls the Schematism an "indispensable" investigation.

⁴⁴ The view that Kant fails to raise a genuine problem is often based upon the idea that there is no distinction between the having of a concept and being able to apply it. This is Bennett's position (as argued in *Kant's Analytic*), for example, which leads him to believe that Kant does not raise a real issue in the Schematism, since he (Kant) has already argued that we possess the pure concepts. Professor Schwyzer argues that Kant did see this, but that the categories are not, prior to being schematized, concepts at all. This issue is raised later in this chapter.

subsumption. Kant begins the Schematism with an example of the former type of subsumption.

In all subsumptions of an object under a concept the representation of the object must be *homogeneous* with the concept; in other words, the concept must contain something which is represented in the object that is to be subsumed under it. This, in fact, is what is meant by the expression, 'an object is contained under a concept'. Thus the empirical concept of a *plate* is homogeneous with the pure geometrical concept of a *circle*. The roundness which is thought in the latter can be intuited in the former. (A137 / B176)

In the case of the categories, however, there must be a middle term which mediates the subsumption, since there is no similarity between the appearance (sensible) and the category (intellectual).⁴⁵

Obviously there must be some third thing, which is homogeneous on the hand with the category, and on the other hand with the appearance, and which thus makes the application of the former to the latter possible. This mediating representation must be pure, that is, void of all empirical content, and yet at the same time, while it must in one respect be *intellectual*, it must in another be *sensible*. Such a representation is the *transcendental schema*. (A138 / B177)

⁴⁵ Kant apparently believes that there are certain essential features of concept application, whether the concepts in question are empirical or whether they are categories. Otherwise, the empirical example which Kant uses to start the Schematism off would be fruitless.

Kant states that this third thing derives from time, since time “is so far homogeneous with the category, which constitutes its unity, in that it is universal and rests upon an *a priori* rule” (A138 / B177), and yet it is “so far homogeneous with appearance, in that time is contained in every empirical representation of the manifold.” (A139 / B178)

From earlier parts of the *Critique* we already know some things about time which are vital to the schematism. For example, Kant calls time “necessary representation” (A31 / B56) and immediately clarifies the fact that time is necessary and *a priori*.

Time and space, taken together, are the pure forms of all sensible intuition, and so are what make *a priori* synthetic propositions possible. But these *a priori* sources of knowledge, being merely conditions of our sensibility, just by this very fact determine their own limits, namely, that they apply to objects only in so far as objects are viewed as appearances, and do not present things as they are in themselves. (A39 / B56)

Taken somewhat metaphorically, time (and space) provide the foundation for objects as appearances in the same way that the categories (and judgment) provide the foundation for objects as objects of knowledge. They (viz. time and the categories) are therefore quite similar in function.

In the Schematism, Kant clarifies the ways in which time and the categories are similar in the following way:

Now a transcendental determination of time is so far homogeneous with the category, which constitutes its unity, in that it is universal and rests upon an *a priori* rule. But, on the other hand, it is so far homogeneous with appearance, in that time is contained in every empirical representation of the manifold. (A138-9 / B177-8)

Does Kant account for enough relevant similarity to explain the application of pure concepts to objects of experience? Kant assumes that something has to mediate between sensibility and the categories, and the transcendental determination of time is stated to be the transcendental schema because it has certain features which are similar both to the understanding and to sensibility. I readily grant that there is similarity in function, as explained above; it is also clear, from the passage quoted just above, that the determination of time is so far homogeneous with the category etc., and that time is contained in every empirical representation. In deciding whether this is sufficient, I turn first to Gordon Nagel's defense of the Schematism.

Much of Nagel's defense⁴⁶ is based upon refuting many of those who have rejected the argument of the Schematism. Nagel cites Bennett, Wolff and Wilkerson,⁴⁷ pointing out along the way where these commentators have gone wrong. Nagel quotes Bennett as saying the following, for example.

⁴⁶ This defense is found primarily in the third chapter (pp. 60-83) of *The Structure of Experience*.

⁴⁷ Ibid. pp. 72-74.

If one is wondering how the concept *C* can be applied to the class of *Bs*, it is no solution to say that the naked concept *C* does not apply to the *Bs* but that the specially adapted concept *CB* does apply to them. No difficulty about calling cats “carnivores” could be overcome by calling them “feline carnivores” instead.⁴⁸

Nagel argues that everything goes astray in this characterization (which is surely true), and sums it up by saying that “whatever problems there may be about calling cats carnivores cannot possibly be complex enough to shed light on the general foundations of experience”.⁽⁷³⁾⁴⁹ Indeed, the real meat of the Schematism, namely how the ‘third thing’ which mediates intellectual categories and their applicability to sensibility, is not clarified by Bennett’s example. Nagel sums it up nicely when he says the following.

What the reader should demand to know is *how* the categories are connected with the things given in sense; and he should demand that the connection be explained for the categories themselves, not for their names. (Ibid, p.74)⁵⁰

⁴⁸ *The Structure of Experience*, p. 72.

⁴⁹ To be fair to Bennett, however, he is surely not trying to shed light on the general foundations of experience. Instead, he is trying to shed light on Kant’s argument about adapting pure concepts to make them applicable to sensibility.

⁵⁰ There is something troubling about the requirements which Nagel places on Kant, shortly after the statement above. He says that “the forthcoming explanation [viz. Kant’s argument in the Schematism] should work—it should be *a* way to explain experience” and that “it should be the best available explanation—*the* way to explain it.” (74) What is troubling about this characterization is that it is unlikely that Kant

Nagel also echoes Kant's thoughts on the subject of time, when he reminds us that time may serve to schematize the categories because it is not empirical, and "nothing empirical could ever provide the connection which is presumed to be a precondition of the empirical." (76)⁵¹ Most of Nagel's actual defense of the schematism, however, is characterized by him pointing out the various ways in which time figures in our experience, as well as the close parallels between time and the schematized categories. As a result, as insightful as Nagel's criticism of the various Kant commentators is, his comments themselves do not seem to bear directly upon the issue of whether time is adequate to the task of the schematism. (And there is no

would have been satisfied with requirements which are not more rigorous. As an analogy, Thomas Kuhn (in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*) provides us with many examples of scientific discovery which have demonstrated the invalidity of previously accepted *truths*, most of which would have met Nagel's criteria for satisfactory accounts. Given Kant's preoccupation with reason following the "secure path of a science" (Bvii), it is unlikely that he would have been satisfied with an account of experience which was only the best available explanation at the time. In fairness to Nagel, he may mean to suggest, after the dash ("the best available explanation—the way to explain it"), that the explanation, being the only possible explanation, is therefore necessary.

⁵¹ At the risk of quoting Nagel out of context, it should be pointed out that this citation comes from a section in which Nagel argues against a claim by Bennett, who refers to 'the empirical element of temporality'. Nagel argues that this is a serious slip by Bennett because time is not empirical. However, the additional claim (viz. additional to correcting Bennett), namely that because time is not empirical it may serve to schematize the categories, is not conclusive, and can be read in two ways. The first way, which I believe is false, is that because time is not empirical it therefore **does** schematize the categories. The other reading is that because time is not empirical, it can schematize the categories, though it remains yet undetermined as to whether it actually does. On this reading, 'not being empirical' is read as being a

general acceptance of the view that time is in fact sufficient for this task.⁵²) Nagel points to various parallels which suggest a connection between time and the categories, including the following:

In respect of the applicability of Kant's methods, the problems of time are very like the problems of the categories. The categories also admit of analysis that requires constraint by explanation. While the categories are, as high-level concepts, paradigmatically intellectual, they also are, as putative conditions for the possibility of experience, involved with things of the senses. There are suggestive parallels between the apparent pervasiveness of time throughout experience and the fundamentality claimed for the categories as its conditions. (Ibid, pp. 76-77)

The parallels which Nagel points out here are true as stated, but potentially misleading. When Nagel says that the categories are intellectual and also involved with things of the senses, he is assuming that the question of identity (viz. between the categories and their schematized counterparts) has already been solved. In fact, Kant opens the Schematism with the question of how the 'high-level' concepts can even be involved with things of the senses, the very problem which the transcendental determination of time is meant to solve. Stated in Nagel's way, we would be suggesting a point of similarity between time and the categories, but doing

necessary though not sufficient condition for a thing being the transcendental schema.

it in such a way that it assumes a fact about the categories which the Schematism sets out to argue, namely that categories are both intellectual and involved with the senses. This does not invalidate Nagel's claim, but it does render the suggestion inconclusive, for it fails to demonstrate an essential connection between time and the categories. It would still be open to conclude, that is, that the categories and time are similar in an accidental way, which would not support the conclusion that it is time which makes it possible for the categories to have the sensible application.

Now let me be clear about what I am not denying. I am not denying, for example, that the schematized categories lead naturally to some conception of time,⁵³ nor am I denying that time is found in all aspects of experience. What I am suggesting is that these things do not cut to the heart of the issue, which is that the connection between the pure and the schematized categories needs to be established, and that examining the various temporal aspects of experience is not going to accomplish this. Hubert Schwyzer puts it well, when he says the following:

It is only, I think, if one surreptitiously keeps in the back of one's mind at least part of the 'objective' meaning, the descriptive force, of the category terms ('substance', etc.) that it can seem natural and reasonable to assign them these and these application criteria rather than others. It is only if we allow

⁵² Professor Schwyzer argues, for example, not only that time is not sufficient for this task, but that nothing could be. This argument is taken up later in this chapter.

⁵³ In any case this would be a silly thing to deny.

ourselves a sidelong glance at the 'objective', the in-the-world employment of subject-predicate sentences that it will seem reasonable to say that the things we think of as subjects are permanent things, things that endure through changes in their states. But such sidelong glances are not permitted in this enterprise of Kant's. To permit them is to beg the question as to how the categories are to be schematized, and to do that is to make it impossible to have derived the categories from the judgment forms in the first place.⁵⁴

There are other places where Nagel seems to take these 'sidelong glances'. Shortly after the the previously cited passage from Nagel, he goes on to say the following:

There is yet more that connects the categories with time. The analysis of some temporal notions leads directly to some of the categories, and vice versa. For example, the notion of duration involves the category of substance fairly directly; and, just as times are but parts of one and the same time, substances (material bodies or types of stuff) are but parts of one substance (matter). For an example of the converse, consider how inevitably an analysis of causation leads to the temporal notion of succession. Kant thinks that there are more than a few such interconnections. At the end of the Schematism, he sets out temporal notions associated with each category, and categories associated with each temporal notion.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ *The Unity of Understanding*, p 28.

⁵⁵ *The Structure of Experience*, p.77.

Again, I would suggest that this sort of analysis is not helpful for a discussion of the merits of the Schematism. In fairness to Nagel, the things which he states here are true. It is true, for example, that Kant believes that there are these parallels, and it is also true that he states these similarities in some detail at the end of the Schematism. But it is not true, I would argue, that these things conclusively establish that it is the transcendental determination of time which is the 'third thing' that allows the categories to be applied in sensibility.

Finally, analyzing the notion of time has similar difficulties, though Nagel defends Kant's analysis of such things.

When Kant analyzes [...] time or any of the more familiar categories (e.g., substance, cause, necessity), he does not rest his case on subtle shades of meaning-difference or verbal niceties. He instead looks just for plain, well-marked features. (Ibid, p. 66)

An analysis of this sort, while perhaps useful for other purposes, has the distinct disadvantage of implicitly assuming the conclusion which the Schematism is meant to establish, namely that time is the transcendental schema which allows the pure categories to be applied to the sensible domain. Nagel seems to assume this conclusion, just as Kant does, presumably for the reasons which permeate the passages cited here, namely that time is an essential ingredient in experience, a fact which makes it very similar to the (schematized) categories. Since Nagel's defense has

such a serious flaw, it cannot be deemed to be valid. However, I believe that the Schematism is not defensible, since the chapter itself suffers from serious flaws.

To begin with there is an obvious way in which the idea of time as the 'third thing' is troublesome. What is troublesome can be made clear with respect to a passage considered earlier in this chapter:

Now a transcendental determination of time is so far homogeneous with the category, which constitutes its unity, in that it is universal and rests upon an *a priori* rule. But, on the other hand, it is so far homogeneous with appearance, in that time is contained in every empirical representation of the manifold. (A138-9 / B177-8)

The second sentence is uncontroversial, since time does indeed provide the necessary basis for the possibility of objects as appearances, and thereby also the basis for empirical representations.⁵⁶ The first statement, while true, is controversial. Time **is** universal and *a priori*, since, as argued in the Aesthetic, it is a "necessary representation that underlies all intuitions" (A31 / B46), which makes it homogeneous with something that is intellectual. However, Kant seems to assume

⁵⁶ I think Kant uses his terminology rather loosely here, when he says that 'time is contained in every empirical representation of the manifold'. We should recall what Kant says of time in the Aesthetic, namely that it is 'nothing but the subjective condition under which alone intuition can take place in us' (A33/B49). Perhaps Kant would have been better to say that 'time makes possible every empirical representation of the manifold', or that 'a determination of time is contained in every empirical representation of the manifold', since it is difficult to see how a pure subjective condition would be contained in an empirical representation.

that any kind of homogeneity would serve to establish the desired conclusion. In fact, this is not the case. For example, if I were trying to classify a new kind of animal, I might look for similarities between it and existing animals to discover whether it should be classified as a mammal or reptile. Finding points of similarity (homogeneity) between this creature and other reptiles might strengthen my case for classifying it as a reptile, but it would not be conclusive unless they were points of similarity which were a) relevant (viz. to the proposition which is to be proved), and b) ones that excluded the new creature from other classifications. For example, I might conclude that the creature is a reptile on the basis of the fact that it bears young through eggs. This would be suggestive of a reptile classification, but it would not be conclusive, since it leaves open the possibility of it being a bird. If I then discovered that the creature had cold blood, that would again be suggestive of a reptile classification and would exclude the bird classification. In other words, at some stage the points of similarity begin to rule out alternative classification because of facts we have about existing species. Of course in zoology we can always create new classifications if we find new facts which do not properly fit anywhere else. But for Kant, if there is some characteristic of the schematized categories which cannot be explained by the pure form of time and the categories, then that ought to rule out time as the transcendental schema. And I shall suggest, in agreement with Professor Schwyzer, that there are features of the schematized categories which do just this.

So the situation is this: in at least one respect sensibility and understanding are heterogeneous, and in at least one respect they are homogeneous. This respect of homogeneity was granted earlier in this chapter, namely 'function'. As I have suggested, however, the crux of the Schematism is not in the movement from schematized categories to experience, but in the movement from categories to the schematized concepts. And the points of homogeneity which Kant illustrates in the Schematism do not achieve the goals which he sets for them. For as suggested above, it is not enough simply there there is homogeneity; the 'third thing' must be homogeneous in ways which are relevant to the desired result. And in this case, the desired result is demonstrating that the transcendental determination of time introduces the requisite sensible content to the categories so that they have application within sensibility. However, I suggest that the resulting schematized concepts are 'richer' than they should be on the assumption that time is the 'third thing'. I shall illustrate this point with an example.

Let us consider the pure category of causation. This pure category is said to have a schematized counterpart, according to which when something real is posited, something else always follows (A144 / B183). While pure determinations of time may indeed be necessary for such a rule, they cannot be sufficient for it. For time and its determinations, springing from pure reason, yield three and only three possibilities for a cause and its effect: precedence, simultaneity, and succession. Such determinations, however, cannot rule out any of these possibilities. Let us put this another way. If we

grant, for the sake of argument, that time brings its determinations to bear upon the pure category of causation, we are still left with the question: "What determines the concept of cause as succession, rather than either of the other two pure determinations of time?" This is a characterization of the schematized concept of causality which a pure determination of time simply could not be responsible for. Professor Schwyzer's comment⁵⁷ about taking sidelong glances seems particularly relevant, because it is only by taking such glances that it seems natural that time would determine the category of cause and effect according to the determination of succession, rather than according to simultaneity.⁵⁸

Now somebody might object to this line of reasoning in the following way. Why could Kant not claim that it is one of the aspects of time which provides the necessary mediation for the category of causality to be applicable to appearances, namely the notion of necessary succession?⁵⁹ I believe that the answer to this objection is that it makes an appeal to a determination of time which Kant should not be entitled to make, because the determination itself makes use of certain reference points. For example, in the proof for the First Analogy Kant says the following:

⁵⁷ *The Unity of Understanding*, p 28.

⁵⁸ One can imagine Hume reminding us that experience, not reason, teaches us that a cause does not follow its effect.

⁵⁹ I am indebted to professor Hunter for suggesting this possible objection.

Our *apprehension* of the manifold of appearance is always successive, and is therefore always changing. Through it alone we can never determine whether this manifold, as object of experience, is coexistent or in sequence. For such determination we require an underlying ground which exists *at all times*, this is, something *abiding* and *permanent*, of which all change and coexistence are only so many ways (modes of time) in which the permanent exists. (A182 / B225-6)

In the same section, Kant continues:

Only through the permanent does existence in different parts of the time-series acquire a magnitude which can be entitled duration. Without the permanent there is therefore no time-relation. (A183 / B226)

These passages suggest that, while time has three different modes (duration, succession and co-existence, (A177 / B219)), utilizing the appropriate mode would depend upon an activity which is not *a priori*, and therefore which could not be homogeneous in any relevant way with the categories. So while Kant has these various modes of time available to him, the act of choosing one rather than another in schematizing the categories is where Kant introduces an activity which should be prohibited. In discussing the category substance Professor Schwyzer puts it thus:

If 'substance' there means no more than 'a something-conceived-only-as-subject...', and if that in itself does not tell us what *in the world* a substance is, then there is nothing in it that points to, or even suggests, one criterion for its application rather than another. There is no reason at all why permanence in time, rather than, say, non-existence at any time, should be

the time-predicate that characterizes those things we conceive as subjects.⁶⁰

Nagel and Schwyzer (among others) notice that during the Schematism chapter Kant demonstrates a much more sophisticated view of concept possession than was advanced by his predecessors. As suggested above, it is clear that Kant rejects the idea that the categories are somehow learned from experience. It is also clear from the Schematism, however, that Kant rejects the idea of mental pictures or images as the model for possession (and application) of sensible concepts. Notice the following:

Indeed it is schemata, not images of objects, which underlie our pure sensible concepts. No image could ever be adequate to the concept of a triangle in general. It would never attain that universality of the concept which renders it valid of all triangles, whether right-angled, obtuse-angled, or acute-angled; it would always be limited to a part only of this sphere. The schema of the triangle can exist nowhere but in thought. (A140-1 / B180)

In the same paragraph, Kant makes a similar comment about empirical concepts.

Still less is an object of experience or its image ever adequate to the empirical concept; for this latter always stands in immediate relation to the schema of imagination, as a rule for the determination of our intuition, in accordance with some specific universal concept. (A141 / B180)

⁶⁰ *The Unity of Understanding*, p. 27.

We discover here (though we should not be surprised by the fact) that the schematism does not apply only to the categories, but also to the sensible concepts as well. Now this is not to say that it is the same function which produces schemata of sensible concepts and the schemata of pure concepts; Kant explicitly denies this.

[T]he *schema* of sensible concepts, such as of figures in space, is a product and, as it were, a monogram, of pure *a priori* imagination, through which, and in accordance with which, images themselves first become possible. (A141-2 / B181)

Whereas:

[T]he schema of a *pure* concept of understanding can never be brought into any image whatsoever. It is simply the pure synthesis, determined by a rule of that unity, in accordance with concepts, to which the category gives expression. It is a transcendental product of imagination, a product which concerns the determination of inner sense in general according to conditions of its form (time), in respect of all representations, so far as these representations are to be connected *a priori* in one concept in conformity with the unity of apperception. (A142 / B181)

However, the fact that schematism is crucial to all types of concepts is a possible source of confusion. Unlike the categories, sensible concepts already have sensible content and therefore already have the rules for their application built into them, so to speak. The schema of the concept of a triangle (the example which Kant uses at (A141 / B180)), as a thing which exists “nowhere but in thought” contains the general features which all triangles share, which students would read about in a

geometry text book. The description would include things such as 'enclosed figure', and 'three straight lines' etc., with a balance between the specific and the general, such that it captures the large number of species of triangles, yet excludes other geometrical figures, such as squares. But the key feature here is that at no point is it the task of the schematism of the sensible concept to introduce the requisite content so as to make it possible to apply the concept to anything at all in the world. Yet this is exactly what is required of the schematism of the categories, since they do not, nor can they, specify anything at the content level if they are also to specify the functions of the understanding in the intellectual domain.

I think that this increases the temptation to bypass the connection between the categories and their schematized counterparts, and concentrate upon the obvious connection between the schematized categories and time. But while the schematism of the sensible concepts is a superior theory of concept possession than Kant's predecessors had offered, it does not shed any light on how purely intellectual concepts have sensible application. As such it appears to fail to connect the intellectual (categories) with the sensible (objects). This, at least, is the conclusion reached by Hubert Schwyzer. Professor Schwyzer characterizes the different levels of thought inherent in Kant's notion of concept possession in terms of horizontal and vertical dimensions.

We are concerned here [viz. when talking about general logic] solely with what we might call the *horizontal* dimension of thought; the 'functions of unity', the unifying, coherent-making

operations of the understanding, the rules for linking representations, or words, with one another so as to procure that unity or coherence. What is omitted from consideration is the entire *vertical* dimension of thought: the linkage of representations, or words, not only with one another, but with things in the world. The very idea of thought as having a content or subject-matter, as being of or about anything at all, is at this stage left deliberately out of consideration.⁶¹

Schwyzler agrees with Johnathan Bennett⁶², for example, that concept possession implies the ability to apply concepts, but disagrees with Bennett on whether or not Kant realized this.

Kant often talks as if one might have concepts without, yet, having the ability to apply them. That is, he often, even usually, call the unschematized categories (these are the items which lack criteria of application) 'concepts', and he sometimes (though atypically) talks as if understanding were somehow independent of judgment. But, on the other hand, there are numerous passages, in the *Critique* and elsewhere, where he emphatically insists that unschematized categories are not concepts of anything at all, that nothing is understood by their means.⁶³

⁶¹ Ibid, p.15.

⁶² *Kant's Analytic*, Cambridge, 1966.

⁶³ *The Unity of Understanding*, p. 8. Schwyzler cites Kant at A136/B175, A147/186-7 and A245, which, for the sake of brevity, I shall not cite here.

Schwyzler concludes that the passages “strongly suggest that Kant's reason for holding that the categories need to be schematized is not that he believes that something over and above the having of a concept is required for one to be able to apply that concept, but rather that he believes that the unschematized categories are not as such (or yet) concepts of anything.” (Ibid, p. 8)

This conclusion, I believe, is a correct one, and is consistent with the very different way in which concepts and *pre-schematized* categories are characterized. Not only is the Schematism necessary for the categories to have application in the sensible world; it is necessary for the categories to be concepts at all. The bifurcation, unfortunately, is the very stumbling block which Kant does not get over. I have argued against the idea of time being the schema. Schwyzler advances this idea one step further in arguing not only that time cannot be the schema, but also that nothing could count as such a thing.

The very fact that Kant finds it necessary ... to give a two-pronged explanation of how concepts of things are possible makes it quite inevitable, surely, that the schemata have a source quite different from that of the categories, and so makes it inevitable that the conjoining of the one to the other will seem arbitrary. (Ibid, p. 28)

Schwyzler goes on to suggest that such arbitrariness destroys the integrity of what it is to possess concepts. It is quite certain, whatever the case, that such arbitrariness defeats the very purpose of what Kant sets out to do, namely to specify the understanding's necessary and *a priori* functions in providing the conditions under

which it is possible for us to have knowledge of anything, and, by extension, have any experience at all, by Kant's understanding of the term. The only conclusion, therefore, is that Kant's account fails, for "he cannot in the end show how concepts of things are possible."⁶⁴ In the end, Kant cannot give a valid answer to the question which he thought his predecessors (most notably Hume) answered wrongly.

[Hume] challenged reason, which pretends to have given birth to this concept [viz. cause and effect] of herself, to answer him by what right she thinks anything could be so constituted that if that thing be posited, something else also must necessarily be posited; for this is the meaning of the concept of cause. (Preface to the *Prolegomena*)

Kant thought that Hume's answer was incorrect. Unfortunately, wherever the correct answer lies, it is not with Kant's bifurcation.

⁶⁴ *The Unity of Understanding* p.29.

V Conclusion

During the course of the three previous chapters, we have tried to come to an understanding of the elements required in Kant's account of empirical knowledge of objects. Such an account needed to take into consideration the deduction of the categories from the judgment forms, which was the goal of the first chapter, the employment of the categories in cases where objectivity can be found, which was the goal of the second chapter, and a consideration of the Schematism, which in many ways holds Kant's entire project together, since the very employment of the concepts of the understanding as anything other than high-level intellectual categories depends upon their finding sensible application.

I argued, however, that the Schematism chapter fails to meet its objective, and that whether such a schematism is even possible in principle,⁶⁵ time is not sufficient for the task. The significance of this failure is great, because it means the categories cannot make experience possible, since they cannot even be applied to anything which is meant to be contained in it.

The deduction of the categories themselves is problematic also. By way of illustration, let us consider a specific problem with the *affirmative-reality* dyad. In an affirmative judgment, the members of one class are said to belong to another. If I say *all sharks are fish* I affirm of the subject class, namely *sharks*, that it belongs as a subset to the class of *fish*. This judgment form is to be distinguished from the other

⁶⁵ Professor Schwyzer, for example, suggests (in *The Unity of Understanding*) that it is not possible.

two under the heading *quality* in that the *negative* judgment denies that the relation obtains and the *infinite* judgment places the subject class in some other class that is the non-predicate class. Linguistically one would use the *affirmative* judgment to say *S is P*, and would use the category *reality* simply to affirm that something *is*. The category demands the existence of something and the judgment the existence of some relation within any given universe of discourse.

The problem with the consistency of this pair is not internal but pertains to categories of a different group, namely *problematic* and *possibility*. Notice what Kant says of *reality* in the Schematism.

Reality, in the pure concept of understanding, is that which corresponds to a sensation in general; it is that, therefore, the concept of which in itself points to being (in time). (A143 / B182)

In the same section, Kant says the following of possibility:

The schema of possibility is the agreement of the synthesis of different representations with the conditions of time in general. Opposites, for example, cannot exist in the same thing at the same time, but only the one after the other. The schema is therefore the determination of the representation of a thing at some time or other. (A144 / B184)

The distinction between *reality* and *possibility* is a fine one. On the one hand, it is clear that *possibility* (once schematized) functions to distinguish between the different determinations of a thing with respect to its location and duration in time. As Kant

points out in the Schematism, the category *possibility* serves to give voice to the principle of non-contradiction, namely that something cannot both be and not-be in the same respect at the same time. The difficulty is that *reality* and *possibility* serve nearly identical functions. If through *possibility* we understand the principle of non-contradiction⁶⁶, this added sense of being in time is added by the form of *time*, not by the category itself. That is, prior to the addition of *time*, *possibility* appears to be indistinguishable from *reality*.

Furthermore, this difficulty suggests an additional one. If the categories and judgments are supposed to specify the same function of the understanding, then it should follow that any overlap between two categories ought to be manifest in their respective judgments as well. In fact, the overlap between the two categories is not manifest in the *affirmative* and *problematic* judgments, each of which clearly specifies an independent function. What this observation suggests is that the match-up between the categories and judgments is a dubious one. The difficulties, (such as the ones just indicated with respect to the dyads above) seem less troubling if what we are trying to match up is the judgments and the already schematized categories.

⁶⁶ I do not intend to make any claims about comparing Kant's understanding of the principle of non-contradiction with that of his predecessors. However, it is clear from Kant's explication of *possibility* in the Schematism that this is essentially what the category amounts to.

However, this makes just the sort of mistake which I have accused Nagel of making.

But Professor Schwyzer points out the dilemma facing Kant either way.

For if one can see in the category what the criterion for its application would be, then the category is no longer a mere logical form for a concept of something; it already 'determines an object', has descriptive force. But then it cannot, as we saw earlier, be derived from the corresponding judgment form. If, on the other hand, the category *can* be derived from the judgment form, then matching a given schema to it can be nothing but a quite arbitrary act. Kant seems not to have noticed this awkward dilemma.⁶⁷

Kant, therefore, cannot give to the metaphysical concepts their place as necessary and *a priori* conditions for the possibility of experience.

⁶⁷ *The Unity of Understanding*, p. 28.

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