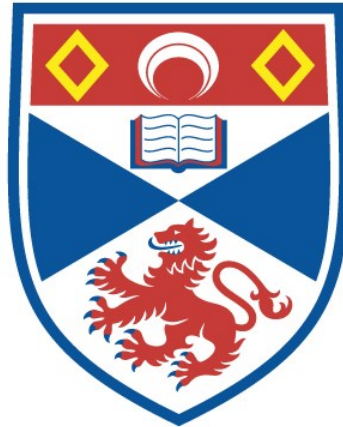


TIME, SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS, AND CATEGORIAL UNITY

Atul Satija

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of MPhil
at the
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Time, Self-Consciousness, and Categorical Unity

Atul Satija



University of
St Andrews

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of

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at the University of St Andrews

October 2022

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Time, Self-Consciousness, and Categorical Unity

Abstract. These essays are an attempt to elucidate the notion of a category, which, broadly speaking, is a concept that accounts for the manner in which the constituents of experience are combined or held together. The relation of such concepts to the unity of self-consciousness and the unity of time is explicated in order to consider the possibility of synthetic a priori knowledge.

0. Introduction

The series of essays that follow center on the concept of a category. Categories are the most fundamental and general concepts under which objects of experience are subsumed. We will mostly be following Kant's treatment of the notion, and in particular, the arguments of the Transcendental Deduction of the Categories from the first *Critique* that seek to establish that the categories constitute concepts necessary for the knowledge of objects of experience.

The leading thread that runs through the essays is the question: Is synthetic a priori knowledge possible? For Kant, knowledge of the categories constitutes synthetic a priori knowledge, and the task of the first two essays is to elucidate Kant's reasons for thinking this. We will then try to show how a correct understanding of the relation between the categories and notion of the self might preclude knowledge of the categories as synthetic. This is followed by expositions on the concepts of goodness and disposition, understood as categorial notions. These may be read as standalone essays, but in the end they are related back to the question of the synthetic a priori.

In the introduction that follows, we will say something about how to understand some key terms and concepts, including the notion of a category, and the distinctions between analytic and synthetic and a priori and a posteriori knowledge. As we'll see, the road to the synthetic a priori, which runs through the Deduction chapter, requires grasping Kant's notion of time and the role it plays in the overall argument of the chapter. This too will be introduced here. Towards the end of the introduction, we will sketch a roadmap of the overall work, providing a bit of detail about each essay and how they connect to one another.

0.1. The A Priori and the Synthetic: Defining Key Concepts

Let us begin with the notion of the a priori. How do we understand this notion? The a priori is a species of knowledge. One way to indicate what this type of knowledge consists in is negatively, by saying what it is *not*. And what it is not is knowledge deriving from experience, or knowledge a posteriori, where experience is understood as something the subject of knowledge receives from the world. It is knowledge that, for this reason, does not require reference to the subject. A priori knowledge, on the other hand, is

knowledge that does contain such reference essentially. It is knowledge the subject adds to the world, not what she receives from it.

Supposing the distinction between knowledge a priori and a posteriori is coherent, the question arises—why should we care about it? In order to answer this question, let us try locating these concepts in the history in philosophy, in the dialectic between empiricism and rationalism. As we'll see, understanding the importance of the a priori allows us to introduce the further distinction between the synthetic and the analytic a priori.

How should we understand the debate between empiricism and rationalism? Beginning with empiricism, as a first approximation, perhaps we can say that experiential or a posteriori knowledge is the foundation of *all* knowledge. Hume, the empiricist par excellence, says:

But though our thought seems to possess [...] unbounded liberty, we shall find, upon nearer examination, that it is really confined within very narrow limits, and that all this creative power of the mind amounts to no more than the faculty of compounding, transposing, augmenting, or diminishing the materials afforded us by the senses and experience. (*Enquiry*, §2, 5)

Now, as a statement of the central tenet of empiricism, it is not quite accurate. Empiricists often want to admit that there are certain truths we *do* acquire independently of experience. Few empiricists would think that knowledge of mathematics or of statements like 'suicide is the taking of one's own life' or 'all bachelors are unmarried' is acquired in this way. Hume says, for instance:

All the objects of human reason or inquiry may naturally be divided into two kinds, to wit, "Relations of Ideas," and "Matters of Fact." Of the first are the sciences of Geometry, Algebra, and Arithmetic, and in short, every affirmation which is either intuitively or demonstratively certain [...] Propositions of this kind are discoverable by the mere operation of thought, without dependence on on what is anywhere existent in the universe. Though there never were a circle or a triangle in nature, the truths demonstrated by Euclid would forever retain their certainty and evidence. Matters of fact, which are the second objects of human reason, are not ascertained in the same manner, nor is our evidence of their truth, however great, of a like nature with the foregoing. The contrary of every matter of fact is still possible, because it can never imply a contradiction and is conceived by the mind with the same facility and distinctness as if ever so conformable to reality (*Enquiry*, §4,1)

Hume's only examples in this passage of "relations of ideas" are mathematical statements, but I think it is safe to assume that he also had in mind here statements of the kind, 'bachelors are unmarried'. The

assumption is safe if we think the negation of such statements implies a contradiction. Applying the label historically applied to judgements of this kind, we'll call them *analytic*.

Mathematical knowledge is not the subject of this paper, and it is unclear if we can so easily clump together knowledge of this kind with knowledge of analytic truths, as Hume perhaps did and Kant certainly does not. So leaving such knowledge aside, perhaps we can restate the core thesis of empiricism as follows. All non-analytic knowledge (which is not of mathematics) is knowledge a posteriori. Once again, we can apply the label historically applied to this species of knowledge. And leaving the qualification about mathematics implicit, we arrive at the following claim. All synthetic knowledge is knowledge a posteriori.

This thesis may well be a good way to characterize empiricism and thereby distinguish it from its rationalistic rivals. If empiricism is the name of the doctrine according to which all synthetic knowledge is a posteriori knowledge, then rationalism may be understood as the thesis that at least some synthetic knowledge, knowledge that does not merely involve grasping the meaning of statements, is a priori.

What is at stake in the debate between rationalism and empiricism is the extent to which we can acquire substantive knowledge of the world from the armchair, independently of experience. The analytic-synthetic distinction is used here in order to distinguish such substantive knowledge of the world from knowledge that merely proceeds through the analysis of concepts. Here's how Kant understands the distinction:

In the analytic judgement I remain with the given concept in order to discern something about it. If it is an affirmative judgement, I only ascribe to this concept that which is already thought in it; if it is a negative judgement, I only exclude the opposite of this concept from it. In synthetic judgements, however, I am to go beyond the given concept in order to consider something entirely different from what is thought in it as in a relation to it, a relation which is therefore never one of either identity, or contradiction, and one where neither the truth nor the error of the judgement can be seen in the judgement itself. (B193-4/A154-5)

An analytic judgement merely involves explicating the meaning of the concepts involved the judgement, clarifying what is already contained in the concepts, whereas in a synthetic judgement we go beyond the meaning of concepts in order to say something more. It is because an analytic judgement involves mere clarification that its negation implies a contradiction. Take, for example, 'All bachelors are unmarried.' It is internal to the meaning of the concept, 'bachelor' that a bachelor is unmarried, and it is in this sense that the meaning of 'unmarried' is related to the meaning of 'bachelor' through identity—being a bachelor *just is* being unmarried. And negating the judgement involves running into a contradiction precisely for this reason.

Now, synthetic judgements involve, as Kant puts it elsewhere (B11/A7), *amplifying* what is thought through a concept, going beyond its meaning. And as such, they are neither thought through the relation of identity, nor does their negation imply a contradiction. Take, for example, the ‘all bodies are heavy’. It is not part of the meaning of the concept ‘body’ that all bodies are heavy. The judgement therefore is not through through the relation of identity, which also means negating the judgement does not entail a contradiction.

0.1.2. Kant’s View of The Synthetic A Priori

Kant rejects the empiricistic view that only a posteriori judgements can be synthetic. Empiricists go wrong in rejecting the possibility of synthetic a priori knowledge by restricting all substantive knowledge of the world to what is given through the senses. In rejecting the empiricistic view of synthetic knowledge, Kant thereby makes room for the synthetic a priori.

But this does not make Kant a rationalist. The only kind of synthetic a priori knowledge that is possible, for Kant, is knowledge of the categories, the most fundamental and general concepts that apply to experience. In restricting synthetic a priori knowledge to knowledge of the categories, Kant distinguishes himself from rationalists like Leibniz and Wolff, for whom no such restriction applies. There is no limit, for rationalism, to the substantive knowledge that can be acquired through the armchair. Certainly, this knowledge is not limited to knowledge of categorial concepts. At this stage it is worth saying a bit more about what the categories are and how they make synthetic a priori knowledge possible.

1.1.2.1. The Categories and the Synthetic A Priori

The categories are, as we’ve said, the most general and fundamental concepts that apply to objects of experience. These concepts, at the same time, reflect the most general and fundamental manner in which we combine the constituents of a judgement. As an example of such a manner of combination, consider the judgement:

All cats are green.

The judgement exhibits a general manner in which concepts may combine in thought, namely, as subject and predicate. The subject-position here being occupied by the concept ‘cat’ and the predicate position occupied by ‘green’. The concepts of subject and predicate, insofar as they constitute the manner or *form* in which specific empirical concepts combine are, for Kant, a priori. Categories are correlates of these forms of combination of concepts in experience:

The same function that gives unity to the different representations in a judgment also gives unity to the mere synthesis of different representations in an intuition, which expressed generally, is called the pure concept of the understanding. (B105)

An intuition is a singular representation. It is the representation of an object of experience as a particular, individualized object. Categories are ways of combining such objects, of bringing unity to intuition, in the same way the concept of a subject brings unity to judgement by combining its constituent concepts.

The application of forms of judgement to experience is through principles that reflect the manner in which time itself must be represented if experience of objects is to be possible. Synthetic a priori knowledge consists, for Kant, in knowledge of at least some, if not all, of these principles, which he entitles *principles of schematism*. We'll see in more detail what such principles amount to by the end of the first essay. But first, we need to introduce Kant's notion of time which is crucial for understanding the content of these principles.

0.2. Time: Introducing Key Concepts

Time occupies a crucial and indispensable role in Kant's critical system. Yet, to the modern ear, Kant's discussion of the concept may sound peculiar, if not downright impenetrable. My aim in this section is to shed some light on this difficult concept.

We should start with Kant's distinction between sensibility and understanding. Sensibility, for Kant, is the faculty of receiving representations from outside the self, whereas understanding is the faculty of producing representations from within.

As spontaneous and receptive faculties respectively, what further distinguishes the understanding from sensibility is the kind of object that is proper to them, the distinctive object they represent. Understanding is the faculty of concepts, and its identity rests on its being the faculty of thinking or judgement through concepts.¹ A concept is a *general representation*, a representation that can possibly apply to more than one individual.² This does not entail that concepts always do apply to more than one thing, only that they can so apply. If understanding is the faculty of general representations, then sensibility is the faculty of particulars, which, as we've seen, Kant calls *intuitions*.

Time, along with space is, for Kant, the *form* of intuitions. Or equivalently, it is the form of objects given in sensibility. The form-matter distinction runs through the *Critique* more generally, and Kant applies it not merely to sensibility, as we've seen, but also to understanding. The notion of form,

¹ See B94/A69: We can, however, trace all actions of the understanding back to judgements, so that the understanding in general can be represented as a faculty for judging. For according to what has been said above it is a faculty for thinking. Thinking is cognition through concepts.

² Kant has this understanding of concepts in mind when he argues that space and time are not concepts (i.e., general representations) but representations of particulars (B39/A25).

with respect to the understanding, is used to explicate the manner in which constituents of judgement are combined or ordered. With regard to sensible objects, here is how it is understood:

I call that in the appearance which corresponds to sensation its *matter*, but that which allows the manifold of appearance to be intuited as ordered in certain relations I call the *form* of appearance.
(B34)

This passage is from the Transcendental Aesthetic chapter, which concerns Kant's exposition of the concepts of space and time. Kant goes on to argue here that space and time are not only the forms of sensible objects, but a priori forms. But we'll get to this. Let us first understand the suggestion that time is the form of sensible objects or intuitions. In order to see what this claim involves, it will be useful to distinguish it from Kant's contemporary interlocutors, Leibniz and Newton.

Newton views space and time as *things* or *substances*. Space and time are akin to containers in which objects are placed.³ In viewing space and time as the forms of sensible objects, i.e., as the ordering of sensible objects in certain relations, Kant appears to reject such Platonism about space and time. His rejection of the Leibnizian view is more subtle. For Leibniz too looks to relations among objects to answer the question concerning the ontology of space and time. Space and time, for Leibniz, just are the spatiotemporal relations in which objects are placed.

The crucial difference between Leibniz and Kant's relational views can be traced back to Kant's distinction between sensibility and understanding. For Leibniz, spatiotemporal relations between objects can be known through the power of the understanding. Let us take a closer look at this claim.

Consider the possibility a world with only two identical objects, existing simultaneously at an equal distance from each other. Leibniz, using his law of the identity of indiscernibles, famously argued against such a possibility. If two objects possess all the same properties, the law says, then they must be identical. So two objects cannot have all the same properties, as *ex hypothesi* our two objects do, yet remain numerically distinct.

Modern readers might see the law of the identity of indiscernibles as the fatal premise here. But it is worth noting that Kant's objection to it does not involve rejecting this principle. At least not wholesale. We are told, in the appendix to the Transcendental Analytic, that the problem with Leibniz's reasoning is that he conflates the distinction between an object and the concept under which an object falls.

Let us say the object in question is a drop of water, and the possibility under discussion is that of a world with two identical drops of water. Now insofar as the *concept* of a drop of a water is concerned, Kant says, there is no distinction between the concept that applies to *this* drop versus *that* one. And if all we had to go on was the concept of a drop of water, there would indeed be no grounds for making a distinction between the two drops.

³ See here Leibniz's second letter to Clarke in *Modern Philosophy: An Anthology of Primary Sources* (2019)

But we don't just have concepts to go on. What distinguishes the two drops of water is their location in space and time. The spatiotemporal locations of the objects are not given in the mere thought of the object through the concepts it falls under, i.e., through the understanding. This is because space and time belong to sensibility, not the understanding.⁴

The issue for Kant therefore concerns the scope of the identity of law indiscernibles. The law is not invalid. It's just that it only applies to concepts. If two concepts have all the same marks, then there is no grounds for distinguishing them. But spatiotemporal relations cannot be discerned through mere thought of concepts. If what we are trying to ascertain is the possibility of certain spatiotemporal properties—whether two identical drops can exist in a certain space at the same time—then the principles of the understanding, like Leibniz's law of the identity of indiscernibles, is of no use independently of sensible knowledge of spatiotemporal relations. Because space and time are attributed to a distinct faculty, sensibility, the application of concepts of the understanding to this faculty needs to first be established and cannot be taken for granted.

Herein lies the difference between Kant and Leibniz's relational views of space and time. For Leibniz, such relations can be known a priori through the use of the understanding. Kant, in attributing spatiotemporal relations to sensibility, takes away from the intellect the capacity to a priori determine the possibility of any particular set of spatiotemporal relations between objects (e.g., identical drops of water equidistant from each other at the same time). We may sum things up as follows. Where the difference with Newton consists in space and time being the *forms* of sensibility, the difference with Leibniz consists in their being forms of *sensibility*.

What complicates this picture, and in fact seems to bring Kant's view closer to Newton's, is that Kant views space and time are not merely forms of sensible intuition, but intuitions in their own right:

Time is no discursive or, as one calls it, general concept, but a pure form of sensible intuition.

Different times are only parts of one and the same time. That representation, however, which can only be given through a single object, is an intuition. (B47/A31-2)

The view that time is a particular representation in its own right is certainly opposed to the Leibnizian view that time is merely the ordering of representations in temporal relations. This is further reflected in Kant's argument for the a priority of time:

⁴ See, generally, the appendix to the Transcendental Analytic. But in particular, B319/A263: If an object is presented to us several times, but always with the same inner determinations [...] then it is always exactly the same if it counts as an object of pure understanding, not many but only one thing [...] but if it is appearance, then the issue is not the comparison of concepts, but rather, however identical everything may be in regard to that, the difference of the places of these appearances at the same time is still an adequate ground for the *numerical difference* of the object (of the senses) itself. Thus, in the case of the two drops of water one can completely abstract from all inner difference (of quality and quantity), and it is enough that they be intuited in different places at the same time in order for them to be numerically different.

Time is a necessary representation that grounds all intuitions. In regard to appearances in general one cannot remove time, though one can very well take the appearances away from time. Time is therefore given *a priori*. In it alone is all actuality of appearances possible. The latter could all disappear, but time itself, as the universal condition of their possibility, cannot be removed. (B46/A31)

In conceiving of a time as devoid of objects ordered in temporal relations, Kant is taking for granted the possibility of an empty time. If time merely consisted in the temporal relations between objects, such a possibility would be out of the question. What truly distinguishes Kant from Newton, I think, is that Kant does not understand time as subsumable under the concept of a substance. While being the representation of a particular, time is still not a thing or substance in its own right.

A substance, for Kant, is a category, a manner in which objects of experience are unified. As a category, it corresponds to a manner in which constituents of judgement are unified. The correlate of the category of substance in judgement is the notion of a subject in subject-predicate judgements. In order for anything to be a substance, it must be possible to speak of it as a subject in subject-predicate judgements. But this is exactly what we cannot do in time's case. Even though it constitutes an intuition, then, it does not constitute an object subsumable under the category of substance.

Alternatively, we may say that time does not constitute an object because an object is that "in the concept of which the manifold of a given intuition is united." (B37) But because there is no concept under which the manifold of time falls, time does not constitute an object.

Before we close this section, we should say something about the a priori of time. That time is a priori constitutes a key premise of the A-Deduction's argument, as we'll see below. In what follows, we will simply take this claim for granted. What is worth highlighting is the conception of a priority Kant is deploying here. Time is a priori not in the sense that it prior to the acquisition of empirical knowledge, as if the representation of time somehow precedes one's knowledge of objects in time. It is rather that we can abstract away the empirical content contained in time in order to consider the manifold of time by itself, devoid of any empirical content. Time is thus *logically separable* from the empirical content ordered in it, and it is in this sense that it is a priori.

0.2.1. Why Talk About Time

Let us consider a sensible object, presented to us right this moment, merely in its capacity to appear in sensibility, in its capacity to present itself to the senses. To consider an object merely in this capacity is to abstract away from the thought of the object under discursive concepts. What can we say of such an object? We can say the object is given in receptivity now. And... that's it. This is all that the general concept of a *merely* sensible object allows us to say.

An object presented in sensibility now need have no connection with an object presented earlier or later. There is nothing in the general concept of a *merely* sensible object which allows us to infer the relation between an object presented to my senses right now with an object that will be presented at some other moment. This is true not merely for sensible objects of theoretical knowledge, but also of sensible objects of practical knowledge.

Here's what I mean by this. Consider an action merely in its sensible capacity, in its capacity to be ordered in time. What we can say about such an action is that it is what I am doing *now*, and as such, the action does not have any connection to what I will be doing or have done so far. The connection between what I am doing now with my movements past or future are accidentally related to the present.

Why is it important to characterize in such detail how objects are presented to the senses? Kant's argument for synthetic a priori knowledge involves elucidating the necessary and non-accidental relation between moments in time. Drawing on this relation, Kant argues that the empiricistic project of grounding empirical knowledge in sensibility fails. It is through an understanding of this failure that the possibility of synthetic a priori knowledge emerges. The refutation of empiricism involves showing that the bare notion of a sensible object is insufficient to ground the necessary connection between moments in time.

The bare notion of a sensible object cannot ground this connection precisely because a sensible object understood merely in this capacity contains no relation to objects presented at other moments. But the manner in which an object of *knowledge* presents itself in experience requires it to have necessary relations with objects presented at other moments. And as we'll see, there is no way to derive such relations from the merely sensible character of either practical or theoretical objects.

One reason the discussion of time is essential, then, is the role its analysis plays in the refutation of empiricism in the Deduction chapter. From this refutation emerges the possibility of the synthetic a priori. Synthetic a priori knowledge consists in principles of schematism which reflect the unity of time, the representation of a single time in which moments are ordered successively.

0.3. The Charge of Subjective Idealism and the Synthetic A Priori

Part of Kant's argument, given in the Transcendental Deduction chapter of the first *Critique*, is that time, as the form of sensibility, falls under the categories. This shows both that a representation of time is impossible without a priori concepts of the understanding, and that such concepts are capable of delivering knowledge only in applying to the form of sensibility.

It is part of the argument that, even as time falls under the categories, the capacity to judge extends beyond our particular forms of receptivity. So while we cannot *know* states of affairs unordered in time, we can certainly *think* such states of affairs.

A common objection to this argument is the charge of subjective idealism. What the argument establishes, the objection goes, is that any form of sensibility must fall under the categories. But the categories themselves, as forms of thinking, do not determine any *specific* forms of sensibility, e.g., space

and time. So while spatiotemporal objects are necessarily categorized, we cannot know whether categorized objects are necessarily spatiotemporal. This is a problem because it leaves room for the possibility of a thinkable object that is not, in itself, spatiotemporal, yet only appears to be so because space and time happen to be our forms of sensibility. McDowell puts the point as follows:

According to transcendental idealism, our capacities to know things reach only so far, and beyond that boundary there is something we cannot know: namely, whether things themselves are really spatially and temporally ordered. If we cannot know whether things themselves are really spatially and temporally ordered, that undermines the possibility of recognizing as knowledge the supposed knowledge we are supposed to be able to achieve within the boundary. That in turn ensures that the Deduction cannot succeed in vindicating a genuine objectivity for the requirements of the understanding. (2013, p. 79)

And hence the charge of subjective idealism, as opposed to a genuine objective idealism. Responding to the objection involves, first, considering the role of the first-person in the Deduction's argument. The unity of time is grounded in the unity of self-consciousness, in my unity in all my representations:

Now no cognitions can occur in us, no connection and unity among them, without that unity of consciousness that precedes all data of intuitions, and in relation to which all representation of objects is alone possible. This pure, unchanging consciousness I will now name *transcendental apperception*. That it deserves this name is already obvious from this, that even the purest objective unity, namely that of the *a priori* concepts (space and time) is possible only through the relation of the intuitions to it. (A107)

Transcendental apperception is the necessary representation of myself in all my representations. It is the single and unified *I* that accompanies any representation that I can attribute to myself. As we'll see, the character of this self-consciousness must be such that it contains no determinate content; that the 'I' does not refer. Yet it precisely requires such reference if space and time are to be forms peculiar to *my* sensibility in a way that leaves open the possibility of other forms of sensibility.

It is because the 'I' in the Deduction's argument does not refer that there is, in fact, no such possibility. Time is *the* form of sensibility, in the same way forms of judgement are *the* forms of judgement. Even the sheer possibility of other forms of receptivity must be precluded.

What this entails is that the unity of time is identical to the unity of apperception insofar as we can only conceive of time as lacking unity if self-consciousness itself lacks unity. Since the latter is impossible, the former too is impossible. But then knowledge of the unity of time cannot be synthetic.

0.4. Knowledge of The Unity of Time as Analytic

If knowledge of the principles of schematism, insofar it constitutes knowledge of the unity of time, is analytic and not synthetic, then the negation of these principles constitutes a contradiction.

In explicating the notion of self-consciousness in the Deduction's argument, we will uncover the following more general thesis concerning concepts and judgements. In order for a concept to be a genuine concept, there must be the possibility of using it incorrectly. Or equivalently, the possibility of negation must be internal to a judgement. It must be possible, that is, to negate a judgement.

But since principles of the schematism are analytic and thus cannot be negated, they do not constitute judgements. What can be spoken of in a judgement is categorized content. Starting from categorized content, we can abstract away its experiential component in order to consider the mere function of the category. And similarly, we can abstract away from the combinatorial capacities of content in order to highlight the merely experiential content of the judgement. But these processes of abstraction artificial must begin from categorized content. Mere categorial function nor experiential content can be given independent of the other.

We can contrast this view with quite a different one that some philosophers have pulled from the *Critique*. Theoretical knowledge, according to such a view, is the end result of a process of interaction between two separate faculties. Knowledge can thus be viewed as constructed or built from the data of sensation and intellectual concepts, where each of these components may be given independently of the other. Starting from the independent contributions of sensibility and understanding, it is possible to see how knowledge arises through their interaction from the ground up. On this picture, concepts of the understanding are construed as functions that take sensation as input and spit out theoretical knowledge as output. Call this the *functional view* of theoretical knowledge. One advocate of such a view is Lorne Falkenstein (1995):

[Kant] draws a clear distinction between a receptive faculty of the mind, through which the data for the cognitive process are first given, and a faculty responsible for processing—or, as he calls it, synthesizing—these raw data. (p. 10)

Falkenstein conceives of the understanding as an information-processing unit that, like a calculator takes numbers as input, the understanding takes the data of sensation, characterizable as such prior to the application of the concepts of the understanding, as input and performs certain processes on it which result in theoretical knowledge. On this picture, both the categories and the content they categorize are independent of one another in the sense that there can be content without a processing unit that categorizes it, and conversely, there may be an information processing unit without anything to process.

The functional picture of knowledge is incorrect. Or so we will try to show. There is no way, even in principle, to speak of content independently of the concepts of the understanding in judgement. And these concepts cannot be pried apart and made the object of judgement.

0.5. Roadmap

Essay 1 explicates the notion of a category and shows that the unity of the 'I' constitutes the fundamental premise of the Deduction.

Essay 2 lays out the argument of the A-Edition of the Deduction. The aims are two-fold. First, to explicate the connection between the unity of time and the unity of apperception. And secondly, to understand what makes synthetic a priori knowledge possible.

Essay 3 expounds on the nature of self-consciousness in the Deduction's argument to show that the 'I' cannot refer. A further aim here is to explicate the theory of concepts behind this view of self-consciousness, according to which it is internal to a concept that it can be used incorrectly.

Essay 4 considers the charge of subjective idealism and the response to it, in light of the referent-less conception of self-consciousness. It is argued that the response to the charge requires giving up the side-ways on view of self-consciousness, and giving up the possibility of distinct, non-spatiotemporal forms of sensibility. But this is shown to affect the possibility of synthetic a priori knowledge. The theory of judgement from essay 3 is then explicated through Kant's theory of judgement as combination in a single self-consciousness. This leads to the more general point that a priori knowledge of form is inseparable from knowledge of content.

Essay 6 tries to explicate the relation between self-consciousness, as this notion is spelled out in essay 3, with the self as it is space and time. This is done by postulating the content of the empirical self through the category of a disposition. The possibility is then considered if knowledge of this category is synthetic, but it argued that this would, once more, involve a side-ways on view of self-consciousness.

Essay 7 tries to understand the notion of goodness in categorial terms, as the notion that unifies the actions of a practically wise agent. The question is raised whether knowledge of goodness is synthetic, but it is argued that it cannot be. This is followed by the (very speculative) suggestion that the self-consciousness that thinks is identical to the self-consciousness of the *phronimos*.

1. The Notion of a Category and the Unity of Self-Consciousness

Our aim here is to connect the unity of thinking, of the categories, with the unity of self-consciousness. We'll start with the notion of a category, and then argue that objects must necessarily fall under these concepts if there is to be a representation of the unity of self-consciousness.

Now, if you are not well-versed in Kantian metaphysics, or any metaphysics in the Aristotelian tradition for that matter, you may be unfamiliar with the notion of a category.

A category, or pure concept of the understanding, is first introduced to the reader of the first *Critique* in the opening passages of the chapter entitled *The Transcendental Analytic* (A65/B90). Kant lists here three defining features of these creatures:

1. That the concepts be pure and not empirical concepts.
2. That they belong not to intuition and to sensibility, but rather to thinking and understanding.
3. That they be elementary concepts, and clearly distinguished from those which are derived or composed of them.

We'll start with the last point and work our way towards the others. What does it mean for a category to be elementary? Categories are the most general and fundamental concepts that apply to experience and this is precisely what makes them elementary. Let us consider each of these characteristics in turn.

In what sense is a category general? Take the notion of a subject in a subject-predicate judgement. A subject is that to which predicates apply. There's a sense in which being a subject is the most general thing we can say about items that can occupy the subject place of such judgements. Here's one way to elucidate this idea.

The concept of a subject is given in terms of the manner in which constituents of thought may combine with other constituents. A subject is that which is capable of combining in a certain way with predicates, and incapable of combining in certain ways with other subjects. The thoughts we reference in stating these modes of combination cannot be more general than they are. We arrive at these general propositions by considering the highest genus under which they fall. Take, for instance, the sentence:

(1) The patch is red.

We know it is possible for a patch to not merely be red, but also green, or any other color. We can thus say that the thought is a specification of a more general proposition:

(2): The patch is of some color.

In other words, in thinking (1), we also think the more general thought (2). Now, we know it is possible for the patch to not merely be colored, but to be of a certain shape or size. We can attribute any property at all to the patch. (2) is thus an instance of an even more general thought:

(3): The patch has a property.

Such generalization is possible for the patch too. It is not merely the patch, but any object at all that can instantiate a property. At this point, finally, we arrive at the most general thought of which (1) is a specification:

(4): x is F , where x ranges over all possible subjects, and F ranges over all possible predicates.

Concepts like ‘subject’ and ‘predicate’ are, in this sense, the most general modes of combination in thought.

This is the sense in which concepts like ‘subject’ and ‘predicate’ are general. Note that we haven’t yet said anything about categorial concepts. But we’ll get to this. First, let us consider the sense in which a concept like ‘subject’ is fundamental. The identity of a concept—what makes the concept ‘red’ this very concept is the ways in which it can combine with other concepts in sentences. Kant puts the point as follows:

[It] is only because I can combine a manifold of given representations in *one consciousness* that it is possible for me to represent the *identity of the consciousness in these representations* itself, i.e., the *analytical* unity of apperception is only possible under the presupposition of some *synthetic* one. (B133)

The analytical unity of consciousness is the unity of a concept in various judgements. Kant makes this clear in the footnote to the passage just cited:

The analytical unity of consciousness pertains to all common concepts as such, e.g., if I think of *red* in general, I thereby represent to myself a feature that (as a mark) can be encountered in anything, or that can be combined with other representations. (B133n)

The representation of the identity of a concept is thus the representation of a single consciousness in various representations. This unity presupposes a synthetic one, which is the unity of judgements in a single consciousness.

Simply put, it is only in virtue of a concept's belonging to a system of judgements—a single consciousness in which judgements are contained—that a concept is the very concept it is. Which means that the identity of the concept 'red' depends on the system of judgements in which the concept figures:

[1] A representation that is to be thought of as common to *several* must be regarded as belonging to those that in addition to it also have something *different* in themselves; consequently they must antecedently be conceived in synthetic unity with other (even if only possible representations) before I can think of the analytical unity of consciousness in it that makes it into a *conceptus communis*. [2] And thus the synthetic unity of apperception is the highest point one must affix all use of the understanding, even the whole of logic and, after it, transcendental philosophy; indeed this faculty is the understanding itself. (b133n; numbering added)

There's two things to note in this passage. First, the identity of a concept is a function of the manner in which it can combine with other concepts in the entire system of judgement. This resembles the Fregean idea, often referred to as the *context principle*, that "it is only in the context of a proposition that words have any meaning. (§62)" Unlike the Fregean notion, it has wider scope insofar the context which determines the meaning of a concept is not merely the proposition in which it figures in a given instance, but *all* possible judgements in which it can figure. We'll call this the *Kantian* context principle.

That's the first point. The second is that the system of judgements which makes possible the unity of a concept is the system of *my* judgements. It is the single and unified representation of myself in all my judgements that accounts for there being a *system* of judgements, a single consciousness in which all judgements are combined. It is thus that the unity of myself in all my representations that makes possible the unity of a concept. We'll flag this point and return to it later, after we complete our discussion of the fundamentality of formal concepts.

The identity of a concept is given by the manner in which it can combine with other concepts in the totality of judgements. The manner in which this combination occurs is given by the *form* of a concept. For instance, the concept 'red' can combine with *any* other concept as a predicate. It can, in other words, take the place of a predicate in judgements of the form or general description *subject is predicate*. That it can do so is internal to the concept 'red' in the sense that without the capacity to combine as a predicate, it would not be the concept that it is.

Some terminology might be useful here. The notion of form is opposed to the notion of content. The form of a judgement indicates the manner in which its constituent concepts, its content or matter, is combined. So if we have the judgement, 'cats are green', 'cat' and 'green' constitute the matter which is

combined in accordance with the form *subject is predicate*. The notion of a subject or predicate can thus be labelled a *formal concept*, indicating that a formal concept reflects the manner in which a material concept falling under it combines with other material concepts in judgement.

Here's another way to distinguish among formal and material concepts. A material concept, like 'green', may be expressed through a function $G(x)$. As a predicate, the concept applies to a domain of particular intuitions x in the sense that without supplying an intuition, the predicate itself remains unsaturated or incomplete, which is to say that it acquires significance only when a value for x is given. Now, the formal concept of a predicate, unlike a particular predicate-concept, is not given through a function. Rather, this formal concept is expressed through a special variable for functions themselves, Φx . This variable expresses the general functionality of predicates, and unlike particular predicates, which are functions, does not take any arguments for x .

With the distinction between form and content, formal concepts and material concepts, in place, we can return to the issue of the fundamentality of formal concepts. Formal concepts are in this sense fundamental. They are internal to material concepts insofar as it is internal to the identity of a material concept that it falls under a certain formal concept, that it combines with other material concepts in such and such ways. When any representation is claimed fundamental, the question always arises: Fundamental to what? And here we have an answer. Formal concepts fundamental to the identity of a material concept, to the constituents of judgement.

We can see here that the generality of a formal concept is tied to its fundamentality. A formal concept is the most general concept a material concept can fall under precisely because such a concept indicates a form thinking can take. And because material concepts are concepts of thought, they must partake in such a form in order to be constituents of thought.

So much so for formal concepts. Now, Kantian categories are analogues of such concepts in experience. The manner in which concepts combine in judgement, for Kant, is at the same time the manner in which objects or constituents of states of affairs combine:

The same function that gives unity to the different representations in a judgment also gives unity to the mere synthesis of different representations in an intuition, which expressed generally, is called the pure concept of the understanding. (B105)

The meaning of a concept, we've seen, is given by the manner in which it can combine with other concepts in judgement. And since the unity of judgement and the unity of intuition are ascribed to the same function, there is an analogue to this in experience. The content of a judgement, what a judgement refers or corresponds to in experience, is a state of affairs. These states of affairs have an internal structure that corresponds to the internal structure of judgements. To think 'the cat is courteous' is to think a state of affairs or situation that may or may not obtain in the world of experience, namely, *the cat is courteous*.

And in the same way the judgement contains a subject-concept and a predicate-concept, the situation judged contains a substance and accident. Since the identity of the subject-concept ('cat') depends on the manner in which it combines with other material concepts in the entire system of judgements, the identity of the substance (*cat*) too depends on the manner in which it combines with other objects in the entire system of states of affairs, the whole of experience.

Why must the unity of judgement and the unity of an intuition be ascribed to the same function? There are multiple ways of arriving at this thought, and here's one of them. An object, for Kant, is that in the concept of which a manifold of intuition is united (B137). Why is this the case? Because intuitions, insofar as they are my representations, must necessarily be thinkable:

The *I think* must be able to accompany all my representations, for otherwise something would be represented in me that could not be thought at all. (B132)

Because intuitions are necessarily thinkable, they are necessarily subsumable under material concepts which are unified with other such concepts in judgement. Now, if we understand the totality of states of affairs which constitute experience as concatenations of objects, then states of affairs must bear the same form as judgements do if objects are to necessarily fall under material concepts. If formal concept is our label for a concept like *subject* or *predicate* which reflects a form thinking can take, then categories are correlates of formal concepts in states of affairs or experience, a form experience can take.

A category's deployment in experience is thus always correlated to some form of judgement. The categories of *substance* and *accident*, for example, correspond to the formal concepts *subject* and *predicate*, respectively. It is internal to a substance or sortal, as opposed to a property or accident, that its correlate in language—the name that stands for it— can possibly figure in the subject-place of judgements of the form, *subject is predicate*.

The kind of object something is is thus determined by its capacity to combine with other objects in states of affairs. For a cat to be a cat it must be possible for it to combine with other objects in certain ways and not others. The following propositions from the *Tractatus* may be useful in elucidating this point:

2.01 A state of affairs (a state of things) is a combination of objects (things).

2.011 It is essential to things that they should be possible constituents of states of affairs.

2.012 In logic nothing is accidental: if a thing *can* occur in a state of affairs, the possibility of the state of affairs must be written into the thing itself.

Because the identity of an object depends on the states of affairs in which it is combined with other objects, that it can so combine is essential to the object. The object cannot, as it were, be held apart from

these states of affairs in a way that “it turned out that a situation would fit a thing that could already exist entirely on its own. (2.0121)” Such a possibility requires objects to be given independently of the situations in which they combine with other objects.

Here’s another way to make the same point.

Logic textbooks typically characterize the internal structure of states-of-affairs (say, *all cats are courteous*) in first-order logic as:

$$\forall x(Cat(x) \rightarrow Courteous(x))$$

This characterization is misleading in the following sense. The cat and mat are not unified by something *other than themselves*. That is, there is no need for logical symbols as further items that bind or glue objects together. This combinatorial capacity is internal to the object. Wittgenstein says on this point:

2.03. In a state of affairs objects fit into one another like the links of a chain.

Like the links of a chain, objects contain the gaps necessary for fitting into certain states of affairs. These gaps are internal to an object insofar as they constitute its identity. A corollary of this claim is that there is nothing besides objects, like a logical connective, that is necessary to explain an object’s fitting into a situation. Like puzzle pieces, objects contain the capacity to combine with other objects in states of affairs in themselves. Colin Johnston (2007) explains this point as follows:

In an atomic fact [state of affairs] objects *hang one in another*, like the links of a chain. The objects of an atomic fact are not held together by some further copula: rather, *they hold themselves together*. They are not ball bearings held together with some glue, but links of a chain holding each other together...

Because objects contain their capacity to glue with other objects in themselves, we cannot identify them as the kinds of objects they are *apart from this capacity*, apart from the states of affairs in which they figure. The combinatorial capacities of *the cat*, the categories it falls under, are essential to its identity.

Now, knowledge of a cat as a substance is internal to knowledge of a cat. It is internal to a cat that it can combine in the manner of a substance. In coming to know how cats combine with other objects in states of affairs, I come to possess knowledge not merely of cats, but also knowledge of substances, since a cat just is a kind of substance. Knowledge of categorial form is, other words, internal to knowledge of states of affairs.

We've said something about how categories constitute elementary concepts. It should also, I hope, be clear why such concepts belong to the understanding and not sensibility. Categories are forms experience might take. Insofar as the understanding is the faculty of thinking, forms of judgement belong to the understanding, and because the categories are reflections of these very forms of judgement, they belong to the understanding and not sensibility. Now for the final point: In what sense are the categories a priori?

Maybe one can say something along the following lines. What is known is that certain sensible content falls under a certain category. But we can distinguish between this content, the receptive or sensible part of an object, from the combinatorial capacities of the category under which the content is subsumed. Knowledge of the manner in which an object may combine with other objects can be considered apart from the knowledge of particular sensible content in an intuition. It is knowledge of this bare combinatorial capacity that constitutes the identity of a category.

But such a maneuver would involve distinguishing between an object and the combinatorial capacities that constitute its identity conditions. The combinatorial powers of a cat, recall, constitute its identity. Since categorial form is internal to states of affairs, coming to know these states of affairs just is coming to know categorial form. To consider an object as distinct from the category it falls under thus entails thinking of it as independent of its capacity to combine with other objects in states of affairs. But this would involve thinking of an object as a ball-bearing and not as the link of a chain. Since it is internal to an object that it can combine with other objects in certain ways in states of affairs, one cannot consider the object independently of the category it falls under. We thus cannot conceive of an object merely in its sensible capacity, apart from the manner in which it combines with other objects.

It is possible to see the project of the Deduction as an attempt to establish this claim. Kant wants to say here that the synthetic unity of consciousness guarantees that the categories have objective validity, by which is meant that the categories are necessary for the representation of an object *as an object*. It is not merely that objects, for us, must fall under these concepts, but that there is no notion of an object, no notion of content, apart from the notion of categorized content:

The synthetic unity of consciousness is therefore an objective condition of all cognition, not merely something I myself need in order to cognize an object but rather something under which every intuition must stand *in order to become an object for me*, since in any other way, and without this synthesis, the manifold would *not* be united in one consciousness. (B138)

The point is that an object, in order to be an object at all, must constitute thinkable states of affairs, situations with the structure of judgement. The Deduction does *not* seek to establish the much weaker point that some pre-existing content, in order to enter my cognition, must fall under the categories. This would be a conception of content as capable of a category-free existence with the categories functioning

like eyeglasses, allowing us to grasp what is already there. But such merely subjective validity is not what Kant is after. The aim is to show that there are no objects apart from categorized objects, no content at all which do not fall under the categories.

If this aim is successful, and if we assume that theoretical knowledge is of independently existing objects, then we should say that what is given to a knowing subject is an object that, as an object, already falls under the categories. The object of theoretical knowledge is not some merely sensible, pre-categorical content that is first given in sensibility and then operated upon by the categories in order to constitute an object for me.

A better argument for the a priori status of categorial knowledge is that the categories are experiential correlates of forms of judgement. Forms of thinking are a priori insofar as they constitute a condition of what it is for something to be a representation—the ‘I think,’ recall, must be able to accompany all my representations. One does not acquire or come to know forms of judgement in judging something. It is rather a condition of there being content in the first place that it is subsumable under formal concepts (subject, predicate, etc.) And similarly, it is not the case that I come to know that there are substances in being affected by objects. This knowledge isn’t acquired from the world. It is, rather, a precondition of there being a world in the first place that there are substances. This is the sense in which knowledge of the categories constitutes a priori knowledge.

Here’s where we are at. We tried to shed some light on the notion of a category, the sense in which they are the most general and fundamental concepts that apply to objects. As reflections in experience of forms of judgements, they belong to the understanding and not sensibility. And insofar as forms of judgements are a priori, the categories too constitute a priori concepts.

We should now return to the point we flagged earlier—the sense in which it is *my* system of judgements that accounts for the unity of a concept. The single consciousness in which judgements are combined in order to constitute a unified system of judgements that account for the identity of a concept is my self-consciousness. The first point to note is the correlate of this in experience. The unity of an object derives from the unity of my experience, or the unity of the totality of my states of affairs. It is in my single self-consciousness that constitutes the totality of experience, and because the identity of an object is grounded in the manner in which it combines with other objects in this totality, it is my unity, the unified representation of myself accounts for the possibility of objects.

The second point worth noting is the manner in which the self-consciousness grounds the unity of objects. Intuitions are necessarily thinkable precisely because the ‘I think’ must be able to accompany them. Objects must fall under concepts, and thus fall under the categories, precisely because their representation is *mine* and thus belongs to my self-consciousness. Unless the ‘I think’ was able to accompany all my representations of objects, there would be no sense in which these representations would be mine, which is as much to say that there would be no representation of objects, and thus no objects at all.

Self-consciousness thus has two unifying functions. The first is to unify language, as the totality of judgements. In unifying language, it makes possible the identity of concepts and makes it necessary that concepts always fall under formal concepts. The second is to unify an object, as a constituent of states of affairs. In unifying an object, it makes it necessary that objects fall under material concepts, and thus fall under the categories. We can describe this second function in a manner that makes it analogous to the first. It is in virtue of the unity of self-consciousness that there is a single, unified experience. This experience, precisely because it is contained in the single consciousness of myself, must be thinkable, and thus, regardless of its content, take the only forms that thinking can take.

Of course, the question may arise—why is the unity of self-consciousness necessary? Can I not imagine an individual as composed of a series of distinct yet unrelated consciousnesses? If it is possible to even raise this question, how can we ascribe the unity of an object, of experience, and of language to the unity of the self? Answering this question takes us beyond the scope of this essay. Our aim here was merely shed light on the notion of a category, and to trace the necessity of this concept, the necessity that is, of objects falling under this concept, to the unity of self-consciousness. Categorical unity, the unity an object has in virtue of falling under the categories, is thus the unity of self-consciousness. We will return to the question of the necessity of the unity of the self in essay six, where it will be shown that the only representation of the self that is possible is as unified.

2. Why Believe There is Synthetic A Priori Knowledge

My aim in this essay is to present some Kantian considerations for the view that there is synthetic a priori knowledge. The paper is divided into two sections. Section one starts with the project of empiricism of founding empirical knowledge in what is given through sensation. The argument of the A-Deduction is then presented, according to which empiricism's project flounders because it cannot account for the unity of time. The conclusion of the argument is that there must be synthetic a priori principles which make possible the unity of time.

Section two applies A-Deduction's argument to the case of action. Connecting these to Sebastian Rödl's argument against a desire-centric theory of motivation, it is shown that the representation of the unity of time must be such that it makes possible the unity of action. This again gives yet another reason to posit synthetic a priori principles that constitute the unity of time.

2.1. Synthetic A Priori Knowledge in Theoretical Reason

Empiricism aims to ground the concepts, or general representations, in the representation of intuitions, or particular representations. Let's unpack this. First, what is to represent a particular? To represent a particular requires the capacity to point to something in thought and say, "I am representing *that*." The representation of a concept, on the other hand, is a representation that can possibly apply to various

particulars. To represent a concept requires the capacity to point to some common feature *F* of individuals and say, “those *F*s.”

Now, second, why is an empiricist committed to grounding the representation of concepts in the representation of intuitions? We said above that the understanding is the domain of concepts or general representations. The business of one’s rational faculties is to supply such representations. Sensibility, conversely, is the domain of particular representations—intuitions. An intuition is that *to which* concepts apply. If, as empiricists, our aim is to elucidate empirical thought by appealing to the data of sense, then we must be committed to grounding concepts in intuition.

Here is one way the empiricistic story might go. What one represents first is a series of individual *sensations*, where this term refers generally to the data given in sensibility. Some sort of logical labor is then expended on these particulars to produce concepts. The logical labor in question may involve isolating features common among particulars and leaving aside the others. The view that concepts are formed through such a process of abstraction may simply be called *abstractionism*. An example of this view is found in Russell’s *Problems of Philosophy*:

When we see a white patch, we are acquainted, in the first instance, with the particular patch; but seeing many white patches, we easily learn to abstract the whiteness which they all have in common, and in learning to do this we are learning to be acquainted with whiteness. A similar process will make us acquainted with any other universal of the same sort. (Chapter X)

On the empiricist’s picture of knowledge, particulars are thus epistemically prior to concepts insofar as it is possible to ground the representation of the latter in representation of the former. If sensibility is to take on this grounding role, if intuitions are to be epistemically prior to concepts, then it must be possible to represent intuitions as intuitions without the use of concepts.

So, the question is, how are the particulars of sensibility represented independently of concepts? For this to be a plausible approach, it needs to be the case that the sensible qualities of objects are capable of being represented as concept-free particulars. Let me clarify what this means.

Say I am sensing a white patch at time *t*. This sensation is represented as a unity—as *a* white patch. One way to represent the unity of this sensation is through the concept of the color in question—“I am pointing to the thing with the white color.” But as we’ve seen, for the empiricist, such concept-based reference does not constitute the epistemically basic cases. The empiricist instead wants to say something along the following lines.

While we certainly possess color-concepts, and sensation-concepts more generally, we can have sensations without possessing such concepts. This point is often stated with reference to epistemically deficient subjects. A child or chihuahua might be able to see white things without possessing the concept of whiteness. In fact, the empiricist might press on, it is in virtue of seeing white things—that is, white

particulars— that we are able to acquire the general concept of whiteness. But in our initial pre-conceptual perceptions of the color, the representation of whiteness does not yet possess the generality of a concept. What is represented in such cases is not a particular instantiating the concept of whiteness, but a white particular.

Acquiring the general property of whiteness therefore requires the capacity to represent particular instances of whiteness. The only option I can think of for such individuation is through the time at which a sensation is given in sensibility. A sensation tells me about its object at a particular time. My knowledge of whiteness-as-a-particular at t is given by a sensation of whiteness at t . I am thus able to say at t , “I am *now* sensing *that*.” But this knowledge is restricted to the moment of sensation. If at a subsequent moment t' I am also representing something white, this is because the sensation *at that time* tells me so. It is thus necessary to represent particulars, in the first instance, as ordered in time and distinguished from one another by their moment of apprehension:

Every intuition contains a manifold in itself, which however would not be represented as such if the mind did not distinguish the time in the succession of impressions on one another; for *as contained in one moment* no representation can ever be anything other than absolute unity. Now in order for the *unity* of intuition to come from this manifold [...] it is necessary first to run through and then to take together this manifoldness, which action I call the *synthesis of apprehension*. (A99)

Particulars, insofar as they are individuated by moments in time are, in their moment of representation, unified representations—individuals. In distinguishing the time in the succession of representations, the mind needs to distinguish these unities from one another.

The question here arises: how does the mind distinguish between these unities? In order to represent a particular in a moment *as a particular*, and thus pry apart the data of sensation given at a moment from the data of sensation given at other moments, the mind needs to be able to take together this data as a whole. Here's Heidegger⁵ on this point:

Thus Kant perceives the phenomenological states of affairs in relation to the offering of what is intuitive as follows: At first there are lots of such absolute and unique impressions; no manifold of impressions insofar as we are limited only to a “now this” and then, as it were, come across another now. Now if this offering of isolated unities is to turn into a multiplicity, that is, into the unity of an empirical intuition, then a unification is needed. (p. 234)

⁵ Heidegger may seem to be an odd choice here given his idiosyncratic phenomenological interpretation of Kant. I am generally following Longuenesse (1999, p. 36) in interpreting the threefold synthesis of the A-Deduction in phenomenological terms. While Heidegger's interpretation of the *Critique* as a whole goes wrong in many places, it is correct in its analysis of this section of the A-Deduction.

The unification of representations through time is at once a unification of an intuition *at a time* precisely because, as Heidegger goes on to say, the grasping of intuitions at moments in time is not merely “grasping of a whole lot of nows that have no relation to each other. Rather each now as now, in order to be intuited as what it is, requires to be taken together with other nows.” The unity of an intuition at a time thus depends on the capacity to take together the manifold of intuition *through* time, ordering representations in a sequence of nows, and thereby distinguish between the nows that individuate each representation.

The synthesis of apprehension, as Kant calls it, is inextricably linked with the *synthesis of reproduction*. This is the capacity of the mind to bring forth representations that *were* at some moment apprehended, but are no longer now affecting one’s sensibility.

It is clear how the two syntheses are linked. For representations to be placed in a determinate temporal order, a representation that is no longer present to the mind must be capable of being represented as what was once present but is now past:

Now it is obvious that if I draw a line in thought, or think of the time from one noon to the next, or even want to represent a certain number to myself, I must necessarily first grasp one of these manifold representations after another in my thoughts. But if I were to always lose the preceding representations (the first parts of the line, the preceding parts of time, or the successively represented units) from my thoughts and not reproduce them when I proceed to the following ones, then no whole representation and none of the previously mentioned thoughts, not even the purest and most fundamental representations of space and time, could ever arise. (A102)

The synthesis of reproduction is the capacity to combine past and present representations together in a single representation of time. Ordering representations successively involves holding together what is past and what is present in a single consciousness, which makes possible the representation of a single temporal order. But there’s no sense in which a past representation belongs in a single consciousness with a present representation unless these can be related together. Related how? It must be possible to recognize the identity among past and present representations.

To say representations belong in a single consciousness is to say that they are knitted together in a way that I can be aware of them together. This awareness entails that I am able to recognize whether the representations bear any resemblance to each other. It must be possible, in other words, for the mind to grasp the identity of its representations through time. Once more, to quote Heidegger:

If what is empirically offered in each case in a now would simply slip away from the passing away of the now, then the mind would never have the possibility of reaching out and back for

something which has existed already, except when mind intuits the same again. But then in fact mind would intuit the respective thing for the second time but not *as the same* thing. (p. 238)

The capacity to intuit something as the same as what came before is thus inseparable and presupposed in the capacity to hold together what is given in the present with the past.

Now, in recalling a past representation and recognizing it as identical with what is present, I must be aware of a *rule* that relates the representations together. Recognizing representations as identical over time is not arbitrary insofar as not just any representation can be held identical with another. There must be, then, a rule that governs this relation; a rule according to which representations can be recognized as identical.

Of course, what is in fact recognized as identical is an empirical matter. The point is not that I must in fact recognize representations as identical over time; rather, the possibility of this recognition must be contained in the apprehension of a representation. Even if it is not necessary that, for instance, a triangle which is perceived now is never perceived again due to the contingencies of my circumstances, it must be possible that in the apprehension of a triangle now I recognize a rule—that three lines are connected in such a way that their internal angles add up to 180 degrees—that I can use to relate this present representation of the triangle with a triangle I *might* apprehend in the future.

The possibility of reproduction thus presupposes apprehension of representations in accordance with a *time-general* rule—a rule that can allow one to determine the identity of representations over time. Such a rule is just Kant's definition of a concept. We can thus say that the apprehension of a representation and its ordering in time requires the capacity to subsume the representation under a concept such that the same concept can be used to subsume another object under it in the future:

All cognition requires a concept, however imperfect or obscure it may be; but as far as its form is concerned the latter is always something general, and something that serves as a rule. (A106)

The rules that govern the apprehension of representations are empirical insofar as their *matter* is concerned. But it is a priori that representations conform to the *form* of a rule. It is a priori, in other words, that representations have the form that makes possible reproduction and re-identification.

How should we understand such a form? Imagine being given, at successive moments, two patches of white. In order to relate these representations to one another as instances of whiteness, I need the capacity to think of predicates in general. While the thought of whiteness as a property constitutes the empirical rule that relates these representations to each other, the thought of predicates in general, as the *y* that can be attributed to objects, is the a priori form of the rule that is needed in order to come up with empirical laws of reproduction.

Take another example. Let us say I am presented in experience with an apple at t and another apple at t' . In order to relate these representations to one another and come up with the concept of an apple, I need the capacity to think of objects in general—an x to which predicates apply. Without this form, I cannot think of objects and thus cannot come up with empirical rules connecting objects through time.

Why must the form of a rule be a priori? The form of a subject or predicate is just the capacity to think of objects as subjects or predicates. But this is just the form of thought *simpliciter*. There is no sense in which the forms of judgement can be other than what they are if they are to be recognizable as forms of *thought*. No matter how experience is structured, it must conform to such forms of thought if experience is to be possible. To conceive of forms of thinking as derived from experience is to think that, were experience otherwise, thinking would take forms other than what they are. But it is unclear what we are to make of this counterfactual.

Let us, for a moment, grant the possibility of experience as being something other than what can be thought. There would be no sense in which such an experience could give rise to forms of thought other than what they are. If such an experience did not already correspond to the forms of thinking, the experience itself would be unthinkable, which is to say the possibility of such an experience is not a real possibility. For forms of thinking to be empirical there must be the real possibility of experience independently giving rise to these forms, and thus it must be conceivable for experience to be other than what it is, giving rise to forms of thinking other than what they are. Because this counterfactual is incomprehensible, we cannot understand the forms of thinking as hanging on the forms of experience.

It is important to note *why* the capacity for reproducing past representations according to a rule is necessary. Without it, it would be impossible to order representations in time. It is the unity of time itself that is at stake. Ordering representations in a single determinate temporal order requires the capacity to reproduce a past representation as something that is related to a present representation in a single consciousness, in the same way that the drawing of a line requires reproducing the parts of a line already drawn as parts of a single line.

The unity of time thus depends on the a priori form of a rule. The representation of this unity requires the capacity to represent the manifold of intuition as a manifold and order representations in time, in the succession of nows. But this in turn requires the capacity to reproduce past representations according to a rule. Without such a capacity to unite representations in a single consciousness, the possibility of determining representations in a single temporal order would be lost. For unifying representations in a sequence of nows just is the capacity to synthesize in a single consciousness—the capacity, that is, to recognize that the series of nows constitute a single unified time.

In order to bring to the fore the connection between the a priori form of a rule and the question of the representation of the unity of time, we can understand the structure of the A-Deduction as follows. The apprehension of an intuition is an empirical matter, insofar as what is apprehended is something

empirical. But this empirical apprehension presupposes an a priori apprehension of the pure intuition of time. Time, we noted in the introduction, is not only the form of sensible intuition, but an intuition in its own right, and what distinguishes it from the sensible intuitions ordered in it is its a priority. Its apprehension is therefore an a priori apprehension.

Similarly, the reproduction of intuitions-past is an empirical reproduction insofar as what is reproduced is an empirical representation. But this empirical reproduction requires the reproduction of past moments of time, and because time is an a priori intuition, this reproduction must in turn be a priori.

The reproduction of past representations, because it is a reproduction in accordance with a rule, requires the recognition of such a rule in one's representations. But such a rule, gathered from empirical representations, is an empirical rule. Yet the reproduction of moments in time, which is a priori, cannot be in accordance with an empirical rule, and the concept used to determine the a priori representation of time must therefore be an a priori concept. Here's Kant on this point:

The possibility of an experience in general and cognition of its objects rests on three subjective sources of cognition, *sense, imagination, and apperception*; each of these can be considered empirically, namely in application to given appearances, but they are also elements or foundations *a priori* that make this empirical use possible. *Sense* represents the appearances empirically in *perception*, the *imagination* in association (and reproduction), and *apperception* in the *empirical consciousness* of the identity of these reproductive representations with the appearances through which they were given, hence in *recognition*.

But the pure intuition (with regard to it as representation, time, the form of inner intuition) grounds the totality of perception *a priori*; the pure synthesis of the imagination grounds association *a priori*; and pure apperception, i.e., the thoroughgoing identity of oneself in all possible representations, grounds empirical consciousness *a priori*. (A115-6)

We have, I hope, said enough to make clear the connection between sense, imagination, and recognition. But the connection between recognition in a concept and apperception calls for more discussion. Insofar as a rule or concept that applies to an intuition is general, in the sense that it may apply to intuitions-past and intuitions-future, its use involves a synthesis of these intuitions in my single self-consciousness. This is the dependence of the analytical unity of consciousness on a prior synthetic unity which we noted in the previous essay.

The single self-consciousness in which such combination occurs is empirical insofar as the concept whose analytical unity is in question is itself empirical. But the synthetic unity of empirical self-consciousness presupposes an a priori synthetic unity insofar as the *possibility* of a synthetic unity of empirical self-consciousness requires a single a priori self-consciousness in which all representations are

combined. This pure apperception is what makes possible the application of empirical concepts through time.

Before we close this section, it is worth noting the resemblance between the above Kantian line of reasoning to Wittgensteinian or Sellarian criticisms of private ostensive definition and the Myth of the Given.

Suppose that concepts are grounded in the brute reception of some non-conceptual Given. The question then is: *how* are concepts supposed to be derived from this manifold? It is internal to a concept that it is something general and thus applies not merely here in this episode of experience, but can possibly be deployed in other instances in which I am presented with an identical bit of manifold. This requires the capacity to judge one bit of the Given as being identical to another. That is, it requires the capacity for demonstrative reference—the capacity to say that *this* thing here is the same (or not) as *that*. In Kant’s language, there must be a possibility of reproduction in accordance with rules. Because the given manifold is entirely non-conceptual, my pointing cannot grip onto anything. In response to the question, “What are you pointing to?” I cannot say, “that thing right there,” for there is no notion of a *thing* I have access to, that I can deploy and re-deploy in judgement, in order for the act of reference to be successful.

If there is to be the possibility of pointing to something in the manifold, it must be the possibility of re-identifying what is pointed to again. This means the manifold must be subject to, must conform to, the a priori form of a rule which makes such re-identification possible.

2.1.1. How Synthesis Determines a Time-Series

The reader may wonder, at this point, just how the unification and ordering of a manifold of nows in a single time-series is supposed to occur in accordance with the form of thinking. Kant’s own exposition in the *Critique* requires him to postpone the discussion of such details until the Analogies, but no such restrictions apply here. In order to clarify how such time-determination occurs, consider the notion of a substance.

Substances, for Kant, are objects whose correlate in language—expressions that refer to them—can occupy the subject-place of judgements of the form, *subject is predicate*. At the same time, substances are objects which determine a time-series. That is, it is substances that determine what counts as moving from past, to present, to future:

The schema of substance is the persistence of the real in time, i.e., the representation of the real as a substratum of empirical time-determination in general, which therefore endures as everything else changes. (Time itself does not lapse, but the existence of that which is changeable elapses in it.) (A144)

The point, in a sense, is quite simple. Time does not itself constitute a substantive, something that exists in experience as an objective measure of change. Representations of time are thus determined through acts of synthesis in accordance with the concept of substance.

Knowledge of time, then, is not given prior to knowledge of substances, but can only be acquired through knowledge of the latter. Kant's clearest, jargon-free statement of this thesis comes from the First Analogy:

Now time cannot be perceived by itself. Consequently it is in the objects of perception, i.e., the appearances, that the substratum must be encountered that represents time in general and in which all change or simultaneity can be perceived...(B225)

To see why we need such a substratum to represent time, imagine there wasn't one. This is to imagine a manifold to which *no* concept or principle or individuation can be applied. It makes no sense to say, confronted with this manifold, that one impression succeeds another. This would require individuating an impression *as an impression*. Which is just to say that we would require a concept to isolate a bit of the manifold, demonstratively refer to it ('*That* succeeds *this*'), in order to assign it a determinate place in the order of succession.

Without the concept of substance, all we are left with is Heraclitean flux from which *no* order of succession or simultaneity, and thus no knowledge of time, can be derived. Without concepts, in other words, there is nothing for a demonstrative to grip onto. We would be unable to point to something in experience and say it is happening now, was preceded by *that* and will be followed by *this*.

What makes necessary the unity of an object through time is that representations of time are possible only in virtue of this unity. Without an identical object acting as substratum there is no possibility of a determinate temporal order—a sequence of representations from past, to present, to future.

This is the sense, then, in which the determination of a temporal order occurs in accordance with the forms of judgement. Substances, in determining a time-series, at the same time make possible the thought of an object as a subject in subject-predicate judgements. Insofar as a form of thinking, which in this case is the notion of a subject in a subject-predicate judgement, determines the representation of time, it is called a *schema*. A schema is a mediating element between the understanding and sensibility in the sense that they reflect the manner in which a priori rules of the understanding apply to sensibility, and in this application make possible the cognition of a sensible object.

The concept of the understanding contains pure synthetic unity of the manifold in general. Time, as the formal condition of the manifold of inner sense, thus of the connection of all representations, contains an *a priori* manifold in pure intuition. Now a transcendental time-determination is homogenous with the *category* (which constitutes its unity) insofar as it is

universal and rests on a rule *a priori*. But it is on the other hand homogenous with the *appearance* insofar as *time* is contained in every empirical representation of the manifold. Hence an application of the category to appearances becomes possible by means of the transcendental time-determination which, as the schema of the concept of the understanding, mediates the subsumption of the latter under the former. (B177-8/A138-9)

The point is this. Categories, as forms of thinking, are necessary for the cognition of all objects of experience because all objects of experience need to be ordered in time, which is the form of sensibility. *A priori* forms of thinking make cognition of sensible objects possible precisely insofar as they make possible the ordering of these objects in their sensible form through schemas.

2.2. Synthetic A Priori Knowledge of Action

I would like to now show that analogous considerations apply to practical reason. The performance of an action is always a performance in time. The following remark concerning the relation between representations and time thus applies to action inasmuch as it applies to objects of theoretical knowledge:

Whatever the origin of our representations, whether they are due to the influence of outer things, or are produced through inner causes, whether they arise *a priori*, or being appearances have an empirical origin, they must all, as modifications of the mind, belong to inner sense. All our knowledge is thus finally subject to time, the formal condition of inner sense. In it they must all be ordered, connected, and brought into relation. (A99)

Now, as in the theoretical case, we can see each moment, each now, in the performance of an action, as by itself isolated and unconnected to the just-past-now and the not-yet-now. The question is: What makes possible the relation of succession between these moments, such that the now succeeds the just-past-now and is succeeded by the not-yet-now? The manifold of nows, in other words, needs to be represented as a manifold, which makes possible the representation of a sequence of successive moments.

The representation of a manifold as a manifold involves distinguishing the now from what is past and will be future, which are related to it by succession. The representation of a manifold is thus necessary for the individuation and representation of the present moment.

Ordering moments in time in a determinate sequence of succession requires the capacity to reproduce past moments so that they can be so ordered with the present. This reproduction must take place in accordance with the form of a rule which makes action possible.

In the performance of an action, I must be able to identify what I am doing now as the very same thing as what I was doing earlier. It must be possible, in reproducing past representations, that action *then*

is identifiable as the action *now*. This capacity to identify a representation, over time, as the very same representation involves the use of a concept.

Why must this capacity to recognize representations as the same involve the distinctive form of an action? What is to say that a concept has such a form? To understand what is meant by this, we should consider Sebastian Rödl's criticism of desire-centric theories of action, according to which my actions at a time rest on what I desire most at that time.

Let us say such a theory is correct, and what motivates an agent to do what she does is what she desired most at the time of action. Now, what is most desirable to an agent is liable to change. What is most desirable to me now may not be what is most desirable later. Desires are, what Rödl calls, *changeable states*. For something to be a changeable state, any duration is accidental.⁶ It is internal to a desire that it is such a state since nothing about a desire, as a desire, tells me whether it will persist through time, and thus any actual persistence is accidental to the desire itself.

Because a desire constitutes a changeable state, an action resting on such a desire must also constitute a changeable state. My reason for doing *A* is that doing *A* satisfies my desires most right now, and if *A* stops satisfying my desires most at a later time, if the desire for *A* does not persist, then I would stop doing *A*. Any duration of the action, like the desire on which it rests, is thus accidental.

But this cannot be correct. If I have an interval during which *x* is *F* and *x*'s being *F* constitutes a changeable state, then were I to split this interval in two, it would be accidental to *x*'s being *F* in the first interval that it is followed by *x*'s being *F* in the second—there is nothing that makes it necessary that *x* which is *F* now will continue being *F* later, even if it in fact does.

But the same cannot be said for action. Say I am performing an action, raising my arm above my head, and it takes me ten minutes to do this. If, after the first five minutes, I continue raising my arm, this will not be because I accidentally happen to be doing this, but because the action itself singles out this end. It is internal to raising my arm above my head that I aim for this end, and thus not only raise my arm now but continue doing this later until my arm is above my head. What I will do, what I am doing is, and what I have so far done are, in this sense, connected by the aim of raising my arm above my head. These constitute phases of one and the same action, unified by the end internal to the action into a non-accidental unity. Here's Rödl on this point:

[Suppose] something is doing *A*. It has done something toward this, as it is on its way. But it is not there yet; it has not yet done *A*. Now there are two possibilities: the movement may end incomplete, or it may continue and progress towards its completion. These possibilities are not on a par. If they were, the concept of doing *A*, which singles out one of them, would not bear on the situation. It would not be true that *x* is doing *A*, but only that it has done what it has done so far.

Thus there is a non-accidental unity of the phase it has completed and the phase following it by

⁶ Rödl, 2007, p. 30.

which it progresses toward having done *A*. An interval during which something was doing *A* is a unity of such intervals. (p. 30-31)

That I am doing *A* now is thus non-accidentally connected with what I was doing and what I will be doing, insofar as the end of the action unifies these moments into the phases of a single action—*A*. Moments in time must thus be ordered and connected in a sequence that make such a unity possible, that makes it possible to represent the non-accidental unity between what I was doing, am doing, and will be doing, as representations of one and the same action. Unless moments in time are apprehended and reproduced in this manner, it will be impossible to say that I am *doing* anything. All we would be able to say, were such a situation to obtain, is that “I have done what I have done so far. (ibid.)”

Representation of the unity of an action through its phases thus requires apprehending what I am doing now, reproducing what I have so far done, and connecting these together in a single determinate series with the representation of what I will do but have not yet done. This synthesis must be in accordance with the a priori form of an action that makes possible the representation of the non-accidental unity of the phases of an action.

The a priori form of an action—and here we are moving beyond Rödl—is akin to a categorial schema insofar as it constitutes a transcendental determination of time—an a priori rule for the ordering of moments in time. Knowledge of the schema as such is knowledge of the manner in which moments in time are to be synthesized and ordered in a single temporal order. And as such, it constitutes synthetic a priori knowledge.

The point of this essay was to elucidate the manner in which the unity of time, given through transcendental schemas, depends on categorial unity, on the unity of judgement. Connecting this to the results of the previous essay, we can say that the unity of time is the unity of self-consciousness. Of course, this does not mean that the unity of self-consciousness is the unity of time. We will, in the end, arrive at this claim, but this requires some groundwork. First, we need to say a bit more about the nature of self-consciousness whose unity is at stake in the Deduction. We will then connect to the problem of subjective idealism discussed in the introduction. Solving this problem, we will see, involves identifying the unity of self-consciousness with the unity of time.

3. The ‘I’ and its Referent

The aim in this essay is to pick up a thread from the Deduction we have so far neglected—the role of the ‘I’ or the first-person. To appreciate its importance in Kant’s argument we can consider the following objection that may be leveled against it.

The argument in the A-Deduction says, first, a synthesis needs to occur in order to represent the unity of time, in order to determine a single temporal order. And, second, this synthesis needs to occur

in a manner that makes concept formation possible, and thus be in accordance with the forms of judgement.

Precisely why the synthesis of representations needs to occur in such a manner is perhaps more clearly stated in the B-Deduction, where §16 begins with the key premise that representations must be thinkable (B132). Because it must be possible to judge representations, which for me are ordered in time, the temporal order of representations must reflect the unity of judgement. It is thus not merely the case that time needs to be represented as a unity, but a *thinkable* unity.

But is it not possible there are creatures with distinct forms of judgement, yet with the capacity to order representations in time? Why should I think the unity of time must reflect the unity of *my* judgement?

The objection, for Kant, involves neglecting a crucial part of the original premise stated in B132. It is not merely that representations must be thinkable, but thinkable *by me*. It is the ‘*I think*’ that must be able to accompany all *my* representations. Representations must bear the sort of unity that characterizes judgement only in virtue of the relation they bear to me, in virtue of being combined in my single self-consciousness:

The synthetic proposition that every different *empirical consciousness* must be combined into a single self-consciousness is the absolutely first and synthetic principle of our thinking in general. But it should not go unnoticed that the mere representation *I* in relation to all others (the collective unity of which it makes possible) is the transcendental consciousness. Now it does not matter here whether this representation be clear (empirical consciousness) or obscure, even whether it be actual; but the possibility of the logical form of all cognition necessarily rests on the relationship to this apperception *as a faculty*. (A117n)

It is thus that the unity of self-consciousness or apperception, my unity in relation to all my representations, plays a crucial role in the Deduction’s argument. A synthesis of representations is necessary in order to represent myself as a unity in all my representations. The only way such a representation of myself is possible is if all my representations are unified in accordance with the forms of judgement. Unless a representation bears the unity of judgement, there would be no way for me to think it, which would make it impossible for me to think of it as *mine*, as part of my unified self-consciousness, and thus no way to represent the unity of the *I* in my representations.

There would be no accounting for the unity of the *I* unless my representations were unified according to the forms of judgement. The unity of judgement is therefore nothing short of *my* unity:

The thought that these representations given in intuition all together belong *to me* means, accordingly, the same as that I unite them in a self-consciousness, or at least can unite them

therein, and although it is itself not yet the consciousness of the *synthesis* of the representations, it still presupposes the possibility of the latter, i.e., only because I can comprehend their manifold in a consciousness do I call them all together *my* representations; for otherwise I would have as multicolored, diverse a self as I have representations of which I am conscious. (B134)

The first-personal character of the argument is essential. It is not that the identity of a certain individual, referred to by a name, A.S, whose identity is at stake. To say the *I* must be the representation of a unity would then mean that there must be a unified representation of A.S, the named individual. But then it is not clear why there must be such a thing.

If we think the representation of A.S must be a unity because A.S the individual, in order to be an individual, must be a unity, it would be possible to raise the question—why suppose there is this entity? Perhaps there are no such individuals, no unities referred to by names. Or more weakly, that there is no individual referred to, in this instance, by this name. Or perhaps we can suppose there are such individuals, but they lack the kind of unity I ascribe to myself. Kant makes this point in the third paralogism:

The identity of person is therefore inevitably to be encountered in my own consciousness. But if I consider myself from the standpoint of another (as an object of his outer intuition), then it is this external observer who originally considers *me* as *in time*; for in apperception *time* is properly represented only *in me*. Thus from the I that accompanies—and indeed with complete identity—all representations at every time in *my* consciousness, although he admits this I, he will still not infer the objective persistence of my Self. For just as the time in which the observer posits me is not the time that is encountered in my sensibility but that which is encountered in his own, so the identity that is necessarily combined with my consciousness is not therefore combined in his consciousness, i.e., with the outer intuition of my subject. (A363)

How can an external observer representing A.S in her self-consciousness not infer the identity of this entity? As Kant goes on to say, the criteria for representing something given in outer intuition (i.e., space) as a unity through time, i.e., substance, is distinct from the criteria I use in thinking my self-identity. From the standpoint of the external observer, it may well be that A.S is in fact not a singular object, but a series of distinct substances through time:

An elastic ball that strikes another one in a straight line communicates to the latter its whole motion, hence its whole state (if one looks only at their positions in space). Now assuming substances, on the analogy with such bodies, in which representations, together with consciousness of them, flow from one to another, a whole series of these substances may be

thought, of which the first would communicate its state, together with its consciousness, to the second, which would communicate its own state, together with its consciousness, to a third substance, and this in turn would share the states of all previous ones, together with their consciousness and its own. The last substance would thus be conscious of all the states of all the previously altered substances as its own states, because these states would have been carried over to it, together with the consciousness of them; and in spite of this it would not have been the very same person in all these states. (A364n)

The criterion for representing an object as a substance involves, as we've said previously, representing the object as a substratum for the determination of time. From the standpoint of an external observer, the determination of *her* time may well involve determining A.S as a series of distinct substances. From my own standpoint, of course, the criterion I use for identifying myself as a unity, if we can call it a criterion at all, rests on an analytic proposition—that my thoughts are mine. I am, for myself, necessarily unified in relation to my representations. Otherwise there would be no sense in which I have any representations at all, and thus no sense in which I would be a subject of representation in the first place. It is a condition of my having any representations at all that they must be unified in my single self-consciousness. The question of my unity from my standpoint therefore cannot arise in the way it can for an external observer.

The fundamental disconnect between the external observer's standpoint and my own is that the grounds for positing a unity for her rests on a synthetic principle—whether an object acts as a substratum for the representation of change— whereas for me it is entirely analytic that I am a unity. For me, this is given by the mere thought of myself as a possible subject of representations, as an I that thinks.

If my self-consciousness was not a unified, singular representation then there would be no single self-consciousness in which all my representations were combined. I would have to say that I am “as multi-colored, diverse a self as [my] representations.” Which is just to say that my representations would in no sense be mine. To conceive of such a possibility would require stepping outside of the world, understood as the unity of states of affairs that reflect the unity of judgement, in order to think what I cannot think. If I were able to think such a representation, it would then belong to me, and this would presuppose its belonging to the world as my representation, as synthesized with all my other representations in a single self-consciousness. It would thus presuppose what the possibility is meant to exclude—a unified self.

The self must therefore be understood as a formal notion. It is a condition of there being a world, and not a part of the world itself. This should not be a surprising conclusion. If Kant is right, and the unity of self-consciousness is the unity of judgement, and if we understand the unity of judgement—categorical unity— as a formal unity, then the unity of self-consciousness must also be understood in such terms. This would mean, however, that the ‘I’ does not represent, that it is not a referring expression.

To elucidate this point, we can consider what Wittgenstein has to say about the notion of self-consciousness in the *Tractatus*. Here are the relevant propositions from the text:

5.632 The subject does not belong to the world: rather, it is a limit of the world.

5.633 Where in the world is a metaphysical subject to be found?

You will say that this is exactly like the case of the eye and the visual field. But really you do *not* see the eye.

And nothing *in the visual field* allows you to infer that it is seen by an eye.

5.6331 For the form of the visual field is surely not like this.

This is followed by a drawing of the visual field. Two features of this drawing are important: First, the eye is placed *within* the field, and second, the field contains a boundary. Wittgenstein's point is that both of these features involve a mistake. In what follows, we'll see what these mistakes amount to.

We need to start with the question: What allows one to infer the existence of a subject? Kant says the 'I think' must be able to accompany all my representations. The self is that which thinks, and nothing more. What determines the self just is the act of thinking. Propositions, or the objects of thought, are thus possible ways of determining the self.⁷ Thinking *p* is act of determining my self-consciousness. But this isn't yet to say that the notion of the self is contentful or substantive. That would require some principle by which I can individuate myself—through which I can, I am *this* and not *that*.

What would be involved in there being such a principle? It would involve the capacity to judge something as *not* being a determination of myself, to say, "I am not that." But since every representation can be accompanied by the 'I think', every possible thought is a way of determining the self. The capacity to individuate the self would involve the capacity to judge what is non-thinkable. But this is impossible.

This line of reasoning presupposes a certain conception of language and world, and it is worth spelling these out. Imagine, for instance, a conception of language that could not grasp the totality of states of affairs—that is, a language that could only describe a bit of the world, but not all of it. For a thinker of such language, not every representation would be graspable in thought for she would only be able to think a subset of the totality of states of affairs.

Following Sullivan, let's consider the specific case of a spatial language. This is a language whose form of representation, being spatial, can only represent spatial facts. The world of a speaker of this language is limited in the sense that it belongs in a still-broader world in which it can be located. The boundaries of this limited world are analogous to the boundaries of Wittgenstein's visual field.

⁷ I owe this formulation to Colin Johnston.

Now, certainly, a speaker of this language would not be able to conceive of anything beyond the boundaries of its spatial world. But that does not preclude the possibility of a sideways on view of her (spatial) world. And from *this* perspective, we can see that the spatial world as a limited whole, as belonging to a still-larger totality of states of affairs. Because the spatial world has this character, we can give content to the notion of a subject that speaks this language *through* these boundaries. The self is precisely that which thinks in accordance with the forms of spatial representation, and cannot think anything else.

So can we not treat the Kantian self in exactly the same way? Can we not say that the self is precisely that which thinks in accordance with the forms of logical judgement, and nothing else? No. The forms of logical judgement are just the forms of thinking *tout court*. This means attributing these forms to a thinking subject is equivalent to saying that the thinking subject thinks. The “and nothing else” contributes nothing.

To conceive of logical forms of judgement in this way is to conceive of language as directly embracing the world. To say that language directly embraces the world is to say that *any states of affairs whatsoever* can be captured by means of language. The only intelligible notion of a state of affairs just is a state of affairs that is intelligible, i.e., thinkable. Anything that falls under the concept can be thought. The form of representation of language, in other words, is the form of the world.

This is precisely how Kant conceives of the connection between language and world in attributing the unity of judgement and categorial unity to the same function of the understanding. The only notion of an object is “that in the concept of which the manifold of a given intuition is united. (B137)” And this unification must occur in accordance with the forms of judgement. There are therefore no objects that fall outside of what can be thought. If this is the case, then insofar as states of affairs are simply concatenations of objects, there is no notion of a states of affairs or fact that falls outside the domain of the thinkable. A fact just is what is thinkable. And thinkables constitute all and only the facts. With such a conception of language and world in place, there is no criteria available to determine a substantial conception of the self. For how could we distinguish between what belongs to the self and what doesn't if *everything that is the case* is a determination of the self? It is with this point in view that Sullivan (1996) says:

There are two mistakes in Wittgenstein's drawing: it gives the eye a place; and it has a boundary. The simple-minded thought I've been trying to press is that these two are the same mistake...If there were any substantial limit to the field, one *could* infer that it was seen by an I, even if one could think of that 'I' only as a source of those limits. To think of an I as subject of a restrictive conception of the world is to distance oneself from it, where to do that is at once to begin to objectify the subject; to think of its world as no longer *everything* that is the case...(p. 211)

This brings us to the ‘I’'s putative referent. According to one standard construal of the meaning of the expression, a token of ‘I’ refers, and refers to the very individual uttering it. So, for example, if the editor of *Soul* were to say, ‘I believe that *p*’, this sentence would be taken to mean that ‘the editor of *Soul* believes that *p*.’⁸

The problem with such referential semantics for ‘I’ is that it cannot supply any meaningful criteria for isolating the subject that utters it—that is, it cannot give content to the notion of a subject. The manner in which it seeks to isolate the subject, and thus give the notion content, requires positing a domain of subjects, and thus presupposes the very notion we are after.⁹

If these considerations are right, if there is no way to give content to the notion of the self, to demarcate the boundary between me and my world, then we are forced to accept Wittgenstein’s conclusion:

5.63. I am my world.

All of this might seem too quick. The idea that ‘I’ refers to *something*, the reader might object, is too primitive and entrenched to be dismissed in such an offhanded fashion. I sympathize here. Let us connect the considerations just presented to Anscombe’s treatment of the issue to get a clearer sense of what’s going on.¹⁰

Anscombe says that if the ‘I’ refers, it must refer in one of the ways expressions can refer—either as a demonstrative or a name. It cannot be the former since it is possible for demonstratives to fail to refer. I can point to what I take to be a box with John’s ashes and say, “these are John’s ashes.” Yet the box may be empty. The ‘I’ however, if it refers at all, cannot fail to refer in this way. This is even acknowledged by Kaplan’s referential treatment of the expression—the ‘I’ cannot fail to refer, according to Kaplan (*ibid.*), because every token utterance of it refers to the individual uttering it.

So it must be name. A peculiar kind of name, no doubt, since it only refers the individual uttering it, but a name nonetheless. But the use of a name allows for the possibility of misidentifying its referent, which the use of ‘I’ necessarily cannot involve.

To see how a name that satisfies Kaplan’s criteria for the use of ‘I’ can misidentify its referent, consider Anscombe’s case of a society where each individual has a letter ranging from ‘B’ to ‘Z’ on their chest and back, used to refer to that person by others. But every individual also has the letter ‘A’ printed on the inside of their wrist, used by each person to refer to themselves. The use of ‘A’ by persons in this society is supposed to mimic the use of ‘I’, now understood as a name.

⁸ See Kaplan (1989, p. 491).

⁹ I owe this point to Adrian Haddock (2021)

¹⁰ In Anscombe (1975)

Now a speaker of such a language may mistakenly take someone else's wrist as their's, and thus use 'A' to speak about someone other than themselves. But the possibility of referring incorrectly in this way is precluded in the use of 'I'. It is internal to the use of this expression that the individual I take to be the putative referent of 'I' is me—I cannot be wrong about this in the way a person of this society can be wrong in their use of 'A'. There is, in short, an immunity from misidentifying the putative referent in my use of 'I'.

It is noteworthy that both of Anscombe's objections against the construal of 'I' as a referring expression have to do with the possibility of error. The possibility of error is internal to content. Which is to say that it is part of an expression's being contentful that it can be used incorrectly to say something false. Whenever we assign some determinate content to an expression, we implicitly say what that content is not, and thus what would be involved in using that expression incorrectly. To preclude the possibility of error in the use of 'I' thus means that it is not a contentful expression. And this is precisely the conclusion we arrived at ourselves. If the use of 'I' was contentful, we could have said which propositions *q* the 'I think' could not attach to, that I would be in error if I uttered, 'I think *q*.' But as we've seen, there are no such propositions. And thus no sense in which I can be in error in uttering 'I think *p*' for any proposition *p*. In precluding the possibility of such error, we have thus precluded the possibility of content—the 'I' cannot refer if there is no sense in going wrong in using it.

This is connected to the general form of a proposition. For a proposition to be a proposition, it must be capable of representing that things are thus and so, which in turn involves the capacity to say that the states of affairs represented as true can be false. Insofar as propositions are made up of concepts, this lends to the following thesis about the general form of the latter. For a concept to be a concept, it must be possible to use it in order to say something false, to say that a situation which is thus and so is not thus and so. The conclusion we've been building up to is that 'I' cannot be such a concept, and thus cannot contribute meaning to a proposition. The immunity from error, the impossibility of going wrong in using it, means that a proposition of the form 'I think *p*' can never be false because not thinking *p* presupposes the very thought meant to be excluded, the thought of *p*.

4. Sensibility and the Sideways-on View

This essay takes up the charge of subjective idealism against the Deduction's argument. As we'll see, the response to this charge has implications for the possibility of synthetic a priori knowledge.

Let us recap what this objection comes down to. As we've seen in essay two, the unity of self-consciousness makes possible the unity of time, which unity is reflected in synthetic a priori principles of schematism. The unity of the self also makes possible, as we've seen in essay one, the unity of an object. But the unity of an object, in the Deduction, is not identical to the unity of time. Here's Sebastian Rödl on this point:

The argument [of the Deduction] rests on the supposition that the form of our receptive faculty, space and time, has a specificity that does not derive from its being a faculty that provides thought with an object. Since the pure idea of something in space and time is not identical with the pure idea of an object of thought given in intuition, being valid of the temporal and spatial, which the argument proves, is not the same as being valid of a given object of thought überhaupt. (2008, p. 2)

Because the pure idea of a spatiotemporal object is not identical to the pure idea of an object, an object may fall under the categories without being given in our form of sensibility, space and time. Of course, any form of sensibility must fall under the categories, and as such, any object given to a subject's senses must conform to the categories. But the categories themselves, as forms of thinking, do not determine any *specific* forms of sensibility, e.g., space and time. So while spatiotemporal objects are necessarily categorized, we cannot know whether categorized objects are necessarily spatiotemporal.

The problem with Kant's argument is precisely that it conceives of the form of intuition as specifically *my* form in the sense that makes room for other forms of sensibility. Certainly, these other forms of sensibility are not forms I can know of, but that does not preclude the sheer possibility of there being such forms.

This connects with the question of the unity of time. The unity of time, we've seen, is grounded in the unity of apperception. There is a single temporal order because distinct moments are unified in my single self-consciousness, making possible, in the now, the reproduction of moments past and the anticipation of moments future. The unity of time is impossible without the unity of apperception, without a single self-consciousness in which moments are knitted together and related to one another as past, present, and future.

But the unity of apperception is possible without the unity of time—if time is merely the form of *my* sensibility. If, that is, it is a brute fact about me that time is the form of my sensible intuition. If we leave open the possibility of beings with distinct forms of sensibility, then we can imagine that in unifying their representations in accordance with the forms of thinking, such beings are capable of representing objects, even if these objects are not ordered in space and time.

It is precisely because the unity of apperception is possible in this way without the unity of time that the principles of schematism, which reflect the unity of time, are synthetic a priori principles. Their being synthetic rests on the possibility that they might be false. We can conceive of this possibility only in conceiving of distinct beings with distinct forms of sensibility. We'll say more about this shortly. First, we should consider McDowell's response to the charge of subjective idealism and its implications for the unity of time and the possibility of synthetic a priori knowledge. The response to the objection involves doing away with the external character of the forms of intuition, and thus to do away the possibility of other, non-spatiotemporal forms.

The idea that there are other forms of sensibility involves viewing myself from sideways on, from a perspective that gives content to the self. The self, now, is precisely that which knows spatiotemporal facts. Certainly, the self cannot know of any *non*-spatiotemporal facts, and cannot, as it were, peer outside the boundaries of its spatiotemporal world. Yet the possibility of other forms of receptivity commits one to the view that there is a larger totality of states of affairs in which my spatiotemporal world is contained. And the boundaries of my spatiotemporal world, located within this greater totality, allow me to individuate myself, allow me to say, “I am *this* (spatiotemporal world) and not *that* (non-spatiotemporal world).”

But the possibility of ascribing such content to the self is precisely what is precluded by the fundamental premise of the Deduction, that the ‘I think’ must be able to accompany all my representations. The set of all *my* representations here is just the set of all representations, for anything that isn’t my representation isn’t something I can think and thus is nothing to me.

The self, in being able to think every representation, is identical to the world, not something located in it. But once we can ascribe content to the self and locate it in the world, then it is no longer the case that the ‘I think’ can accompany every fact, for there are some facts—facts about categorized objects presented in other forms of sensibility—that I cannot think. That I cannot think such representations is just to say that I do not synthesize non-spatiotemporal forms of intuitions in my single self-consciousness in the manner I synthesize time.

Note that time is not merely a form of sensible intuition, but an intuition in its own right, and thus contains a manifold, as all intuitions do, that needs to be held together in order to make possible the representation of a unity:

We have *forms* of outer as well as inner sensible intuition *a priori* in the representations of space and time, and the synthesis of the apprehension of the manifold must always be in agreement with the latter, since it can only occur in accordance with this form. But space and time are represented *a priori* not merely as forms of sensible intuition, but also as *intuitions* themselves (which contain a manifold), and thus with the determination of the *unity* of this manifold in them (see the Transcendental Aesthetic). (B160-1)

It is in virtue of time’s containing a manifold *qua* intuition that it falls under the categories. This is to repeat the point we’ve made before, that the unity of time is a product of a synthesis in my single self-consciousness, with the added emphasis that the unity of time is the unity of an intuition, and it is this intuitionistic character of time that makes a synthesis in a single self-consciousness necessary.

If we take seriously the possibility of a subject with distinct, non-spatiotemporal forms of sensibility, then the question arises, are these forms of intuition intuitions themselves, like space and time are for us, or concepts? If they are concepts, then the forms of intuition are, for such a subject, products of

the understanding, determined by the combinatorial activity of the self. But as we've seen, the understanding does not determine any specific forms of intuition. If this subject's non-spatiotemporal forms of intuition were products of acts of synthesis, then my self-consciousness, in synthesizing intuitions, would make necessary the representation of the very same forms of intuition. But then there would be no sense in which there are possibly distinct forms of sensibility. That the apperceptive self does not, merely through its activity, make necessary the representation of any specific forms of sensibility entails that for a subject with non-spatiotemporal forms of sensibility, the non-spatiotemporal forms are intuitions themselves.

If these non-spatiotemporal forms of intuition are intuitions in their own right, they contain a manifold that, through the combination of the manifold, fall under the categories, and are thus representable by a thinking subject as a unified object. But then I too must be able to represent these non-spatiotemporal forms in thought—the 'I think' must be able to accompany these representations. But this clearly impossible since the forms of intuition under consideration are non-spatiotemporal. But then in what sense are these intuitions categorized? We're left with an uncomfortable disjunctive conclusion. Either non-spatiotemporal forms of intuition, as intuitions themselves, are categorized objects, yet for some reason unthinkable, or that there are forms of thinking, forms of categorization, other than my own such that the objects are thinkable, just not thinkable by me. Both disjuncts are absurd. There is nothing more to an object's falling under the categories than its being thinkable, and nothing more to something's being thinkable than its being thinkable by me.

Perhaps one can something along the following lines. An intellect other than mine, capable of receiving representations ordered in a form distinct from space and time, is able to think the unity of time, even if she is unable to represent time as the form of her sensible intuition. Similarly, I am able to think the unity of non-spatiotemporal forms of intuition, even if I do not represent these forms as forms of intuition.

This line of reasoning involves supposing a difference between the representation of the unity of time, and its representation as the form of sensible intuition. But it is unclear if we can make such a distinction. All there is to the representation of the unity of time is the representation of sensible objects in time as ordered in a single, determinate temporal order, related to one another by succession. My capacity to think of the unity of a non-spatiotemporal form of intuition must equally be the capacity to represent sensible objects as ordered in this form, ordered by the relation distinctive to it, as succession is distinctive to time. Since I cannot do this, since I have no notion of such a relation, there is no sense in which I am able to think the unity of such a form.

The sideways on perspective of self-consciousness thus infects the argument of the Deduction. The first-personal perspective is essential to the argument and from *that* perspective the 'I think' accompanies *every* representation, and there is no fact that is not thinkable by me. If I retain this perspective, then space and time can no longer be viewed as brute facts about my sensibility. Rather,

space and time can be *the only* forms of sensibility such that there is no still-larger world in which my spatiotemporal world is contained. There is only one world, the world I am identical to, and that is the spatiotemporal world.

If there is only one world, the spatiotemporal world, then this has implications for the unity of time and the possibility of synthetic a priori knowledge. This knowledge consists in nothing more than principles of schematism that reflect the unity of time. The principles are true just in case there is a representation of a unified time, and false whenever there isn't.

This knowledge is synthetic insofar as it is possible to think of time as lacking unity. Now, time can certainly not lack unity *for me*. Why not? Objects are given to me in time, and to represent the unity of these objects just is to represent these objects as ordered in single determinate temporal order, which is just to represent the unity of time.

The unity of an object itself is necessary insofar as the *disunity* of an object is just the disunity of myself. The representation of objects is unified only because the manifold of intuition pertaining to an object belongs to the single consciousness of myself. The only sense in which an object lacks unity then is if its manifold does not belong to my self-consciousness. This can only be if either the manifold does not belong to my self-consciousness at all, in which case it is nothing to me, or if I myself lack unity. The first disjunct is false insofar the only objects whose unity is of concern here is objects that I am capable of representing, and that are therefore "something to me." But the second disjunct is equally false insofar as my own representation in all my representations is necessarily unified. I cannot but represent myself as a unity in all my representations.

The unity of an object is thus necessary. But this means the unity of time is equally necessary. For the only kind of object that I can represent is an object ordered in time. The only sense I can give to an object unordered in time is that of an object given to a sensibility other than mine, but as we've seen, this possibility results in absurd consequences.

If the representation of the unity of time just is the representation of the unity of an object, which just is the representation of the unity of the apperceptive self, then there is no sense in which synthetic a priori principles of schematism can be false. Because for them to be false is for time to lack unity, which is for objects, and for myself, to lack unity. But this entails that principles of schematism are not synthetic at all, even if they are a priori.

4.1. Some Conclusions From the Above Concepts: Can Form be Given Without Content?

If the considerations from the previous essay are correct, then schematic principles cannot be thought of as false. Yet we encountered in essay three an internal property of judgements: their capacity to represent that which is not the case. The possibility of negation is internal to a judgement in the way it is internal to a concept that it must be capable of being used incorrectly. It was precisely because the expression 'I' did not satisfy this constraint on concepts that allowed us to determine its status as non-referential.

In this essay, we will elaborate a bit more on this feature of judgements and concepts through an analogy with pictures. The point of this analogy is to shed some light on the notion of representation *simpliciter*, and not to advance anything like a “picture theory” of judgement. Even if such a theory is, in the end, correct, it goes beyond the scope of this essay to make this claim.

Dwelling on the capacity of representations *qua* representations to be true or false, we will conclude that knowledge of the categories, given through schematic principles, cannot be representational knowledge precisely because knowledge of these principles is presupposed in the act of combination that makes truth and falsehood possible. This will allow us to return to our very first essay, where we discussed the relation between categorial form and sensible content. We said there that the representation of content without its form is impossible, since it is internal to the identity of an object that it combines with other objects in states of affairs in such and such ways. But merely because form is internal to content does not entail content is internal to form. What was left open there was the possibility of being given bare combinatorial form without content. Simply because an object cannot be given without its combinatorial capacity does not entail that mere combinatorial capacity without an object cannot be so given. But a reflection on the representational aspect of judgement must show that this too is impossible, and that in the end the only representation that is possible is of content as it is categorized. Neither content without form, nor form without content is capable of standing alone.

Let us begin with the notion of judgement and its capacity to be false. Why must a thought contain the possibility of both its truth and falsehood? This is a feature of a thought *qua* representation. A thought depicts the world. This is what it is for it to be a representation. As a representation, it may be compared to pictures if only to shed some light on features internal to a representation *qua* representation.

A picture may be used to depict a certain states of affairs. When this is done, elements of the picture are correlated with objects constituting a state of affairs in order to depict that things are thus and so. Consider the following picture, as an example:



Now, I can use this picture to say that *Andrew is walking*, correlating, in the process, the figure with an object, *Andrew*, and the position of the figure with the property *walking*.

With this correlation in place, I can equally use the picture to say how things are not, to say that *Andrew isn't walking*. It is internal to a representational device that it can be used to do both—to say how

things are and to say how things are not.¹¹ The possibility of negation is, in precisely this sense, internal to the picture in its capacity as a representational device. A proposition, at least in this respect, resembles pictures. Insofar as it is used to depict states of affairs, a proposition can both be used to say that things are thus and so, but equally to say they are not. A proposition, in this way, contains within itself the possibility of saying something false.

Let us hold onto this idea, that to represent (by means of a proposition, a picture, or by any other device capable of representing) that something is the case requires the capacity to deny exactly the same content that is asserted true in the representation.

We can elucidate this point through Kant's understanding of judgement as the act of bringing representations to the unity of self-consciousness. Judgement is thinking through concepts. It is, at the same time, an act of synthesis through which representations are brought to the unity of apperception. The single representation of myself that accompanies all my representations is made possible only through the act of judgement, which constitutes the act of synthesizing all my representations in the single self-consciousness of myself.

A concept is that which unifies the manifold of an object, and thus combines the manifold in a single self-consciousness. In unifying the manifold of intuition pertaining to an object, a judgement comes to represent that things are thus and so. The capacity for representing something as true or false always presupposes such an act of combination. In order to use the above picture to represent that *Andrew is walking*, I need to unify the pictorial manifold under the concepts *Andrew* and *walking* and relate these together through an act of synthesis.

Manifolds of intuition thus need to be united in concepts through the synthesis of representations in order for the possibility of truth and falsehood to arise. No states of affairs are represented prior to the subject's synthesis of representations through the act of judgement. The very act of synthesis in a single self-consciousness is not *itself* something that is true or false. It is rather that which makes truth and falsehood possible.

Categorical knowledge is non-representational precisely because the form of judgement, categorial form or the form of a schema, is reflected in the mere act of synthesis of a manifold of intuition. It is not itself a manifold of intuition that is judged or combined in a single self-consciousness. It is rather the manner in which such a manifold is brought to the unity of apperception, thus making truth and falsehood possible.

This can be seen in a picture's capacity to represent a state-of-affairs. To unify the pictorial manifold through concepts is to unify the manifold in accordance with certain forms. In our case, this is the form of a categorial judgement, *subject is predicate*. This form is reflected in the mere act of synthesis which makes the truth or falsehood of the picture possible.

¹¹ I am indebted here to Anscombe's remarks on the picture theory and negation in her introduction to the *Tractatus* (1959).

We can relate these points to the unity of self-consciousness. That a judgement is true or false presupposes the capacity to judge that it is true or false. This means that *I* must be able to judge something as true or false. But the unified representation of myself that is able to make such a judgement is made possible only through the synthesis of judgement in accordance with categorial form.

If the unity of judgement is the unity of self-consciousness, and the *form* of the unity of judgement, the manner in which the constituents or matter of judgement is unified, is categorial form, then this is also just the manner in which self-consciousness itself is unified. Categorial form is thus the form of *my* unity. My representation of myself must be unified in accordance with categorial form in order for me think that something is true or false. My unity in accordance with categorial form is thus a presupposition of my judgements of truth and falsehood.

Content cannot be given without form insofar it is internal to content that it possesses a certain form, that it can combine with other content in certain ways in judgement. This was the claim we arrived at in essay one, in spelling out the Deduction's argument. What we have here is the converse claim that form cannot be given without content. Form cannot be given without content because form is reflected in the act of synthesizing content that makes truth and falsehood possible. Categorial form is given only *through* the representation of the act of synthesis that makes possible the unity of the self and the unity of the content judged; it is only in making possible the unity of myself in all my representations, which is at the time to make possible the unity of my representations, that the possibility of truth and falsehood itself arises.

5. The Thinking and the Empirical Self

We saw above, in our analysis of self-consciousness in the Deduction, that there was nothing more or less to the self than the thoughts it can possibly think. On the face of it, this is a puzzling and remarkable claim. Here's one way to bring this out. Thinking, we said there, is an act of self-determination, which is to say that all there is to me, to *my* content, is the content of the thoughts to which the 'I think' can attach. In saying that the 'I think' must accompany all my representations, I am making a claim not merely about my representations—that they must be thinkable, and thus combined in my single self-consciousness—but also about myself: all I am is the I that accompanies all my thoughts, all there is to self-consciousness is that it is the single self-consciousness in which all its thoughts are contained. To say, as Wittgenstein says in the *Tractatus*, that 'I am my world' is at the same time to say that *all* I am is my world.

To equate myself with what I think, to think of my content as the content of my thoughts, is to understand thinking as the essence of the self. It is to say that all there is to me is my thinking. And further, that all there is to thinking is the content of what I think. The I that thinks *only* thinks, and the content of its judgements exhausts the act of thinking.

But there's a sense in which the self I find in space and time appears to be more than this. Since space and time are forms of sensible intuition, we can call the self as it is in ordered in such forms the

empirical self. The self of the Deduction, on the other hand, insofar as it is the original self-consciousness identical to the content of its thoughts, may be called the *thinking self*.

The empirical self is the subject located among a manifold of other subjects. Insofar as the notion of the I that thinks (and merely thinks) is the notion of something merely in its relation to (thinkable) content, the question of its relation, of the thinking I's relation, to other subjects does not yet arise.

The thinking I is merely that which thinks. What it thinks is facts, and any fact is a determination of it. In virtue of its capacity to think any fact, the thinking I is identical to the world. The empirical self, on the other hand, does not merely think, but *knows* or *perceives*. What distinguishes its knowing or perceiving from mere thinking is that the empirical self finds itself *in* a world where its knowledge may *grow* or *expand*. Whatever the empirical self is, it is not identical to the world.

We should now consider the question—how does the I that thinks relate to the I in space and time? I'll sketch here one possible story of this relation. In the end, this will really be limited to a sketch. To develop it completely will require resources and thought that go beyond the scope of these essays.

As an I in space and time, I possess a character, a set of dispositions. A disposition, following Michael Thompson (2007), is a categorial notion, an a priori formal concept which unifies content in judgement. The thinking I determines itself empirically by thinking of itself as disposed to act in certain ways.

Let us unpack this. First, we'll say something about the notion of a disposition, and this will allow us to shed some light on the manner in which the I that thinks determines itself in space and time.

What is a disposition? Let us begin with action. Anscombe (1957) says an intentional action is that to which the question 'why?' has application. Assume I am moving my jaw, and doing this intentionally. Call this description of my action *A*. Since the action is intentional, it is possible to ask, "why are you moving your jaw?" I respond, "in order to chew." Now, let us say this is a description (call it *B*) to which the question 'why are you *B*-ing' in turn has application—"Why are you chewing?" I answer, "in order to eat" (*C*). Once more, assume it is possible to ask, "why are you eating?" To which I say, "to stay healthy" (*D*). Let's say that this is where the why-game stops. If I were asked why I am staying healthy, I would have no answer.

The question 'why?' can thus be used to form a series *A-B-C-D*. Every description in the series is related to the one to its right as means to end. Now notice that descriptions *A-C* differ from *D* in the following respect. While it is possible to finish doing *A-C*, and thus possible to say at some point in time that I have *done A-C*, the same cannot be said for *D*. *A-C* are in this sense descriptions of something *completable*, while *D* is a description of something *in-completable*. There is a sense in which I am doing *D* but it will never be the case that at some point in time I will have done it.

Thompson (*ibid.*, p. 158) recognizes as one of the internal marks of an action its completable. An action, "winds down under its own steam" in the sense that it is possible for an agent to fully execute it and thus for it to come to an end at some point in time through being completed. A disposition, on the

other hand, is intrinsically in-completable. *Being healthy* is a disposition that, in being in-completable, applies to an indefinite number of my actions. The in-completable nature of a disposition is thus tied to its *generality*. It is not merely eating, but also exercising, keeping doctor's appointments, and so on, that are done for the sake of being healthy. The disposition applies to more than one action, and is thus general, precisely because being healthy is not a completable task. Its non-completability means that being healthy manifests itself as an end in various actions.

The manner in which a disposition relates to an action is akin to the relation a concept bears to an intuition that falls under it. An action *falls under* the disposition it manifests. This is distinct from the relation an action bears to its phases. Recall what we said about this relation in the second essay. An action, insofar as it is a continuous or progressive doing in time, constitutes the non-accidental unity of the intervals in which it is performed. The phases in time through which I do *A* are unified together by *A* such that one phase non-accidentally succeeds the other. The relation an action bears to its phases is akin (though not identical) to the relation an intuition bears to its parts.¹² The phases are parts of the whole that constitutes the action, they do not fall under the action.

We may characterize the generality of a theoretical concept, in the terms of the B-Deduction, as the analytical unity of consciousness in various representations. A concept is the single consciousness that accompanies various sensible intuitions it subsumes under it. The analytical unity of consciousness presupposes a synthetic unity insofar as there needs to be a single consciousness in which all my representations are combined in order for a concept to, in this way, accompany various representations.

A similar story may be told about dispositions. A disposition is a single consciousness that accompanies various representations. The representations are, in this case, actions, and not sensible intuitions. Of course, if various representations are to fall under a concept in this way, there must be a synthetic unity, a single self-consciousness in which all actions are combined.

The synthetic unity of consciousness that makes possible the unity of a concept is, in the end, the unity of the I that thinks. It is thus my unity that makes possible the application of a concept to possibly multiple intuitions. This unity of mine is the unity of the thinking I, of the I that merely thinks, and as such, it is a necessary unity. I cannot but represent my self-consciousness as unified.

The synthetic unity of consciousness that makes possible the application of a particular disposition to various actions is equally the unity of this thinking self. The representations unified by a disposition are unified non-accidentally insofar as it does not merely happen to be the case that diverse actions, e.g., eating and exercising, fall under the single disposition of being healthy. What accounts for this non-accidental unity of actions under a disposition is, in fact, the unity of the same I that makes possible the unity of a concept in its various applications, and this is the unity of the thinking self.

¹² This feature of intuitions is discussed in the Aesthetic, where Kant uses it to argue for the intuitionistic character of space and time. See B39/A25.

Whereas the unity of the I that thinks cannot but be a unity, the unity of the *empirical* self, of my character, cannot be taken for granted. One's character is revisable, and as such, the synthetic unity of *empirical* consciousness, the single consciousness of the empirical self, that makes possible the application of any *particular* disposition in various representations is not a necessary unity.

The sense in which my character may change is this. I think of myself as being disposed to act in certain ways when I make a judgement with the habitual or generic form, "I do *A*" or "I perform actions of the kind *A*." But these judgements are revisable insofar as I may choose to change my habits, the kinds of actions I am disposed to perform. That one's character is subject to revision in such a way is an expression of one's freedom or autonomy. The kind of person I am is determined not merely by an I that thinks, but an I that is free, in the sense that I may change my mind about the kind of person I am. To make room for such freedom, we need to understand the notion of character as, in at least some respect, subject to revision.

There's really two levels here, two synthetic unities, one empirical and one pure, as in the A-Deduction, and it is important to keep these apart. There is the application of a disposition *as such*. The application of any disposition, like the application of any theoretical concept, presupposes the single self-consciousness of the thinking I in which actions, like sensible intuitions, are combined.

But then any particular disposition itself may be called into question and not taken for granted, and it is in *this* (and only this) respect that it is revisable. The use of a particular dispositional concept, e.g., being healthy, reflects the *actual* unity of the empirical self, but not its *necessary* unity, precisely because, in being revisable, the empirical self, which is identical to its dispositions, itself is capable lacking unity.

What changes, in the changing of a character, is not the I that thinks, which is necessarily the same in all my representations; what changes rather is the empirical self, the essential mark of which is its character. It is not necessary, in this sense, for the representation of the empirical self to be the same representation in all my representations. One's character may change, and thus the unity of actions under a disposition may fall apart as the I that thinks changes its mind about its own character.

There is, it is worth mentioning, one case in which the character of the empirical self is unchanging, and this is the case of the practically wise or flourishing being, the *phronimos*. It is internal to the notion of practical wisdom that a practically wise individual knows the kind of person it is good to be, and thus the traits or habits it is good to have. The character of such an individual, their empirical self, is thus necessarily unchanging, and constitutes a necessary unity.

We have elucidated the generality of a disposition in the language of the B-Deduction, by considering its character as an analytical unity, and the relation of this analytical unity to the synthetic unity of self-consciousness. But it is really the A-Deduction that we need to turn to if we want to consider how the notion of a disposition may bear on the possibility of synthetic a priori knowledge.

Dispositions, in possessing the generality of a concept, unify actions through time by subsuming them. To understand what this means, let us return to the temporality of an action, which was discussed above in essay two.

The phases of an action, in being non-accidentally unified, involve the necessary reproduction and anticipation of moments in time, connected in a single determinate temporal order. In performing an action, I reproduce phases of the action I have already performed, and anticipate phases yet to come, necessarily unifying these with what I am doing right this moment. An action, in this way, is implicated in the necessary unification of intervals of time. This was our grounds for postulating the categorial schema of an action, which gives the manner in which moments in time must necessarily be unified in order for the representation of an action to be possible.

Now, a disposition, as an a priori categorial concept, may similarly be viewed as providing its own schema. What I think, in subsuming an action under a disposition, is not only that what I am doing now falls under this disposition, but that other actions I have done previously, and may still do again in the future, are held together as a unity in falling under the disposition. The reproduction of action-past with the-actions-present, and the anticipation of actions-future in a single temporal order is a way of representing the unity of time, and thus involves the use of a categorial schema that makes possible this unity.

We can consider an example to make this clear. Let's say some action of mine, *A*, falls under the disposition to be healthy such that I can possibly think, "I am doing *A* in order to be healthy." Since being healthy is intrinsically in-complete I recognize, in bringing my action under this disposition, that I will perform actions in the future, should the occasion arise to perform them, that also fall under this disposition. To judge an action as falling under a disposition is to project the application of the disposition in the future such that what I will be doing, and am currently not doing, is capable of being subsumed under this disposition.

But further, even if an action (say, raising my arm) does not directly fall under this particular disposition, it still cannot go against it. Even the act of raising my arm must be such that the end of this action coheres with the end of being healthy. In this way, there is an implicit recognition of the disposition to be healthy in all my actions.

We can put the point as follows. A disposition supplies an end. When the suitable occasion arises, this end is made the end of an action. It is because I have the general disposition to be healthy that 'to be healthy' is made the end of certain actions like exercising. It is also because I have this disposition that I choose *not* to do certain things, like eating lots of sugary snacks, or smoking, because performing these actions would involve doing something that goes against a *general end* of all my actions, being healthy. This means not just any action can succeed any other in time, insofar as these actions are *mine* and belong to my single self-consciousness. The action that succeeds my action now will be such that its end coheres with the general ends supplied by my dispositions.

Compare this to a point often made with respect to concepts that unify intuitions. That a manifold of intuition (e.g., of three lines with the sum of internal angles adding to 180°) falls under a particular concept (e.g., triangle) means that whenever the same manifold of intuition is presented again in the future, it is capable of subsumption under this concept. This is what it means for a concept to be a rule—it is implicitly recognized in its application that the concept applies whenever suitable circumstances call for its application. But this also adds a constraint to which intuitions can be subsumed under which concepts in the future. I cannot in the future think of three lines arranged in this manner as falling under the concept of a circle, insofar as circles cannot be triangles. The application of a rule to an intuition now entails that whatever rule I apply to an intuition presented in the future does not contradict the application of this rule applied to this intuition in the present. Here's Kant on this point:

We find, however, that our thought of the relation of all cognition to its object carries something of necessity with it, since namely the latter is regarded as that which is opposed to our cognitions being determined at pleasure or arbitrarily rather than being determined *a priori*, since insofar as they are to relate to an object our cognitions must also necessarily agree with each other in relation to it, i.e., they must have that unity that constitutes the concept of an object. (A104-5)

Time is unified in such a way that makes possible the representation of the unity of an object. Representations-past are reproduced in the present, and representations-future anticipated, in a manner that the representations agree with one another in order to constitute the unity of an object.

The *a priori* concept of a disposition, we can say, represents the unity of time in the following manner. To deploy the concept of a disposition involves reproducing actions-past, along with actions-present, and anticipating actions-future, in such a way that the end of all of these actions cohere with the general end supplied by the disposition under which the present action falls. That the concept of a disposition is capable of being deployed means that the manifold of actions in time are capable of such coherence. Time must therefore be unified in a manner that allows for actions through time to together manifest the general ends of a disposition.

5.1. How the Above Considerations Relate to the Synthetic A Priori

We said above that time is necessarily represented as a unity because of the unity of apperception, such that the only instance in which apperception is unified and time is not is when we allow for the possibility of distinct forms of sensibility. When we allow for the possibility, that is, of a side-ways on view of self-consciousness.

This reasoning neglects the point that time is not merely unified, but unified in accordance with *a priori* categorial forms which supply forms of temporal synthesis—the manner in which moments in time must be held together to make judgements with a certain unity possible. What bearing, if any, does this

have on the argument? Before we answer this question, we should make explicit the relation among various forms of unification.

Not all forms of temporal combination are made equal. It is possible, perhaps, to order them in a hierarchy, as Michael Thompson (ibid.) does. In Thompson's treatment of the notion, categories are organized in such hierarchical relations:

Thus far the strata I have distinguished amount to those of a familiar Aristotelian *scala naturae* erected on top of a Fregean infrastructure. The ladder in question may be summed up in the narrowing sequence of formal concepts *object, substance, organism, animal, agent*. (p. 3)

To this *scala naturae*, Thompson goes on to add a *scala practica*, with the concepts of disposition and practice. To move along the sequence from left to right, or up the ladder, is to successively apprehend more determinate forms of judgement. The crucial point is that a narrower concept always presupposes the more general category to its left, on the lower rung.

Now, if take this picture for granted and suppose that categories can be ordered in such hierarchical relations, we can say that the notion of a disposition presupposes the notion of an action, and as such, is a more determinate form of judgement than action is.

Both of these notions, of action and disposition, supply categorial schemas for the unification of time in accordance with their form, and both forms of temporal unification rest, in the end, on the unity of self-consciousness. But then the question arises: is it possible that self-consciousness is unified even if the more determinate form of unification (of disposition) does not apply?

We can imagine perhaps a speaker of a language more limited than ours, a language which lacks the dispositional form of judgement. The speaker of such a language, while capable of action, of thinking of substances and causes, is unable to think of its actions as falling under dispositional-concepts. Such a subject would be unable to develop habits and character-traits. Time, for this subject, would be unified, but only in accordance with the forms of substance, cause, community, and the other categories of the first *Critique*. Yet its actions through time, if such a subject can be said to act, and thus time itself, would lack the kind of unity that only dispositional concepts can provide, the unity implicit in the tense of habitual judgements of the form "I do *A*." The contention is that if a speaker of such a limited language can be conceived, then perhaps schematic principles of the category of disposition are synthetic, for the self-consciousness of such a subject constitutes a unity, even if the subject's time is not unified in accordance with these principles.

What should we make of this? The possibility of such a speaker and its language once more involves a side-ways on view of self-consciousness. The speaker of such a language is not identical to the world, understood as the totality of states of affairs, insofar as we can ascribe to it some content through the boundaries of its limited world. Whatever the properties of such a subject, whatever its content, it is clear this subject can never be *me*. Insofar as I am identical to my world, my language can never be

conceived as limited, as lacking the full range of categorial concepts that it contains. Knowledge of a category constitutes knowledge that cannot be false for exactly this reason: to conceive of the category as lacking application is at the same time to conceive of a world with boundaries and thus a contentful self, which is impossible.

6. Goodness as a Category

The aim of this essay is to show how the notion of goodness may be understood as a categorial notion. For something to constitute a category, it must possess a unifying role in judgement. In order to show that goodness is a category, we therefore need to specify the kinds of judgement in which goodness occupies a unifying role, and the constituents of judgement which it unifies. The point of these reflections is to arrive an understanding of the nature of self-consciousness in its relation to the good, which will allow us to consider the possibility of synthetic a priori knowledge of this concept.

The kinds of judgements we should consider, I suggest, are judgements about what to do, made by the practically wise agent. The judgements, in reflecting the agent's practical knowledge, are judgements that result in virtuous action. Goodness unifies these judgements together in the sense that the judgements together constitute the unity of virtue.

There's a lot to unpack here. Let us begin with the observation that a judgement, made by a practically wise agent, about a particular action's falling under a virtue-concept cannot be wrong. If the practically wise agent judges a certain course of action to fall under a virtue, then this judgement constitutes knowledge insofar as the judgement expresses the truth—the action does in fact constitute the virtuous thing to do.

We are equating here an action's falling under a virtue with it being virtuous, and this might cause some eyes to narrow. To lie to a friend about the quality of their writing might be the kind thing to do, but fall short of right conduct, perhaps due to some overriding considerations of fairness which renders the goodness of the action suspect.

My response here echoes McDowell's. To possess the concept of kindness is to know how to behave kindly *when a situation calls for it*. To act kindly in a situation where doing so does not exemplify right conduct is thus to not act kindly at all, but merely to mistake one's actions for kindness:

If a genuine virtue is to produce nothing but right conduct, a simple propensity to be gentle cannot be identified with the virtue of kindness. Possession of the virtue must involve not only sensitivity to facts about others' feelings as reasons for acting in certain ways; but also sensitivity to facts about rights as reasons for acting in certain ways; and when circumstances of both sorts obtain, and a circumstance of the second sort is the one that should be acted on, a possessor of the virtue of kindness must be able to tell that this is so. So we cannot disentangle genuine possession of kindness from the sensitivity which constitutes fairness. And since there are obviously no

limits on the possibilities for compresence, in the same situation, of circumstances of the sorts proper sensitivities to which constitute all the virtues, the argument can be generalized: no one virtue can be fully possessed except by a possessor of all of them, that is, a possessor of virtue in general. (1979, p. 333)

What makes the thesis about the unity of virtue indispensable (although McDowell does not phrase the matter in these terms) is that right conduct is internal to virtue. For an action to fall under a particular virtue is for it to be the right course of action. The equation of virtue with right conduct, or of virtuous action with right conduct, is not an accidental connection between two disparate concepts, something we can in principle negate. It is, rather, merely an articulation of what makes the concept of virtue intelligible in the first place.

Notice here the following resemblance here between the concepts of virtue and object. Wittgenstein says of the latter in the *Notebooks*:

If objects are given, then therewith *all* objects are given. (5.524)

Wittgenstein's point—and here I am following Peter Sullivan's reading of it (1996, p. 207)—is that grasping the concept of an object involves the grasping of a totality. It involves an “appreciation of internal, structural features that characterize each member of the totality.”

How should we understand this? The notion of an object is not a constituent of judgement, but rather a form of judging. To be acquainted with the form of an object is thus to be acquainted with the manner in which judgements about particular objects are made. It is in this sense that all objects are given, whenever objects are given. Insofar as one is acquainted with the form of an object, one is capable of thinking of *all* objects.

The same can be said of virtue. If a virtue is given, then therewith *all* virtues are given. And this is because knowledge of any particular virtue carries with it the appreciation of the internal feature of goodness characterizing each member of the totality of virtues. Goodness, we can say, is not the content of a particular thought, some feature *F* we can understand as combining with objects as a function might, but the form of judgements which involve subsuming courses of action under particular virtues. The practically wise agent is acquainted with this form, and for this reason is acquainted with *all* virtues.

The notion of goodness thus constitutes the unity of judgements of right conduct, in which judgements about particular courses of action are subsumed under particular virtues. What unifies these judgements together, in order constitute a whole, is the category of goodness.

If this is correct, then we can understand this category as supplying its own categorial schema, the manner in which time must be unified in order for judgements of right conduct to be possible. The practically wise agent not only judges the current course of action under a particular virtue, but also

reproduces actions-past, subsumed under either the same or distinct virtues, and similarly, anticipates actions-future subsumable under some virtue-concept, in order to represent the unity of all her actions under the concept of the good. The phronimos' actions through time are unified by the notion of goodness, and as such time is represented as a unity through the representation of actions-past, present, and future as falling under the concept of the good.

Once again, we can relate these considerations to the question of the synthetic a priori. Can we imagine a unified self-consciousness, capable of ordering representations in time in accordance with the schemas of the *Critique*, and perhaps the schema of an action too, without supposing this unity to be affected by the category of goodness? Perhaps an ordinary agent lacking practical wisdom needn't unify representations in time in accordance with the form of the good. If this is right, then would knowledge of goodness (or its schema) not constitute synthetic a priori knowledge?

What follows is some speculative remarks concerning the relation between the practical and theoretical subject which very much go against both the Kantian and Wittgensteinian understanding of the good, and as such, should be taken with a grain of salt. To say anything substantial about this relation would require groundwork that goes beyond the scope of this essay.

Reason in general is capable of a division into the faculties of the practical and the theoretical. This division is made possible because we are able to distinguish between the questions proper to each faculty. To reason theoretically is to answer the question, "what is the case?" To reason practically is to answer question, "what ought to be the case?"

To reason about what ought to be the case is to reason about what object ought to be made real by my causality, whereas to reason about what is the case to determine the concepts under which an object is to be subsumed. We may understand the difference between the two faculties as a difference of existential dependence with respect to their objects. Whereas reason, in its theoretical capacity, seeks knowledge of objects that exist independently of it, in its practical capacity reason it is the cause of the existence of its objects.

Despite this difference, practical and theoretical reason belong to the same general faculty. What unifies the two sub-faculties into one and the same reason is that the object made real by my causality is the very same object whose manifold of intuition is united by concepts proper to theoretical reason.

If actions are a type of causality in the world, then what is judged to be good by the practical subject is states of affairs that obtain in the world. What is judged in judgements of goodness is particular states-of-affairs, states-of-affairs which constitute the world. In order for such judgements *qua* judgements to be possible, they must belong in the single self-consciousness of myself—the single representation 'I think' must be able to accompany them. The subject of these judgements is thus the I that thinks, the single self-consciousness whose unity makes the judgements possible in the first place.

If this is right, then the phronimos does not speak a language richer than mine, nor is my world contained in her still-larger world. The notion of goodness available to her is the same notion available to

me. That I *can* unify representations in accordance with this form, and thus can possibly make judgements of right conduct is sufficient to equate my world with her world. The possibility of an unwise agent is the possibility of an empirical subject, an empirical consciousness located among a manifold of subjects, capable of making incorrect judgements. But this is not the self-consciousness that is identical to its world. The I that is identical to the world is the self-consciousness of the phronimos.

7. Conclusion

This is a good place to stop. I'll end by recapping some of the major points we have stumbled upon in these essays, along with some of the concerns that have been suppressed.

The central premise of the Deduction's argument is that the *I* is necessarily unified. There is no criteria for this unity, and it is thus impossible to consider the possibility of its disunity. The unity of apperception, of self-consciousness, is at the same time "the highest point to which one must affix all use of the understanding, even the whole of logic and, after it, transcendental philosophy; indeed this faculty is the understanding itself. (B134n)"

Since the understanding, as the faculty of self-consciousness, is at the same time the faculty of judgement, the forms of judgement, the manner in which judgements are unified or held together, must be traced back to self-consciousness. The manner in which the *I* is unified is the manner in which judgements are unified; categorial unity is thus identical to the unity of self-consciousness.

To fix our gaze on the world from the perspective of self-consciousness is to conceive of the world as *all* there is. And this is, at the same time, to conceive of the world as everything that can be thought, that can be brought to the unity of self-consciousness through judgement. The forms of thinking are then conceived as the forms of experience, and we can no more discover new forms of thinking as we can discover a still-larger world in which our world is contained.

We saw how this affected the possibility of synthetic a priori knowledge. The categories, in being the form of the world, are the form of the *spatiotemporal* world, and in this sense ground the possibility of a unified space and time. Categorial unity is, at once, spatiotemporal unity. To pry apart these unities is to imagine the possibility of distinct forms of sensibility, no doubt unified by the categories, but distinct nonetheless. But this involves the possibility of a contentful self-consciousness, contained in a world parts of which it cannot reach. We rejected this possibility as absurd, but failed to consider its implications for the notion of thinking. The point of the *Critique* as a whole is to reveal the boundaries of knowledge. Thought can go past these boundaries, and indeed often does, but in doing so it loses its right to knowledge. In equating the unity of self-consciousness with the unity of time, we have lost track of this strand of the text. Here's Sebastian Rödl (2008) on this point:

It may be sensible to hold, as Kant does, that the form represented by the schema exhausts knowledge, but it is absurd to claim that it exhausts thought. If it did there would be no *critique* of the schema, no limitation of its valid application. The gap between category and schema is to allow us to think beyond the schema, even though we do not know beyond it. But closing the gap must not be locking ourselves into the schema. It must not deprive us even of the capacity to think beyond it. (p. 8)

This thought, which Rödl attributes to Hegel, is a serious concern. Our characterization of the unity of self-consciousness cannot foreclose the possibility of unbounded thought. The issue is this. I am my world, and my world is spatiotemporal, yet somehow I am able to think beyond the spatiotemporal, and thus beyond the world. But if the world is all there is, how could this be possible? In a more complete treatment, we would have to grapple with this problem. Perhaps the solution is *Tractarian*, and then we would have to claim that any attempt to impose limitations on knowledge must collapse in on itself.

We have also ignored here the question of spatial unity only because time appears to be the more fundamental form of unification. But this is of course not true. For Kant, space and time are inextricably connected, and the representation of time is only possible through the representation of space. The representation of succession, the fundamental relation which allows for intuitions to be connected in time, is only possible through a figurative synthesis of spatial manifolds (B154). Time is represented as a unity only in virtue of the unification of spatial manifolds. In a more complete and thorough treatment of the unity of experience, this connection between space and time would not be so neglected.

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