Theoretical Issues in Kant

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Kant's Philosophical Method (II)*

Summary

The author in this text offers a series of hypotheses regarding the manner in which Kant solved the fundamental problem of transcendental philosophy, namely, the problem of the possibility of synthetic judgements a priori. The task at hand is to determine the a priori conditions required for synthetic judgements to be presumed as either given or true. This, as the author himself indicates, entails an analysis of some of the major steps of Kant's philsophical metod: the theory of categories, the metaphysical and trandscendental exposition of judgements, the status of concepts (eg. space and time), and the operations of pure reason. The author also offers an analysis of the theses of objectivity and ideality, as well as Kant's transcendental deduction. In the end, the author demonstrates that there is a circle in Kant's transcendental proofs, although not a vicious one.

I. Starting the Analysis of the Fundamental Problem of Transcendental Philosophy

Few commentators would deny that in solving the fundamental problem of transcendental philosophy – the problem of the possibility of synthetic judgements *a priori* – Kant employed the method of analysis and synthesis. There are, however, many disagreements as to the nature of the steps which he actually performed. I submit here a series of specific hypotheses about the actual moves of Kant's. An additional and not negligible interest of this kind of research is that it introduces a systematic order into different and apparently disconnected parts of transcendental doctrines and clarifies the structure of arguments produced by Kant.

Kant himself pointed out that in the *Critique of Pure Reason* he proceeded by the method of synthesis, and that in the *Prolegomena* he followed the way of analysis (*Prol*, A 38-9). We shall, however, be well advised not to take this remark too literally. Some important aspects of the initial problem situation of the analysis are less explicit in the *Prolegomena* than the first *Critique*. Thus, for instance, the former book does not state quite clearly that the fundamental problem of transcendental logic in its general form also concerns synthetic judgements *a posteriori*.[1] The first *Critique* leaves

* This paper is a continuation of my »Kant's Philosophical Method« (I), *Synthesis Philosophica* 12 (1991), pp.467–484. Quoted below as KPM (I)

[1] See KPM (I), * 4.

no doubt about that. It sins, in turn, by frequently mixing analytical with synthetical procedures.

The problem of the possibility of synthetic judgments *a priori* is not a problem of proving a proposition, but a problem of finding the *a priori* conditions which would ensure that these judgements be possible, i. e., that they can be true or false in the domain of appearances. Since Kant proceeded by the method of analysis and synthesis, he must have started by supposing the problem as already solved. Which means, in the present case, that he must have presupposed that at least some synthetic judgements *a priori* were not only possible, but positively true in the domain of objects given in sensible intuition, or, to put it otherwise, that empirical truth conditions of some synthetic judgements were realized.

This is precisely the opening move of the *Prolegomena*, as explained by Kant himself. In order to solve the fundamental problem of the possibility of synthetic judgements *a priori* in agreement with the analytic method we must, says Kant, presuppose (voraussetzen) »that such knowledge produced by pure reason is real (wirklich)« (P, A 46). The reality of a piece of knowledge is immanent so that the truth of the judgement which expresses it can be exhibited in concreto (ibid.). To put it otherwise, knowledge expressed in a judgement is real if that judgement is true of objects given in our intuition. Judgements presupposed by Kant to be real in this sense are those of pure mathematics, as well as some judgements of natural science, like the principle of the permanence of the substance and the principle of causality (P., *15). I say some judgements of natural science, because Kant considered only such judgements which might be taken as being true beyond reasonable doubt of objects that appear to us. Since no judgement about, for instance, fundamental forces can possibly be true in that sense, Kant never mentions Newton's second law nor his inverse square law for the force of gravitation as given at the starting point of the analysis.

Kant's choice of the starting point for analysis has occasioned many misunderstandings. Successive commentators wanted to see in it Kant's uncritical allegiance to Euclid and Newton. This way of looking at the matter is, however, entirely unjustified. Kant did indeed believe that judgments of pure mathematics and physics which he presupposed as real were either apodictically certain or at least stood in complete agreement with experience, being in any case undisputed (*unbestritten*, P, A 39; cf. p, A 41, 46-7, 124; B 20, 189). Yet, in the present context, these judgements were not assumed as secure premisses upon which some other knowledge was to be grounded, but only as the starting point of a heuristic procedure which aimed at finding the *a priori* conditions of possibility, that is, of truth or falsity, of all synthetic judgments (as well as of their probability from the principle of possibility) (*Prol*, A 40). What he was hoping for was to turn into his advantage the fact that there are some judgements the truth of which can presumably be shown in concreto, a circumstance through which the search for conditions of their truth or falsity was rendered much more easier: »This facilitates our work greatly for here universal considerations are not only applied to facts, but even start from them, while in the synthetic procedure they must strictly be derived in abstracto from concepts« (*Prol*, A 47, tr. p. 30, my italics). This same

strategy is touched upon in the first *Critique* where it is said that the critical enquiry measures the faculty of knowing something *a priori* by its own deeds.[2]

From Kant's methodological point of view, it is just a lucky accident (Es trifft sich aber glücklicher Weise..., *Prol*, A 39) that there are undisputed, objecitvely true judgements. If this were not the case, and if we would nevertheless want to employ the method of analysis in solving the fundamental problem of transcendental philosophy, we would still have to start by taking some synthetic judgement as if (als ob) they were true in order to try to find out necessary and sufficient conditions of this supposition. In all essential aspects, our procedure in such a case would be the same as the one actually followed by Kant. We would certainly have to consider at the very beginning the ways in which synthetic judgements relate to objects and here he would no doubt be eager to study the question of how mathematical judgements acquire objective meaning.

Far from concealing a dogmatic allegiance, Kant's study of the objective truth conditions of synthetic judgements *a priori* actually generalizes the sceptical thrust against metaphysics. Instead of doubting *whether* propositions on such and such subject matter (for instance, the propositions of the Newtonian physics) are true or false, Kantian scepticism wants to know what it means to say that judgements having a certain logical form are true and decidable. The shift operated by Kant is thus the one from doubting or denying – as traditional sceptics did – to systematically scrutinizing the very possibility of whole classes of judgements to be true and known as such. By doing so, Kant was actually not trying to refute scepticism, but was rather trying to deepen it. Indeed, in spite of the fact that Kant offers a refutation of the material scepticism of Descartes and Berkeley (B 274, 519n), his transcendental idealism is none the less a form of scepticism: it limits our knowledge by proving that we are necessarily ignorant of all and any objects which do not belong to the domain of possible experience.[3]

2. Transformation

2.1. Discovery of Categories

The next move of Kant's, the one which corresponds to the transformation phase of the method, must have consisted in analyzing the semantical fact that some synthetic *a priori* judgements are given as being objectively true. Here, the most natural first step is to distinguish between the form and the content of judgments. In studying logical forms of judgements, Kant relied heavily upon traditional formal logic:

»Here the work of the logicians lay before me, finished though not completely free of defects, and put me in the position to draw up a complete table of pure functions of the understanding, which were yet undetermined in respect of any object« (*Prol* A 120, tr. p. 86; cf. B 95).

So far as I can see, the only important improvement of the traditional doctrine of the forms of judgements proposed by Kant was the distinction

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(Vermittelstder Tatselbst), ibid., A 48, tr. p. 31, my italics. Ondeeds of our reason, cf. *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 788-9 and 795

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Cf, Loparić 1988.

between negative and limitative judgements, which are generally treated as being equivalent by contemporary logicians (Meyer, for instance).

After having established the *complete list* of logical forms of judgements, Kant turned to the study of their content. Here his problem was to find out which determination the content must possess in order that judgements of such and such forms might be true of it. That is how categories were discovered and exposed.

In the second edition of the first *Critique* Kant added some methodological remarks which seem to concern the present phase of the employment of the combined method. One of them introduces the distinction between the metaphysical and the transcendental *exposition* of an *a priori* given concept.

By exposition of a concept in general Kant understands »the clear, though not necessarily exhaustive, representation of that which belongs to a concept« (B 38). Or, as he says elsewhere, »exposition is the successive representation of the notes of a concept, in so far as they are found by analysis« (Lj, * 105). The exposition of a concept gives us less than a definition of it, since its completeness is always problematic (B 756). A critic can accept it »as being up to certain point valid, though still entertaining doubts as to the completeness of the analysis« (B 757).

Now, metaphysical exposition »contains that which exhibits the concept as given *a priori*« (B 38). That is to say, it simply unpacks, by analysis, the notes of *a priori* given concepts. Such an analysis is called metaphysical because in Kant methaphysics (a title which he bestows »to the whole of pure philosophy, inclusive of criticism«) comprehends »the investigation of all that can even be known *a priori* as well as the exposition of that which constitutes a system of pure philosophical modes of knowledge of this type in distincition, therefore, from all empirical and from all mathematical employment of reason« (B 869).

Transcendental exposition, on the other hand, does not limit itself to taking apart notes of an *a priori* given concept, but explains it »as a principle from which the possibility of other *a priori* synthetic knowledge can be understood« (B 40). Clearly, transcendental exposition scrutinizes concepts in precise agreement with the general aim of the transformation, which, as we have seen, is to find the necessary conditions of possibility for synthetic *a priori* judgments to be presupposed as given at the beginning. We must therefore attribute to transcendental exposition the discovery of categories as necessary conditions of that semantical fact.

How are we to describe the steps of the transcendental exposition of categories? A remark from the *Prolegomena* helps us in finding an answer:

»Finally, I referred these function of judging to objects in general, or rather to the condition of determining judgments as objectively valid, and there arose pure concepts of the understanding« (*Prol.*, A 120; tr. p. 86).

This fundamental text makes it quite clear that Kant's theory of categories is a part of his theory of truth. Categories belong, so to speak, to the meta-language in which Kant studies truth conditions of given logical forms of judgments. The starting point of his study are these forms themselves. Categories are introduced next in order to express conceptually (discursively) determinations which objects must possess in order for

judgments having *a priori* determined forms to be true of them. In other words, categories are semantical and not syntactical concepts employed in order to characterize in an abstract way the truth conditions of synthetic *a priori* judgements. That is the reason why the number of primitive categories is exactly the same as the number of the functions of judgment.

Since in the present context truth means the truth of objects which can be given to us, categories are said to express determinations of things in general »in so far as the manifold of their intuition must be thought« in one judgement or another (A 245). In another passage Kant explains them as being »concepts of object in general, by means of which the intuition of an object is regarded as determined in respect of one of the logical functions of judgment« (B 128). In many other texts categories are treated as applying not to objects in general unspecified as to the mode of their givenness to us, but to »objects of intuition in general« (B 105). He likes to stress again and again that by categories alone we can »understand anything in the manifold of intuition, that is, think an object of intuition« (B 106).

It would be an error, however, to conclude from these remarks that categories cannot be referred to objects in general. They can: »The categories accordingly extend further then sensible intuition, since they think objects in general, without regard to the special mode (sensibility) in which they may be given« (B 309). Categories have thus a »transcendental meaning« in virtue of which they may be referred not only to things in general, but even to the things in themselves (B 305, 309).

Consider, for instance, the Kantian treatment of metaphysical judgments like »God is omnipotent«. Since this judgment contains concepts which have no objective meaning, it is itself without objective validity or invalidity and cannot be studied further within Kant's intuitive semantics. Yet, since it has the subject-predicate form, we know in an entirely *a priori* way what it purports to say, namely, that a certain substance is determined by such and such an accident. This we know previously to knowing whether the substance and the accident in question can really be given to us. The same is true of judgements of whatever form. Their abstract truth conditions can be determined by means of the same categories which are employed in studying the truth conditions of objectively valid judgements.

We must conclude, therefore, that in addition to the intuitionistic concept of truth Kant also possesses an entirely abstract concept of truth. The latter concept can be explained in the traditional way as agreement (Übereinstimmung) between knowledge and its object (B 82). This purely abstract explanation of truth is admittedly always presupposed in the Kantian intuitionistic theory of truth developed in transcendental logic. There is in Kant an abstract *a priori* semantics which figures as a companion to his purely intuitive *a priori* semantics.

There are consequently in Kant two different concepts of category corresponding to two different concepts of truth. To truth as the agreement of judgments and objects in general correspond abstract (that is, non schematized) categories, and to truth understood as the agreement between judgements and empirical objects correspond transcendental (schematized) categories. Moreover, since the truth in the first sense is always presupposed in transcendental studies, abstract categories must be considered as

being logically more primitive. In this most primitive sense categories are nothing other than discursive representations of determinations which objects in general must possess in order that judgements having certain *a priori* given forms may be true of them. To my knowledge, Kant offers only once such »exposition« of categories, in a text where they are treated in agreement with our interpretation, just »as being logical functions applied only to objects in general« (*Gebr.* A 136).

2.2. Discovery of Forms of Intuition

As we have seen, the truth of a synthetic judgement *a priori* consists in its agreement with an object that can be given to us. In order to construct an *a priori* theory of truth conditions of such judgments, we have therefore to specify *a priori* the conditions of the givenness of objects. Kant searched for these conditions by analyzing the givenness of those objects of which synthetic judgements of mathematics and pure physics were supposed to be true. There is little doubt, indeed, that the mode of the givenness of mathematical objects, in particular, served for Kant as the guiding principle in his discovery of space as the necessary *a priori* form of external intuition.

Kant noticed that to suppose a mathematical judgment to be true is equivalent to say that it is or can be instantiated by *mathematical construction*. Since mathematical judgements are not empirical but necessary truths, constructions of mathematical concepts cannot be empirical. This is presumably how Kant arrived at the requirement that spatial schemata, as well as spatial constructions which they produce, be grounded on *a priori* intuition. The same line of thought seems to have lead Kant to the discovery of the aprioricity of the concept of space and of all geometrical concepts as well (cf. P, ** 7 and 8).

Similar transcendetal (*a priori* semantical) considerations about the givenness of referents of the propositions of rational mechanics must have lead Kant to the discovery of time as an *a priori* form of intuition and of a priori schemata for time construction.

We should always keep in mind that the problem of Kant's here is not a problem-to-prove, but a problem-to-find. What he was after were *operational* conditions which can possibly generate judgments of required logical form and produce intuitive forms which may make such judgements true and provable. In fact, the fundamental conditions specified by Kant are not *inborn representations*, but *inborn operations* capable of generating objectively possible judgements. We should not forget either that in Kant no representation whatsoever is inborn, that all of them, even the pure representations of space and time and categories, are acquired. Kant writes:

»The Critigue admits absolutely no divinely implanted (anerschaffene) or innate (angeborene) representations. It regards them all, whether they belong to intuition or to concepts of the understanding, as acquired« (*Ent.* A 68; tr. p. 135).

Both »the form of things in space and time« and »the synthetic uniting of the manifold of concepts« are brought out *a priori* by the human cognitive apparatus. However, says Kant,

»there must be a ground in the subject which makes it possible for these representations to originate in this and no other manner, and this enables them to be related to objects which are not yet given. This ground at least is innate« (ibid.).

Thus, for instance, »the formal intuition, which is called space« is not innate, but only its »formal ground, e.g. the possibility of a representation of space« (*Ent.* A. 70; tr. p. 136) is innate. The same is, of course, true of time.

This critical doctrine of the original acquisition of representations of space and time echoes Kant's views already expressed in his *Inaugural Dissertation*. There Kant says that each of these representations has been acquired, not indeed by abstraction from the sensing of objects, but from the very action of the mind, and action co-ordinating the mind's sense according to perpetual laws«. For, he argues, the »sensations excite this act of mind but do not influence the intuition«. Nor, he adds, »is there anything else here born with us except the law of the mind according to which it joins its own sense together in a fixed manner as a resultt of the presence of an object«. Moreover, this fixed manner of joining sense is like an immutable diagram« which can be »cognised intuitively« (*Dissertation* A 23; tr. p. 74).

Analogous remarks from the critical period apply to categories:

»These likewise are acquired and not innate, but their acquisition, like that of space, is originally and presupposes nothing innate except the subjective conditions of the spontaneity of thought (in accordance with the unity of apperceptiion)« (*Ent.* A 71; tr. p. 136; cf. B 91-2).

This doctrine too has a parallel already in the *Dissertation*. The concepts of possibility, existence, necessity, substance, cause, etc., says Kant there,

»are not to be sought in the senses, but in the very nture of the pure intellect, and that not as concepts born with it, but as concepts abstracted out of the on the occasion of experience« (*Dissertation*, A 11, tr. p. 59).

Let us now sum up the main discoveries Kant achieved by analyzing the fact that some synthetic *a priori* judgements are given as true. All of them can be packed up in two transcendental theses, the *thesis of necessity* and the *thesis of a the prioricity* of categories, of forms of intuition and of corresponding construction procedures. The first thesis says that the content (objects) of true synthetic *a priori* judgements must necessarily possess detterminations expressed by categories and that they must be given in space and time and in forms generatable by *a priori* construction procedures. The second thesis says that categories, forms of space and time and corresponding constructions cannot originate from experience, but must be *a priori*. Both theses are transcendental, i.e. belong to an *a priori* semantics, since they are arrived at by analyzing the semantical fact that some judgments are given as true.

3. Resolution

3.1. The Nature of the Task

In agreement with Kant's views on the method of analysis, the resolution in the present case has to prove the validity of all *a priori* elements of pure reason which have been found in the transformation to be necessary conditions of synthetic propositions *a priori*. The accomplishment of this

task requires that the very givenness or existence be previously ensured. These two problems are clearly identified in the Introduction of the first *Critique*.

The second problem asks us to give »a complete enumeration of all fundamental concepts that go to constitute« pure knowledge, »a task which is recognized as being one of the main tasks of the *Critique*« (B 27). And, of course, in order to constitute the complete enumeration of the fundamental concepts (and we must add, of fundamental operations) one has to start by ensuring their very existence. Both is achieved by what Kant calls methaphysical exposition and deduction.

Once we have the list of all *a priori* possessions of the understanding we must proceed to »judge them as to their value or lack of value, and so of rightly appraising them« (*ibid.*). In the present case this means that we have to prove the objective validity (empirical reality or reference) of all *a priori* concepts. This is achieved by transcendental deduction.

Notice that no particular problem of validity arises in relation to *a priori* necessary operations. They are valid by the very fact that they are *a priori* given or feasible. And that is a problem of the metaphysics of our cognitive apparatus.

3.2. Metaphysical Exposition and Deduction of *a priori* Concepts

Kant's hope to be able to offer a complete and exhaustive methaphysical exposition of the fundamental concepts of reason is founded in the following considerations: »I have to deal in this case with nothing save reason itself and its pure thinking; and to obtain a complete knowledge of these, there is no need to go far afield, since I come upon them in my own self« (A XIV). And he adds in the same vein that *a priori* elements, »since they have not to be sought for without, cannot remain hidden from us, and in all probability are sufficiently small in extent to allow of our apprehending them in their completeness« (B 27). In this respect, the formal logic again provides the necessary guideline for framing the philosophical research: »Common logic itself supplies an example, how all the simple acts of reason can be enumerated completely and systematically« (A XIV).

As regards the concepts of space and time, the metaphysical exposition establishes, among other things, that they are not empirical but *a priori* given (B 38, 46), and that they necessarily underlie the concept of outer intuitions (B 38, 46). The concept of time also necessarily underlies all inner intuitions (B 37). As we see, all the main properties of the concepts of space and time found in the transformation are now exposed as given *a priori*.

The B edition of the first *Critique* contains some interesting emandations concerning metaphysical deduction. For instance, the proof that the possibility of apodictic principles concerning relations of time, including axioms of time, is grounded upon the *a priori* necessity of the concept of time and must be placed, says Kant, under the title of transcendental and not of metaphysical deduction (B 47). The reason is clear: the metaphysical deduction has to do with the origin and not with the grounds of elements

of knowledge. In agreement with this self-correction, Kant omits from the text of the B editon on the metaphysical exposition of the concept of space the whole paragraph in which space is characterized as the ground for apodictic certainty of geometrical judgements.

As far as I know, Kant never talks about the metaphysical exposition of categories. Yet, clearly, he offers it on many occasions, that is, whenever he describes them as *a priori* given concepts. In their case, Kant is much more interested in a deeper metaphysical inquiry, namely, in showing their *a priori* origin in our mental apparatus. No, such atempts are made in the first *Critique* as regards the concepts of space and time. The inquiry into the origin of the categories is called their metaphysical deduction. This procedure »dissects« the birthplace of categories, which is the understanding, and follows up »the pure concepts to their first seeds and dispositions in the human understanding, in which they lie prepared, till at last, on the occasion of experience, they are developed« (B 90-1). By this method Kant discovers the *a priori* origin and thus the *a priori* givenness of the twelve basic categories which correspond to the twelve basic logical functions of proposition formation, already identified as *a priori* given by formal logicians.

Metaphysical deduction has to be distinguished not only from transcendental deduction, which is essentially semantical, but also from the purely psychological or subjective deduction, which is a theory about our cognitive powers as causes of pieces or our *a priori* knowledge (A XVI, B VIII and the letter to J.W.A. Kosmann, September 1789). The latter is hypothetical in character as any other search for causes is (A XVII), while the metaphysical deduction is secure in the sense that it considers operations of the understanding actually given in inner experience. Kant does not seem to have ever admitted the existence of an *a priori* principle from which the complete list of the fundamental elements of our objective knowledge could be metaphysically deduced. He declared explicitly that the number of categories cannot be justified *a priori* (B 146). The constitution of their complete list remains, therefore, based on the direct inner experience and on the history of the modes of the functioning of our cognitive apparatus (cf. Kruger 1968).

It is sometimes implied that Kant thought to have shown that all eucledian geometrical postulates are *a priori* given as well. Kant takes for granted, indeed, that some postulates, like the first two Euclidean postulates, are a possibility of rejecting the postulate of parallels. The existence of non-Euclidean geometries seems, therefore, to be entirely compatible with Kant's metaphysical doctrine of geometrical knowledge. This knowledge is *a priori*, but does not necessarily consist of just one axiomatic system.

It is also widely believed that Kant granted only one system of logical operations, namely, the Aristotelian syllogistic. But this is not true. Kant rejected the universal validity of at least one of Aristotle's logical principles, the principle of the excluded middle (cf. Loparić 1990). Although he did not work out his insights about the necessary limitation of the validity of this principle, there seems to be little doubt that he made the first step in the direction of intuitionistic logic.

Not all operations necessary for ensuring the possibility of knowledge can be represented as given by metaphysical exposition and deduction. At least

one of the operations, the original apperception, is only shown to be logically necesary without being further described or represented. It could not be otherwise, for the original apperception, the supreme condition of the givennes of any object, is not given at all. It is a mere logical construct of pure reason and differs, therefore, essentially from other operations, which in addition to be proved as necesaary are actually given as in inner experience (as is the case of logical operations of proposition formation).

3.3. Transcendental Deduction of the Concepts of Space and Time and of Categories

As I have said above, the second main task of the resolution of the present problem is to give *an appraisal* of concepts which were found to be necessary *a priori* conditions of synthetic *a priori* knowledge presupposed as given. The solution of this task is obviously decisive for the success of transcendental logic in general.

In a footnote appended to page XVI of the *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science* (published in 1796, that is, five years after the A edition of the first *Critique* and one year before the B edition), Kant distinguishes three main transcendental problems concerning categories. The first of these problems requires us to show that categories »are capable of no meaning or employment in any other reference than to objects of experience« (MAN, A XX; tr. p. 14). The second problem asks us to establish that experience is possible only through these concepts. Finally, the third problem demands an explanation of »how experience is possible by means of these categories« (ibid.).

It is easy to show that the first two problems are solved by Kant in the transcendental deduction of the B edition (but in inverse order). I shall call these solutions the ideality thesis (** 22, 23) and the objectivity thesis (** 20, 21) respectively. The third problem is attacked later on in the chapter on principles of the understanding (cf. B 167) in which it is proved that categories express basic *a priori* constitutive features of empirical objects. Some indispensable premisses for proving this thesis of the *a priori* categoric constitution for appearances are contained in the chapter on schematism.

The objectivity and ideality theses for the concepts of space and time are proved in their transcendental deduction offered earlier in the first *Critique*, immediately after their metaphysical and transcendental expositions (B 44, 51-2, 119-20). In this case, too, transcendental deduction is an appraisal and must therefore be treated as belonging to the resolution.

In order to illustrate Kant's way of reasoning here, I shall briefly outline his proof of the objectivity thesis for categories. Suppose that our sensations represent determined objects. Then it must be possible for us to connect these sensations by determining concepts. For otherwise, these sensations would not refer (correspond) to or represent determined objects (* 17), which is contrary to the supposition.

Now, operations by means of which we conceptually connect sensations (and give them relation to objects) are judgements. Therefore, determined

objects referred to through sensations, as well as these sensations themselves, must be thinkable in judgements (* 19). This implies that objects represented by sensations must be determined in respect of the logical form of judgements. Now, according to the necessity thesis established in the transformation, categories are conceptual expressions of determinations which objects of intuition must possess in order to be thinkable in judgements. Therefore, if sensations contained in a given intuition refer to a determined object, then this object is necessarily subject to categories (* 20).

As we see, the objectivity thesis for categories is settled in a purely analytical way, by making explicit the *a priori* conditions of our significant talk about determined objects which are presumed to be given to us in empirical intuition. It is an analytic truth obtained deductively from the premiss that sensations given in our intuition refer to determined objects and from the necessity thesis for categories.

Let us sum up the results obtained by Kant in the analysis of the fundamental problem of transcendental logic. Having supposed that judgements of pure mathematics and physics are assumed as objectively true, Kant found by means of conceptual analysis this supposition that objects of which these judgments are true must obey some *a priori* conditions of givenness and that, in addition, they must possess some *a priori* conceptual determinations which characterize them as the possible content of logical forms of judgments considered. The determinations mentioned are expressible in concepts and are called categories.

Kant also found that there must be some *a priori* instantiation procedures for all fundamental concepts, that is, constitution procedures for their referents. As we have seen above, all Kantian discoveries in the transformation can be summarized in two theses, that of the necessity and that of the aprioricity of all fundamental elements of synthetic knowledge. The former says that such elements are logically necessary in order that synthetic judgements *a priori* be possible. The latter says that such elements must be *a priori*.

In the following resolution part, Kant established the list of all fundamental elements and proves the thesis of ideality and of objective validity for all fundamental concepts. The latter thesis has the form of a conditional and says that if our sensations give us (represent) determined objects, then these objects must satisfy categories. The former thesis says that fundamental concepts have no reference and thus no cognitive meaning beyond the domain of empirical objects. The resolution part has, therefore, solved the two first main problems of transcendental research mentioned above. What there still is to be done is to solve the third main transcendental problem, namely, to show how ecperience is possible by means of concepts of space, time and of categories. Kant has to explain, in other words, by what kind of procedure the determined objects which are given to us in our sensation come to possess determinations or features expressed in fundamental concepts. I shall call this problem the constitution problem for empirical referents or objects of synthetic knowledge. It is treated in the second or synthetic half of the Kantian solution of the problem of the possibility of synthetic *a priori* judgements.

4. Constructions

The view that the main problem of Kant's in the synthesis is to show how it happens that objects be actually characterized by categories stands in good agreement with various texts. It is explicitly mentioned in paragraph 22 of the B edition of the first *Critique*, where Kant makes the difference between showing that categories are »grounds of possibility of all experience in general« and showing »how they make experience possible« (B 167). The general form of the problem is implied by Kant's definition of transcendental exposition. This a priori semantical approach of an *a priori* concept attempts, as we have said above, to discover in it a principle from which other *a priori* synthetic knowledge can be understood. This is how categories were hit upon and »deduced« by Kant. But, for the purposes of the transcendental exposition of a concept, it is not enough to show that it makes other *a priori* knowledge possible, but also that such knowledge does really flow from it (B 40). This is the problem of synthesis in its most general form, that is, concerning all fundamental *a priori* concepts.

The constitution problem is solved by »construction and proof«, that is to say, in precise agreement with the general schema of the synthetic method. Kant leaves no doubt, indeed, as to the fact that his transcendental proofs are conceived as being analogous to mathematical proofs, and that the possibility of making experiences of objects determined by spatial, temporal and categorical features plays in former proofs the role which is played by constructions in latter proofs. According to Kant, an essential rule for all proofs is the one that says that we must first establish »The objective validity of the concepts and the possibility of their *a priori* synthesis« (B 810). We must possess means either to constitute objects for them or to find empirical examples for them. Kant adds:

»In mathematics it is a priori intuition which guides my synthesis: and thereby all our conclusions can be drawn immediately from pure intuition. In transcendental knowledge, so long as we are concerned only with concepts of the understanding, our guide is the possibility of experience. Such proof does not show that the given concept (for instance, of that which happens) leads directly to another concept (that of a cause); for such a transition would be a saltus which could not be justified. The proof proceeds by showing that experience itself, and therefore the object of experience, would be impossible without a connection of this kind. Accordingly, the proof must also at the same time show the possibility of arriving synthetically and a priori at some knowledge of things which was not contained in the concepts of them« (B 810-11).

It should be clear from this passage that transcendental proofs in general are not merely discursive, but also necessarily »constructional«, as mathematical proofs are. Constructions which Kant has in mind are of course those which can be executed in accordance with schematic procedures. By means of these constructions, objects which we are talking about in the principles of the understanding are reached before the proof itself is produced. In other words, in proving these principles Kant proceeds by construction and proof in the same way as geometers do, and not by simple conceptual analysis. What is more, there is no other way to prove these principles. If we limit ourselves to conceptual analysis, we cannot provide desired proofs. If, on the other hand, we do presuppose constructions, we can generate good proofs and these proofs as well as the principles proved are apodictically certain (B 765). What makes them certain in this sense are therefore

the »intuitive data, that is, possible experience« (B 223), constructed or constituted by *a priori* procedures.

Notice that Kant's constitution problem is not the general one in the sense that he does not have to bother about objective reference of any one concept. He has only to specify the construction or constitution procedures for concepts of space and time and for categories, because they are the only concepts *a priori* necessary for the existence of objective knowledge. He can accordingly entirely neglect the problem of the construction of mathematical and physical concepts. Kant's schematism is an *a priori* theory of reference only for fundamental philosophical concepts, and not of any other pure concepts. Empirical concepts are also left aside since their theory of reference requires that, in addition to the *a priori* schemata, the empirical schemata also be taken into account.

The *a priori* constitution procedures for the concept of space are constructions which introduce spatial relations among pure or empirical intuitive data. They may be called Kantian spatial schemata. The *a priori* constitution procedures for the concept of time are Kantian temporal schemata. For they are »nothing but *a priori* determinations of time in accordance with rules« (B 184), that is, they are *a priori* rules for generating examples of temporal relations. The *a priori* intuition of time can also always be expressed by means of spatial analogies (B 50). In the B edition of the first *Critique*, Kant even goes so far as to affirm the priority of pure spatial constructions over temporal ones. We cannot generate a representation of time, he says on B 156, except under the image of line, which we draw (cf. also B 154 and 292). The same schematic procedure is employed in instantiating the categories over intuitively pure as well as empirical data.

5. Proofs

The proofs that the concepts of space and time express *a priori* constitutive features of empirical objects are grounded upon the schemata controlled by the operations of the synthesis of the empirical manifold which generate spatial and temporal relations among elements contained in it. The properly inferential part of the synthesis consists in this case simply in observing that, in view of the schematic constitution procedures appearances are necessarily organized by pure forms of space and time, and that entities organized in that manner are edequate examples of our concepts of space and time. One of the texts which contains a proof of such a kind is the following:

»We have already been able with but litttle difficult tto explain how the concepts of space and time, although a priori modes of knowledge, must necessarily relate to objects, and how independently of all experience they make possible a synthetic knowledge of objects. For since only by means of such pure forms of sensibility can an object appear to us, and so be an object of empirical intuition, space and time are pure intuitions which contain a priori the condition of the possibility of object as appearances, and the synthesis which takes place in them has objective validity« (B 121-2).

The present text, which refers back to passages of *Transcendental Aesthetics*, where Kant establishes the objective validity of the concepts of space and time (B 44 51-2), does not distinguish explicitly between problems of resolution and problems which legitimately belong to the synthesis proper.

One of the merits of our present approach is to make us able to distinguish among aspects of Kant's doctrine which belong to methodologically distinct parts to order them in an overall scheme.

Kant's reasons in favour of the thesis that categories express *a priori* constitutive features of empirical objects are likewise only implicit in the first edition. They consist in substance in reading the principles of the understanding from schematic constructions. Consider, for instance, the proof that all intuitions are extensive magnitudes. It ends by the assertion:

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

Before going into some details about Kant's transcendental proofs, let us ask whether the principles of the understanding offer, as expected, the solution to the fundamental problem of transcendental logic in its general form, that is, whether they determine objects of experience in such a way that synthetic judgements about them can be true. The answer is that they do. The principles of the understanding, Kant explains, »are not only true *a priori*, but are indeed the source of all truth (that is, of agreement of our knowledge with objects) in as much as they contain in themselves the ground of possibility of experience viewed as the sum of all knowledge wherein objects can be given to us« (B 296). What Kant has in mind is the following: the principles of the understanding say that objects of experience are determined by categories. Since categories express determinations which qualify objects as presentable (thinkable) by means of objectively valid judgments, such judgements are now proved to be possible about objects of experience. In that sense, principles of understanding are the source of the truth of all other synthetic judgments *a priori* as well as *a posteriori*. For instance, the principle of causality expresses the transcendental or *a priori* semantical condition of truth of all empirical judgments about causal sequences (B 247).

We face here one of the most decisive turning points in the history of philosophy. Fundamental principles of philosophy, from now on, are no more those of ontology but, as Kant says, those of the exposition of appearances (B 303). The proud name of ontology has given place to a modest theory of intuitive reference and truth, that is, to intuitive (constructive) *a priori* semantics. Understanding no more produces *a priori* knowledge of objects in general, but only guarantees conditions of cognitively significant talk about objects accessible to us. The age of modern analytical philosophy has begun.

6. Some Limitations of the Transcendental Method

6.1. The Incompleteness of the Analysis

It seems to me that the preceding discussion offers a good approximation of Kant's actual strategy in solving the fundamental problem of transcendental logic. The evidence displayed above give it, I hope, the credentials of a plausible working hypothesis for spelling out the details of the first *Critique*. In order to strengthen it a bit, I shall make some additional remarks on the power of the Kantian method of analysis as applied to the present transcendental problem. In agreement with Kantian terminology, I shall call the combined method so applied the transcendental method.

The transformation or the analysis proper is considered by Kant as being entirely unproblematic (unbedenklich, B 28). The obvious reason is that the transformation rests exclusively upon the logical analysis of the initial semantical assumption that some synthetic judgements *a priori* are true. The necessity and the aprioricity of the fundamental elements of synthetic knowledge stands therefore beyond any doubt (A XVII, B 28).

The same cannot be said about the completeness of the resolution. Though the metaphysical exposition which is employed in it proceeds by the logical analysis of *a priori* given concepts and is in so far entirely secure, the very givenness of *a priori* concepts to be exposed cannot be established analytically. Their complete list cannot be established this way either. In this respect, metaphysical exposition must rely upon data revealed by inner experience and also by historical developments in common logical and mathematics. Now, of course, inner experience is »not to be regarded as empirical knowledge, but as knowledge of the empirical in general« (A 343; cf. B 153). However, we cannot be so confident of it as we are of outer or objective experience. That which is intuited in inner experience is not an object that obeys spatial relations, which are for us the most easy objective properties to grasp, but the working of our cognitive system. A particularly troublesome difficulty about the resources of our inner experience is the fact that we are obliged to recognize the existence of unconscious operations and representations. This means that inner experience is not sufficient for making an inventory of all possessions of human reason and that, in order to do that, we must employ hypothesis and even pure ideas themselves.

As to the data obtained by the study of common logic and mathematics, they are very useful in establishing complete lists of basic operations (A XIV), rules (B IX; *Prol*, * 23), concepts (B 105-6, etc.). Indeed, Kant's general ontology consists of an *a priori* logical system of rules and concepts interpreted over pure time determinations (Prol, * 23). But here again, he doubts the completeness of the system which cannot be eliminated by an apodictic proof.

For the same reason, we always run some risks by saying that our transcendental exposition of a concept is complete. There is a statement of Kant's to the effect that transcendental endeavors in general need constant

revision and that new inferences may be necessary to determine the principles more fully or to change them entirely:

»Reason must not, therefore, in its transcendental endeavors, hasten forward with sanguine expectations, as though the path which it has traversed led directly to the goal, and as though the accepted premisses could be so securely relied upon that there can be no need to return constantly to them and to consider whether we may not perhaps, in the course of the inferences, discover aspects which have been overlooked in the principles, and which render it necessary either to determine these principles more fully or to change them entirely« (B 763-4; my italics).

On the other hand, the transcendental deduction, which, according to our interpretation, is the other part of Kant's resolution, seems to be entirely certain. It cannot be otherwise because this procedure rests entirely upon *a priori* semantical considerations concerning the truth conditions of synthetic propositions as regards to empirically given objects.

6.2. Kant on the Certainty of the Principles of the Understanding

What about the stength of the synthesis? Kant concedes himself that »we encounter in the case of synthesis, for the sake of which the whole critique is undertaken« certain problematic aspects (Bedenklichkeit) which does not arise as regards the analysis proper (B 28).

In the footnote to page XVI of the *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*, which we have already commented upon, Kant says more about the weakness of the synthetic method. The solutions of the three main transcendental problems concerning categories offered in the A edition of the first *Critique* differ in certainty as well as in importance for transcendental philosophy.

The ideality and the objectivity theses which solve the first two problems (whether categories apply beyond the domain of possible experience and whether experience is possible without the application of categoreis) are established with apodictic certainty and belong to the analysis. The same is not true of the thesis of *a priori* constitution which solves the third main problem (that of how categories are applied to the sensible manifold in order to generate experience) and belongs to the synthesis. For the negative purpose of the critique, however, the thesis of *a priori* constitution of experience does not need to be undisputably cartain. This purpose is to lay foundations for a precise determination of limits of pure reason and is already achieved by solving the first two problems. Without the solution of the third problem the system of critical philosophy remains entirely »certain«, says Kant, although not complete. At that stage of elaboration it resembles Newton's system of universal gravitation, which is »well established, even though it carries with it the difficulty that one cannot explain how attraction at a distance is possible« (MAN, A XVII; tr. p. 12). But difficulties are not doubts, Kant observes, and both systems remain well founded even without complete interpretation of their fundamental concepts.

Yet, although the solution of the third problem is »only meritory« in relation to the negative task establishing the limits of our objective knowledge, it is certainly obligatory for the positive purpose of proving that categories

express constitutive property of empirical objects. The relative weakness of the solution of the constitution problem is therefore a weakness of critical philosophy itself.

Another evidence that there are limitations in transcendental proofs is provided by certain tension between some Kantian texts on the certainty of the principles of the understanding. In a paragraph from the *Transcendental Doctrine of Method,* Kant observes that these principles are not proved »directly from the concepts (categories) alone, but always only indirectly through relation of these concepts to something altogether contingent (etwas ganz Zufaelliges), namely, possible experience« (B 765). This indirect character of transcendental proofs does not diminish, however, the strength of the evidence: »When such experience (that is, something as object of possible experience) is presupposed, these principles are indeed apodictically certain; but in themselves, directly, they can never be known *a priori*« (ibid.).

There is a difficulty with this text which is more than a terminological one. It seems strange, indeed, that Kant is willing to call the principles of the understanding apodictic. According to other texts, judgements are apodictic only if they are intuitively evident (B 762; LJ * 35), that is, assertable on grounds that their objects are given in pure intuition. It would appear that such judgements can exist only in pure mathematics. The same line of thought leads us to expect that only this science can offer apodictic proofs. For mathematics alone »derives its knowledge not from concepts but from the construction of them, that is, from intuition, which can be given a priori in accordance with concepts« (B 764). Since the principles of the understanding cannot be proved »directly through the cpnstruction of concepts« (B 764), neither they nor their proofs can be said to be apodictic. Kant thus seems to be caught in a contradiction.

A further complication is added by the fact that not all principles of the understanding are treated as being apodictic without further qualification. In B 199-200 only mathematical principles of the understanding are said to be »unconditionally necessary, that is, apodictic«. The dynamical principles are described in turn as being apodictic »only under the conditions of empirical thought in some experience, therefore only mediately and indirectly«.

What, then, is Kant's view on the certainty of the principles of the understanding and, naturally, of transcendental proofs themselves?

6.3. The Uncertainty of Kantian Constitution Procedures (Schemata)

In order to reconcile Kant's apparently conflicting views about the certainty of different kinds of *a priori* principles, we must focus our attention upon their grounds of proof or, as Kant also says, upon the differences »in the nature of their evidence, that is, as regards the character of the intuitive (and consequently of the demonstrative) factor« peculiar to them (B 223). The difference in »intuitive«, that is, constitutive factors is reflected in »demonstrative« factors, that is, in the nature of the proofs of these principles.

What is the difference in the nature of evidence between the principles of mathematics and those of the understanding? The amswer is that they lie in some aspects of intuitive data (constructions) taken into account in their respective proofs. The principles of mathematics are proved just from construction in pure intuition, without presupposing any additional premiss. They stand as intuitively evident because objects given in our pure intuition cannot but satisfy the properties of the form of space. The mathematical principles of the understanding, on the other hand, do presuppose two additional premises, firstly, that the pure forms of space and time are necessary conditions of our intuitions and, secondly, that our sensations or the real in the perception necessarily have degrees. These two premisses are neither intuitively nor logically necessary, but express only an accidental character of our sensibility, namely, that the sensible manifold is organized in two a priori forms of space and time. Accordingly, the mathematical principles of the understanding are based on something entirely contingent and are therefore less directly or unconditionally evident than the principles of the mathematics.

The same point could be stated in the following way. Whereas the principles of mathematics are true of objects of pure intuition, the mathematical principles of the understanding are true of something else, namely, of conditions of the givenness of these same objects. The features of mathematical objects are thus as indisputably evident as anything else which cannot be otherwise on grounds of our way of having intuitions. The conditions of their giveness are no doubt given together with mathematical objects but are not as such real objects of an intuition. They are no more that a subjectively unavoidable fact. Problems concerning objects themselves differ in nature from problems about conditions of their qiveness and, no doubt, also about conditions of cognitively meaningful talk about them. In other words, problems of transcendental logic stand on a hierarchically higher level than simple object-problems (cf. Loparić 1987).

Returning to our main issue here, since subjectively necessary yet in themselves contingent forms of intuitive data are always also given, they can be employed as grounds in proving the mathematical principles of the understanding. In that sense, these principles can also be said to be intuitively evident and consequently be called apodictic.

Dynamical principles of the understanding are based on further contingent facts about our way of generating intuitions. Since they are concerned with the existence of objects in possible empirical intuition, when we try to prove them by the method of synthesis we must presuppose their conditions of existence as being given in experience. This presupposition is not a subjectively necessary feature of our sensibilitty (B 199). Which is to say that we cannot constitute the conditions of the existence of empirical objects entirely *a priori*, as we can constitute the conditions of their intuition and perception. Instead, we must rely upon empirical analogies in order to find them in experience. Dynamical principles are therefore less directly evident than mathematical ones. Yet, since their ground of evidence is still possible experience, they can nevertheless be viewed as being intuitively evident and can be called apodictic, though in a much weaker sense (B 765).

Let me explain in more detail the difference between the constitution procedures presupposed in these two cases. The schemata for mathematical categories are sufficient, according to Kant, to generate the appearances »as regards their intuition and the real in their perception« (B 221). That is to say that we can constitute in a purely *a priori* way and at will spatial and temporal extensive quanta as well as the degrees of sensations (intensive quanta), which exemplify mathematical categories. The former quanta are generated by a successive addition of homogeneous units (B 182), while the latter are given by continuous and uniform synthesis in time »as we successively descend from a sensation which has a certain degree to its vanishing point, or progressively ascend from its negation to some magnitude of it« (B 183). For instance, we construct the degree of sensations of sunlight by combining a number of »illuminations of the moon« (B 221). The rules for the schemata of mathematical categories are therefore rules for the effective construction of appearances as extensive and intensive quantities.

Operations for instanciating dynamical categories, on the other hand, are not effective constructions. For these categories have to do with the existence of appearances and »existence cannot be constructed« (B 221-2). These categories are therefore not exemplified by constructing *a priori* objects or sequences of objects to which they apply. To be sure, the rule for the construction of dynamical categories are equally *a priori*, but they are not effective. For instance, the rule for instantiating the relation of cause to its effect asks us to search for successions in the sensible manifold, in so far as these successions are subject to a rule (B 183). That is of course not an effective rule for actually constructing causality. The same is true of the schemata of all other dynamical categories. They are not constitutive of the objects which exemplify these categories, but only regulative of the empirical search for such objects. Moreover, they are not defined in an entirely *a priori* way, but necessarily also in terms of empirically given relations. The *a priori* formula for exemplifying the relation of causality, for instance, says us how to proceed in order to find an empirical event (d) which is related to another already given empirical event (c) in a similar way as two other empirical events (d/c=b/a). Though *a priori* as to its form, this schematic procedure is dependent in an obvious way upon our knowledge of empirical temporal relations among events. In other words, it is not defined entirely in terms of *a priori* procedures and concepts.

Summing up, constitution procedures for dynamical categories are in several aspects weaker than procedures corresponding to mathematical categories. That fact reflects itself upun the evidence which we can rely upon in proving dynamical principles. Although all of them are proved by presupposing as given a bit of possible experience and can therefore be called apodictic, intuitive factors relevant are either only subjectively necessary or even positively accidental. This is the reason why dynamic principles of the understanding are said to be necessary in a weaker sense than those of mathematical principles.

6.4. Circularity of Transcendental Proofs

We must finally face another difficulty with transcendental proofs which seems to be an even more serious one. In order to be determined at all, the possible experience presupposed in transcendental proofs must be characterized, as we have seen by categories. But that means that we must think of them as satisfying the very principles which they help to prove. Each principle of the understanding has thus »the peculiar character that it makes possible the very experience which is its own ground of proof, and that in this experience it must always itself be presupposed« (B 765). There is, therefore, a circle in transcendental proofs. The question now arises whether it is vicious.

The answer is that it is not. This can be shown by considering once more the exact nature of the problem situation which Kant is confronted with. When he starts to prove, for instance, the principle of causality, he already knows many things about causality. He knows that the concept of causality is a necessary *a priori* condition of the possibility of synthetic knowledge in general. He has also already discovered its *a priori* origin and proved its objective validity and ideality. He also knows what is the *a priori* schema for finding cases of causal relations in experience. All these aspects of the categories of causality were obtained by the analysis and are secure. The only additional contingent element in the proof is the assumption that we are actually capable of organizing the sensible manifold by the schema of causality, in other words, that we are able to find in concreto causal relations in nature. This assumed, the principle of causality can be read off from sensible experience as expressing the condition under which our actual empirical search for causal relations can be executed. The same is true of Kantian proofs of all other principles. They all presuppose that we know how to apply categories by means of transcendental schemata in making experiences of certain kinds, and not only that we understand their abstract meaning. This is a strategy which results directly from the combined method of analysis and synthesis applied to the present problem.

We can now see why this presupposition is not vicious. Categories presupposed in possible experience which is the ground of the proofs of the principles of the understanding are not abstract concepts as they are employed in these principles themselves, but universal conditions of schematic rules which we know how to apply. In other words, categories presupposed together with the possible experience are schematized and not abstract categories. What is thus taken as granted are not premisses but procedures for generating objects possessing categorical properties. Principles of the understanding do no more than describe the constitution of objects generated in that way. There is, indeed, a circle in transcendental proofs, but it is not a vicious one.

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Kants philosophische Methode (II)

In diesem Beitrag schlägt der Verfasser eine Reihe von Hypothesen hinsichtlich der Weise vor, in der Kant das fundamentale Problem der transzendentalen Philosophie bzw. der Möglichkeit der synthetischen Urteile a priori gelöst hat. Die Aufgabe besteht darin, die apriorischen Bedingungen zu bestimmen, die für die Voraussetzung der synthetischen Urteile als gegebene oder wahrhafte notwendig sind. Dies — wie der Verfasser selbst meint — schließt die Analyse einiger wichtiger Punkte in der Kantschen philosophischen Methode ein: die der Kathegorienlehre, der metaphysischen und transzendentalen Exposition der Urteile, des Begriffs-Status (z.B. des Raums und der Zeit) und der Operation der reinen Vernunft. Der Verfasser schlägt auch die Analyse der These von der Objektivität und Idealität sowie der Kantschen transzendentalen Deduktion vor. Zusammenfassend demonstriert der Verfasser, daß es einen Kreis in den Kantschen transzendentalen Beweisen gibt und daß dieser Kreis nicht geschlosssen ist.

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La méthode philosophique de Kant (II)

Dans cet article l'auteur propose plusieurs hypothèses concernant la manière dont Kant résout le problème fondamental de la philosophie transcendantale ou le problème de la possibilité des jugements a priori. La tâche que l'auteur se propose consiste à déterminer les conditions a priori, nécessaires pour pouvoir supposer les jugements synthétiques comme donnés ou véritables. Comme l'auteur l'indique, cela inclut l'analyse de quelques points importants dans la méthode philosophique de Kant: la théorie des catégories métaphysiques, celle de l'exposition transcendantale des jugements, la théorie de la position des concepts (par exemple du concept du temps ou de l'espace), et la théorie de l'opération de la raison pure. L'auteur propose aussi l'analyse de la thèse de l'objectivité et de l'idéalité, ainsi que celle de la déduction transcendantale de Kant. A la fin, l'auteur montre que dans les preuves transcendantales de Kant existe un cercle qui n'est pas fermé.