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Empirical Truth in *The Critique of Pure Reason*

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Abstract: In this paper, I describe Kant's theory of 'empirical truth' (classical) and its conditions of possibility at the lower level of intellect and its "transcendental conditions of possibility". The paper is at the same time a polemic against those contemporary interpretations of Kant's theory of truth which unilaterally ascertain in Kant either coherence truth only or classical truth only, and I demonstrate that in Kant's philosophy both kinds of truth occur, but on different epistemological levels and in mutual connection.

Keywords: classical truth, coherence truth, empirical truth, epistemology, intellect (Verstand), Kant, reason (Vernunft) theory of truth, transcendental deduction, transcendental truth

Empirická pravda v *Kritike čistého rozumu*

Abstrakt: V tejto práci opisujem Kantovu teóriu 'empirickej pravdy' (klasickú) a jej podmienky možnosti na nižšej úrovni umu, spolu s jej „transcendentálnymi podmienkami možnosti“. Práca je zároveň polemikou proti tým súčasným interpretáciám Kantovej teórie pravdy, ktoré v Kantovi jednostranne odhaľujú buď len koherentnú pravdu, alebo len klasickú pravdu, a ukazujem, že v Kantovej filozofii sa vyskytujú oba tieto druhy pravdy, avšak na odlišných epistemologických úrovniach a vo vzájomnom vzťahu.

Kľúčové slová: empirická pravda, epistemológia, um (Verstand), Kant, klasická pravda, koherentná pravda, rozum (Vernunft), teória pravdy, transcendentálna dedukcia, transcendentálna pravda

Introduction

Opinions on Kant's theory of truth are divided among his interpreters. Some, like Kemp Smith¹, see in Kant solely a coherent theory of truth. Others oppose this thesis, as does the contemporary Kant scholar James van Cleve², who claims the presence of the correspondence theory of truth in Kant (classical truth).

Hilary Putnam, on the other hand, considers Kant to be the founder of 'internal realism', i.e., a variety of the coherent theory of truth³, while a contemporary prominent expert in Kantian philosophy, Robert Hanna, is categorically convinced that in Kant we encounter solely a classical theory of truth.⁴

I think, however, that all these authors are wrong in so far as in Kant's writings both these differently defined kinds of truth occur concurrently, but on different theoretical levels and with different functions within Kantian epistemology, however, closely related to each other and in this sense inseparable.

Empirical truth versus transcendental truth

In the *Critique of Pure Reason* two understandings of truth occur: empirical truth operating at a lower level of intellect (*Verstand*) and transcendental truth operating at a higher level of pure reason (*Vernunft*). (Strictly speaking, the level conventionally referred to here as the level of intellect also includes imagination and the senses, as those cognitive powers that jointly constitute experience in the Kantian sense).

Empirical truth (*empirische Wahrheit*) concerns a single cognition or a series (set) of such cognitions and is defined in a classical way as the adequation of cognition and its object, while transcendental truth (*transszendentale Wahrheit*), is defined as coherence truth and means, in the broadest terms, the coherence of individual cognitions with knowledge (*Wissenschaft*) as a system of reason.⁵

Transcendental truth refers no longer to the cognition of an object, but to the totality of knowledge (science) and this is understood as a system; that is, a totality organized by laws, rules, and principles of knowledge. Moreover,

¹ Smith, N., K.: *A Commentary to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*. London, 1923, p. 36ff.

² Van Cleve, J.: *Problems from Kant*. New York, 1999, p. 216.

³ Putnam, H.: *Reason, Truth and History*. Cambridge, 1981.

⁴ Hanna, R.: Kant, Truth and Human Nature. In: *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 8(2), 2000, pp. 225–250.

⁵ Kant, I.: *Critique of Pure Reason*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 276.

these two types of truth are mutually and closely related.

In this article, I will limit myself to a discussion of Kant's theory of truth from the level of the intellect, i.e., empirical truth, while transcendental truth from the level of reason (*Vernunft*) and the relationship between these two types of truth require a separate, extensive work.

Intellect versus reason

In order to define the specificity of the theory of truth from the level of intellect, we have to characterize this cognitive power in more detail and in juxtaposition and opposition to reason, which is something completely different in Kant's philosophy. This is because intellect represents a certain cognitive power whose task is the constitution of empirical objects comprising 'possible experience'; intellect is that which cognizes and 'thinks', i.e., combines certain notions (categories of intellect, etc.), at the same time relating them to the object of 'thought'. This intellectual thinking is discursive, i.e., reliant and dependent on the beholder, i.e., the intellect can only 'think' through its concepts what is given in some *modi* of the beholder, otherwise its concepts become meaningless.

Reason, on the other hand, is not any cognitive power, and no cognition arises as a result of its activity: its tasks are of a different nature. The concepts of reason are 'ideas of pure reason' (*Ideen der reinen Vernunft*), which do not serve for constitution (like the categories of intellect), but for what Kant defines as "understanding" (*begreifen*), resulting in 'concepts' (*Begriffen*)⁶, i.e., structures for reasoning and designing totality, e.g., the absolute totality of possible experience ('the idea of the world'), which is no longer any object or anything given in experience. Reason immerses the entire intellectual-sensory-imaginative field in its understanding (*begreifen*), and its concepts (*Begriffen*) or ideas are concepts and understandings of this very field in its totality.

Reason, despite the fact that in Kant's 'architectonics of pure reason' it is situated higher and subordinates and makes dependent on itself intellect, imagination, and sense is intrinsically dependent on the whole of this intellectual-sensory-imaginative field and in separation from it becomes meaningless.

Formal definition of empirical truth

Kant defines empirical truth in the classical way (as in the classical definition of truth in the tradition stemming from Aristotle) as the adequation of cognition and the object of cognition.

⁶ Ibid., p. 394.

What is truth? The nominal definition of truth, namely that it is the agreement of cognition with its object, is here granted and presupposed; [...] If truth consists in the agreement of a cognition with its object, then this object must thereby be distinguished from others; for a cognition is false if it does not agree with the object to which it is related even if it contains something that could well be valid of other objects.⁷

Transcendental deduction

In order to detect the conditions of the possibility of adequation, essential for the concept of truth, we must refer to the most important philosophical method developed by Kant, namely, 'transcendental deduction' (*transzendente Deduktion*). This method, according to Kant himself, is a philosophical version of the so-called legal deduction, which consists of two methodological steps. First: from the question *quid facti?* (as to the facts) and, secondly, from the question *quid juris?* (as to what law?). The first of these questions is to establish the legal factual state, while the second is: by what law?, i.e. by virtue of what principles, rules, and legal provisions the legal fact under investigation has come into existence (the accomplished form is at issue here). The Kantian philosophical version of legal deduction, i.e., transcendental deduction, also raises these two questions, but in order to detect and reveal the epistemological conditions of the possibility of an empirical fact (object) present in the experiential world.

By way of deduction, it turns out that empirical truth, in the classical sense of the term, refers to various *a priori* and transcendental conditions of its possibility, arranged hierarchically and forming a complex whole that delimits the theoretical field within which the concrete cognition and its definite object can only be adequate.

The parts of this path, proceeding 'from the bottom to the top', towards that which is *a priori*, are: time and space, categories of pure intellect, schemas, axioms of intuition, anticipations, analogies of experience, and postulates of empirical thinking in general.

Transcendental deduction detects from that which is ready, given, and manifest (the empirical object), the hidden, implicit, not directly given, and not directly visible structures (the *a priori* conditions of the possibility of the object) which have just made possible the existing and cognizable objectivity. Further premises of Kant's theory of truth are contained in his concept of cognition.

⁷ Ibid., p. 197, see also p. 590.

Discursiveness of cognition

One of the most important assumptions of the philosopher's epistemology is the presumption of the so-called 'discursiveness' of our, human cognition, resulting in turn from its finiteness.

There are, in general, as Kant argues, two essentially different main possible ways of cognition: cognition by perception (intuitive) or cognition by concepts (discursive).

Intuitive cognition is direct cognition that presents things as they present themselves and within the limits within which they present themselves, directly and without the use of concepts, cognitive judgements, or other cognitive implements, and it provides knowledge that is complete, holistic, direct, and, moreover, concentrated as if in a single 'glance'. For this reason, it is precisely the kind of cognition that Kant places at the top of the hierarchy of cognition in general.

However, this intuitive, non-conceptual and non-sensory cognition is not given to finite beings (such as human beings), because it requires intellectual insight that finite beings do not possess, and in Kant's philosophy it is ascribed to the infinite intellect of God.

It is also not necessary for us to limit the kind of intuition in space and time to the sensibility of human beings; it may well be that all finite thinking beings must necessarily agree with human beings in this regard (though we cannot decide this), yet even given such universal validity this kind of intuition would not cease to be sensibility, for the very reason that it is derived (*intuitus derivativus*), not original (*intuitus ordinarius*), thus not intellectual intuition, which for the ground already adduced seems to pertain only to the original being...⁸

On the other hand, the essential characteristic of finite intellect is precisely its non-intuitive or discursive nature. Our human intellect can 'only think' (it is even, in Kant's own words, 'doomed to think') and it thinks only about what is given to it for thinking, presented from outside the intellect.⁹

This discursiveness, the endowment with *intuitus derivativus*, means that our intellect cannot 'see' anything in its own intellectual intuition, of which it is deprived, so it must rely and base its cognitive process on that intuition which is given to man and which is at man's disposal, and which is provided to finite beings by the receptive senses.

⁸ Ibid., pp. 191–192.

⁹ Ibid., p. 191.

However, there is a gap between intellect and sense: they are two completely different ‘cores’ of our cognition. Therefore, Kantian theory and transcendental deduction will try to find a mediating structure between intellect and the senses that can act as a certain medium, a ‘translator’ between them. Such an intermediary will transpire in the form of transcendental schemata.

This, however, entails a fundamental change in the notion of cognition and its essence, which constitutes another important premise of Kant’s theory of truth. This is because cognition in Kant’s philosophy ceases to be, as it was for the whole pre-Kantian philosophical tradition, a description, and begins to be understood as a constitution.

Description is a passive adaptation and adjustment of the cognitive subject and its cognitive powers to the object of cognition, which, in the model of cognition as description, is the active party, dominating the cognitive process and making cognition dependent on itself.

The essence of Kant’s change of the philosophical paradigm (“Copernican Revolution”) consists precisely in reversing this relation and showing that the object of cognition is constituted only in the course of cognition; that the object of cognition is the result of the synthesizing activity of the intellect and its concepts, but also of the activity of the imagination and sensuality, on the basis of sensory data.

Transcendental schematism

In the process of the constitution of objectivity, the key role of the ‘intermediary’ between the intellect (*Verstand*) and its concepts (categories) and sense is played by transcendental category schemata, operating in and through time. Since the categories of the intellect – in themselves – are only certain ‘forms’, certain laws of constitutive synthesis and do not know anything by themselves, they necessarily need some ‘matter’ which can be provided by sensuousness (I am omitting here, for the sake of brevity, mathematical cognition, where we are dealing not with a constitution, but with a construction) and in relation to which they can only reveal their constitutive function.

One cannot directly apply pure concepts of the intellect to sense, they are two completely different realities, hence transcendental deduction encounters on its way a mediating structure, on the one hand sensual and on the other intellectual, which is precisely the transcendental schema. Each category, as a law of synthesis, has its own adequate transcendental schema, which serves to transfer the logical properties of the intellect’s concept into the sensory sphere, to “translate” them, so to speak, into what is sensory, which ‘transla-

tion' only makes possible the application of the categories to experience and the constitutive synthesis as such.

However, schemata require a certain 'environment' in which they can act, and which should be common to both intellect and sense. In Kant's view, time, which is something most internalized and subjective, and at the same time something subjective and external, becomes such a space for the play of schemata, their 'environment'.

The schemata are therefore nothing but *a priori* **time-determinations** in accordance with rules, and these concern, according to the order of the categories, the **time-series**, the **content of time**, the **order of time**, and finally the **sum total of time** in regard to all possible objects.¹⁰

This is because time is, firstly, a "pure form of perception" and everything that reaches the cognitive subject through the senses is immediately subjected to temporalization, which is performed by the inner sense (*innerer Sinn*) belonging to the empirical subject. On the other hand, however, time is also that which is most intersubjective, for it arises under a certain effect which the transcendental unity of apperception (*transzendente Einheit der Apperzeption*), i.e., a kind of Kantian transcendental subject, exerts within the whole subject (understood together as the empirical subject and the transcendental subject at the same time) on the inner sense by means of the transcendental imagination and its synthesis.

The transcendental self (transcendental unity of apperception) – through transcendental imagination – causes a certain 'stimulation' of the inner sense with which the empirical subject is equipped, by providing this sense with its own 'appearances' (*in other words*, 'images'), which are then synthesized by the transcendental unity of apperception that activates this whole process.¹¹

Thereby, the transcendental subject performs an a-perception of itself, but so that it is mediated by the already spatialized (by the receptive external sense <*auesserer Sinn*> of the empirical subject) extra-subjective content and temporalized in the inner sense also belonging to the empirical subject. The successive impulses sent by the transcendental subject to the inner sense and the subsequent synthesis of the transcendental imagination constitute successive single time-points of the 'now', which themselves have no temporal extension, however, a series, a line of such time-moments of the 'now' (time

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 276.

¹¹ Ibid., pp. 248 and 257–258, cf. Heidegger, M.: *Phänomenologische Interpretation von Kants Kritik der reinen Vernunft, Gesamtausgabe*, Bd. 25. Frankfurt, 1977 and Heidegger, M.: *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik*. Bonn, 1929.

points) yields an infinite sequence of time as such.

Accordingly, time also becomes the most essential glue linking together two different layers of one and the same holistic Kantian subject, i.e., the 'empirical subject' (empirical apperception) and the 'transcendental subject' (transcendental unity of apperception, transcendental apperception, transcendental Self). Moreover, it is precisely time that is the structure which allows the already spatialized extra-subjective contents to be merged with the very core of the subject as such, the core of which is precisely the transcendental subject.

This, then, is where the field for the operation of the schemata breaks open. In the first step, they must adequately translate the purely logical properties (contents) of a given category into the properties of time itself and as such, find in time itself and in time alone a certain '*analogon*' (equivalent) of the logical content of this category. However, in step two, which is inseparably connected with step one, the schemata must take their 'translation' even further, to the senses, i.e., they must 'translate' adequately the properties of time itself, corresponding to the logical content of a given category, into correlated with them properties of that which is in time, that which is temporal, i.e., the sensual content.

However, in Heidegger's famous interpretation of the *Critique of Pure Reason*¹², he posits that it is precisely in Kant's transcendental schematism that we are dealing only with this first step, i.e., with a certain 'translation' of the logical content of categories exclusively into the content, the content of time as such, i.e. with a certain depiction in time of the content of pure intellectual concepts and with an 'ontological synthesis', which leads to 'ontological cognition' (in the Heideggerian sense of 'ontology' as 'cognition of the being of being', the 'being of that which is being' <*Sein des Seienden*>), which in turn allows further justification of 'metaphysical cognition', i.e. cognition of 'being' (*das Seiende*) as such and in its entirety'.¹³

Leaving aside the controversial question of the possibility of justifying 'metaphysical cognition' in Kant, who in the *Critique of Pure Reason* claims that classical, dogmatic metaphysics is not possible at all, and is even nonsensical, this interpretative Heideggerian thesis concerning the function of transcendental schemata is not, in my opinion, confirmed by Kant's philosophy, where it is explicitly asserted that the task of schemata is not only to depict intellectual concepts in time (this is only the first step as noted by Heidegger), but first and foremost to 'realize' (*Versinnlichung*) these concepts, i.e. a kind

¹² Heidegger, M.: *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik*, ibid.

¹³ Ibid., pp. 10–13, 48–49, 213.

of application of the logical content of the category to sensual reality (which Heidegger omits); schemata are to perform – in time and through time, which is simultaneously and in the same process both the form of the world and the form of the subject – the function of a medium between intellect and sensuousness, and not only (as in Heidegger) between intellect and time.

Now it is clear that there must be a third thing, which must stand in homogeneity with the category on the one hand and the appearance on the other, and makes possible the application of the former to the latter. This mediating representation must be pure (without anything empirical) and yet **intellectual** on the one hand and **sensible** on the other. Such a representation is the **transcendental schema**. [...] Now a transcendental time-determination is homogeneous 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 homogeneous with the **appearance** insofar as **time** is contained in every empirical representation of the manifold.¹⁴

If schemata have a key function in the constitution of objectivity, they are of course also very important for the Kantian notion of truth, or more precisely the empirical truth of our cognition, and they only make it possible to express it also in linguistic form, in the form of judgements, endowing them with ‘objective validity’ and truthfulness.

The fact that our cognition is adequate (or not) for its object given inside the world (i.e. it is empirically true or not) is possible because schemata are able to ‘realize’ the conceptual content of the structures of the intellect (categories), although not directly, but indirectly; they make it possible, through time, to correlate this conceptual content and to unite it with the objective content (in other words, sensuous) and at the same time to ‘intellectualize’ – again through time – the sensuous content of the empirical object, i.e. to correlate and synthesize it with the appropriate logical and conceptual content of the intellect’s categories.

Hence, schemata as such become the *sine qua non* condition of all empirical truth of our cognition, concerning a single object or a series of object cognitions.

Negative and positive conditions for the possibility of empirical truth

In order to be able to speak of empirical truth in the full sense of the term, the

¹⁴ Kant, I.: *Critique of Pure Reason*, *ibid.*, p. 272.

conditions, as Kant calls them, ‘negative’ and ‘positive’ must both be fulfilled. The negative conditions concern logical formal conditions (e.g., logical inconsistency), which constitute a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for empirical truth. If a cognition satisfies only logical conditions (logical criteria of truthfulness), i.e., it conforms to the “general and formal laws of intellect and reason,” i.e., it satisfies solely the “negative condition of truth,” then, of course, this does not yet give rise to objective truth, i.e., truth in the positive sense.¹⁵ For truth in the positive sense, it is necessary – apart from formal and logical conditions – that the content of given cognition be consistent with the object of cognition, and logic itself can never provide such content, as this content is extra-logical, because it is object-related.¹⁶

If logic itself produced the objects of its cognition, then we would be dealing with purely analytical cognition in the Kantian sense, and therefore worthless for the synthetic knowledge of reality.

For this, a structure is required that is able to relate, not the form, but the content of a given cognition to the object of cognition. This structure is described by Kant in transcendental logic, i.e., ‘material’ logic, also called by him ‘the logic of truth.’ This transcendental logic no longer establishes, like ‘pure and general logic,’ the laws and principles of correct thinking and inference; it concerns not the form of cognition, but its matter, content; it refers directly to the objects of cognition and establishes ‘objective validity’ (i.e. validity for the object itself, the objective and not the subjective validity only for ‘this very’ subject of cognition), and thus also the full, also ‘material,’ empirical truth of our cognition.¹⁷

Transcendental logic consists of a number of elements which, when taken as a whole, form a compact structure and enable it to be objectively referential. It comprises categories (pure concepts of the intellect), transcendental schemata, axioms of intuition, anticipations of perception, analogies of experience, and postulates of empirical thinking in general.

Recapitulating the findings hitherto, it can be said that the Kantian notion of classically understood empirical truth, referring to a single object (*resp.* to a finite set of such objects) and its cognition and their adequation, presupposes a whole series of *a priori* conditions of possibilities at the intellectual level of the constitution of objectivity (discussed above), but this does not yet exhaust all the conditions of this empirical form of truth.

Subsequent conditions are situated at the transcendental (supra-empiri-

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 193–197.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 198.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 197.

cal) level and refer, most generally, to the fundamental relationship that exists between the ‘transcendental object’ (*transszendentaler Gegenstand*) and the ‘transcendental unity of apperception’ (*transszendentale Einheit der Apperzeption*).

Transcendental conditions for the possibility of empirical truth

In order for empirical adequation to occur, i.e., the conformity of concrete cognition with its definite objective and empirical counterpart (to empirical truth), the conditions of transcendental adequation *a priori* (logically) to empirical truth must already have been fulfilled. ‘The transcendental conditions of the possibility of empirical truth’ are primarily connected with the notion of a ‘transcendental object’ and a ‘transcendental unity of apperception’ (the transcendental Self) and the primary relationship occurring between these two poles.

As far as the transcendental object is concerned, it is, in short, a structure that fulfils, in Kantian philosophy, several important functions in the process of the constitution of objectivity. First; the transcendental object is the objective basis and the foundation of the identity of every possible empirical object. Second; the transcendental object lends objective validity to the categories of pure intellect, i.e., it ensures their reference to the object itself (objectivity), and not just to any subjective representation of the object. “The pure concept of this transcendental object (which in all of our cognitions is really always one and the same = X) is that which in all of our empirical concepts in general can provide relation to an object, i.e., objective reality.”¹⁸

The transcendental object is clearly distinguished from and opposed to the empirical object in Kant’s work – it is not any concrete object (like an empirical thing), but, as Kant calls it, “an object in general = X”, while under this ‘X’ we can, each time, insert different contents.¹⁹

The transcendental object is that towards which the constitutive synthesis of objectivity is directed, controlled by intellectual categories and mediated by schemata, which provides cognition with an objective reference, i.e., validity, objectivity and empirical truth.

On the other hand, Kant’s ‘judgements of perception’ of a subjective spectrum, taken on their own, are not necessarily false; after all, they concern purely subjective feelings and states of the concrete subject of cognition and in this sense they are always ‘true’, but this does not give the empirical truth

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 223.

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 347–350.

of cognition, which for Kant means the objective truth, i.e., the truth about the object itself (and not about the individual perception, sense of the object, which can be different for each subject) and which is related to the Kantian notion of 'judgements of experience'. Only the latter judgements can (or cannot) be ascribed objective truth (empirical truth), while judgements of perception can only be ascribed subjective validity for the subject. For only experiential judgements are founded on categories referring in the last instance, as to their objective pole, to a non-subjective transcendental object, which guarantees their objectivity.

The very notion of transcendental object, in turn, refers back to the notion of *noumenon* (the thing in itself <*Ding an sich*>). The transcendental object is not, as Kant claims, a concept freely invented or constructed by the cognitive subject, but something the subject must inevitably encounter at the limit of its cognition. This is because it is a boundary structure, but it is 'seen' from the side of the subject, from 'inside' the cognition, while its 'external' boundary, invisible to the subject, becomes the thing itself, a *noumenon*, an object that can only be thought of, but never cognized.²⁰ If a cognitive subject encounters an impassable boundary (a thing in itself) in the process of cognition, it simultaneously renders it discursive, i.e., makes it finite and adjusts it to its, after all finite, cognitive capabilities.

After such an adjustment to finite cognitive possibilities, the noumenon becomes – in our view – already a transcendental object present in the phenomenon and functioning as the basis for the identity and objectivity of things.

Such an adaptation of the noumenon to the finitude and discursiveness of the cognitive subject is, however, accomplished by the opposite and equally important transcendental subjective pole, which in Kantian philosophy is the transcendental Self, or the 'transcendental unity of apperception'. It is the transcendental subject that relates – in some primordial and *a priori* relation that runs beyond time and beyond space, beyond and above empiricism, in a purely transcendental sphere – to the thing in itself, and it is it that 'interprets' the noumenon as something now positive to us, discursive and present, that is, as a transcendental object in the phenomenon.

Thereby, the transcendental subject and the transcendental object 'contact' each other and delimit as transcendental poles a supra-empirical field in which only object constitution will be possible, and in which, therefore, the empirical adequation of concrete cognition with its definite object, i.e., empirical truth, will also only become possible.

In order for there to be an empirical correspondence between a particular

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 380, 381.

cognition and the corresponding object given in experience (empirical truth), the general framework of the more primordial, fundamental and, for Kant, more important transcendental correlation, i.e., agreement (adequation) of the transcendental Self with the transcendental object, must already be established (*a priori*).

Lack of adequation of cognition and its object, i.e., falsity, can occur only on the empirical level (in connection with the notion of empirical truth), and pertain to the incompatibility of specific empirical cognition with its 'own' object, which, of course, does not at all prejudge the falsity of such cognition, which, after all, can agree with another object, i.e., be true in the empirical sense.

At the transcendental level, the adjacency between the subjective factor (the transcendental unity of apperception) and the objective (the transcendental object) is *a priori* and fixed.

However, there can still be no question here of (empirical) truth, which concerns the empirical (*a posteriori*) level and depends on concrete objects given 'here and now' in experience, whereas this primary and transcendental relation and its two poles: the transcendental subject and the transcendental object, Kant defines as the 'transcendental conditions of empirical truth', for it is they that ultimately determine the space of interaction in which only then can there be (or not be) an adequation (or lack thereof) of a particular, concrete cognition with its empirical object counterpart, that is, empirical truth (or empirical falsity).

However, this relationship does not set any criteria for empirical truth; its task is more general, but also more essential, logically primary and *a priori* to the empirical veritative relationship, for which the transcendental relationship provides a transcendental, essential, and preveritative ground.

Empirical truth itself must always remain the domain of empiricism, since it concerns the relationship between concrete cognition (judgement) and its specific empirical object and is constantly dependent on what is *a posteriori*, although, of course, without the fulfilment of the *a priori* and transcendental conditions it could never occur.

This is why Kant can consider that the supra-empirical, extra-temporal and extra-spatial relation of the transcendental Self to the *noumenon* (which, in this very relation is no longer a transcendental thing in itself and begins to be a transcendental object 'to us') determines the most primordial conditions of possibility for whatever empirical truth that unfolds in the realm of possible experience.

Despite the fact that this most primary relationship itself is not of a veri-

tative character and is not subject at all to the qualification of truthfulness, it nevertheless makes the empirical truth of our cognition possible in the deepest sense, marking out its specific “space of play”.

Conclusion. The insufficiency of empirical truth

Empirical truth, however, proved to be insufficient in Kant’s theory of truth. *Inter alia* in *Jäsche-Logik* it is concluded that:

Truth, it is said, consists in the agreement of cognition with its object. In consequence of this mere nominal explanation, my cognition, to count as true, is supposed to agree with its object. Now I can compare the object with my cognition, however, only by cognizing it. Hence, my cognition is supposed to confirm itself, which is far short of being sufficient for truth. For since the object is outside me, the cognition in me, all I can ever pass judgement on is whether my cognition of the object agrees with my cognition of the object.²¹

Firstly, the reach of this empirical truth is limited to the cognition of an object or a set of such cognitions of objects, secondly, it has an a posteriori and non-imperative character and, thirdly, it concerns the cognition of a particular subject (i.e., it is not yet ‘universally valid’). Moreover, much more important for Kant is the problem of knowledge, i.e., the universal and systematic totality of cognition, ‘universally and necessarily valid’. Therefore, it transpires as necessary to move to a higher level within the ‘architectonics of reason’ (*Vernunft*) and to work out a higher form of truth – transcendental truth (no longer defined as adequation, but as coherence) dependent on empirical truth. Only these two types of truth operating on different epistemological levels and in mutual connection and combination yield a relatively complete picture of Kant’s theory of truth. However, this is an issue for another essay...

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²¹ Kant, I.: The Jäsche Logic. In: I. Kant, *Lectures on Logic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, pp. 557–558.

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