

**The Transcendental Deduction of the
Categories in the B Edition of *The Critique
of Pure Reason*: Necessity and Sufficiency
in the Conditions of Objective Judgment**

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Abstract: This article reconstructs the Transcendental Deduction in the B edition of Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* as a two-stage strategy. It aims to clarify and reinforce the claim that the pure concepts of the understanding (the categories) possess objective validity only in relation to possible experience – a claim that establishes the transcendental conditions for objective judgment and its normative application.

First, by examining §§15–20, the paper argues that the unity required for cognition “in general” is grounded in the original synthetic unity of apperception: the “I think” must be able to accompany all my representations, while the logical functions of judgment provide the categorial forms as rules of synthesis. Second, through §§22–26 (with §21 serving as the pivot), the analysis demonstrates how this general result becomes specifically necessary for our spatio-temporal sensibility. The synthesis of apprehension and the determination of inner sense require categorial unity for any empirical intuition to constitute an object of experience.

The central interpretive proposal is that the first stage secures the sufficiency of the categories for cognition in general, while the second establishes their necessity for objectively valid experience, thereby delimiting their legitimate use to the domain of possible experience.

Key words: Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (B Edition), Transcendental Deduction, Categories, Apperception, Objective Validity, Synthesis, Judgment, Possible Experience, Transcendental Philosophy, Normativity, Conditions of Judgment, Figurative Synthesis (*synthesis speciosa*), Transcendental Idealism

The academic controversy concerning the architectural layout of the Transcendental Deduction in the second edition [B] of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* revolves primarily around the interpretive challenge that Dieter

Henrich famously designated as the “two-steps-in-one-proof” problem.¹ Within the B-Deduction, the philosopher appears to formulate the identical conclusion twice: initially in §20 and subsequently in §26. To elucidate this singular structure, earlier commentators advanced two principal interpretations, both of which Henrich ultimately dismisses.

Erich Adickes and H. J. Paton sought to resolve this structural tension by appealing to Kant’s distinction within the first edition’s preface [A] between the objective and subjective dimensions of the deduction. They propose that §20 completes the proof of objective validity, whereas §26 demonstrates the subjective conditions of application. On the other hand, Benno Erdmann and Herman de Vleeschauwer offered a distinct structural explanation based on another Kantian distinction: the argumentative trajectories “from above” and “from below”. They propose that §20 be understood as a deduction “from above,” while §26 is to be regarded as a deduction “from below”.

Dieter Henrich revolutionized the interpretation of the B-Deduction by exposing the fatal deficiencies in both preceding positions. He rejected the Adickes/Paton reading because Kant explicitly affirms in §21 that the demonstration of the categories’ validity is only fully attained in §26, meaning §26 cannot be merely a subjective psychological deduction. He rejected the Erdmann/de Vleeschauwer reading because the argument in §20 cannot be seen strictly as a deduction “from above,” since it also starts with the manifold of sensible intuition. Instead, Henrich proposed that the two steps are united by a logical restriction that is established in the first step and overcome in the second. According to his reading, the result of the proof in §20 is valid only for those intuitions which already contain unity. He argues that the novelty of the second step (§26) is that it overcomes this restriction by looking at human sensibility: in our representations of space and time we have intuitions which contain unity and which at the same time include everything that can be present to our senses. Because space and time guarantee unity for all our sense-data, the categories are proven to be universally valid for all objects of our senses.

Against this background, I propose a fresh conceptual framing compared to Henrich’s restricted-to-unrestricted progression. While Henrich focuses on the transition from “intuitions with unity” to “all spatial-temporal intuitions”, I argue that the focus should shift to the philosophical stakes of the categories themselves: the transition from *sufficiency* to *necessity*, and from *validity* to *reality*.

¹ Henrich, D., 1969. The Proof-Structure of Kant’s Transcendental Deduction. *The Review of Metaphysics*, 22(4), p. 640.

As I articulate in my analysis, the first part of the deduction (§§15–20) argues for the sufficiency of the categories for knowledge *in general*.² At this stage, they are merely rules for synthesizing a general manifold, meaning they possess objective validity but not yet objective reality. The novelty of my hypothesis lies in interpreting the second step (§§22–26) not merely as the removal of a quantitative restriction, as Henrich suggests, but as the crucial ontological anchoring of these concepts. By applying the categories specifically to spatial-temporal intuition, I demonstrate that the second part argues for their necessity in producing valid knowledge according to the forms of sensibility. Therefore, my hypothesis reframes the two-step structure: I maintain that the first part of the transcendental deduction argues the *objective validity* of the categories, and the second part argues their *objective reality*.³ This offers a compelling alternative to Henrich by emphasizing that §26 is required to prove that categories are actually constitutive of a concrete, spatial-temporal object, rather than just formally valid for an abstract consciousness.

The transcendental deduction of the categories took up the most time during Kant's writing of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. However, his effort to solve the problem of applying categories to intuitions continued even after the 1781 edition. Six years after the *princeps* edition, and following several attempts to argue the transcendental deduction of the categories, Kant published the final version of this argumentation.

Comparing the two main editions, one immediately notices the segmentation of the discussed topics into paragraphs in the B edition. The motivation for this is given by Kant at the end of the section: "Only up to this point have I found it necessary to divide the text into paragraphs, because we were dealing with elementary concepts".⁴ Additionally, one can discern two sections of the deduction: §§15–20 and §§22–26, complemented by §21 as a moment of *respiro*. Added to these are two concluding paragraphs, §27 and *A brief summary of this deduction*.

² Cf. Kant, I., 2025 (reprint). *Critique of Pure Reason* B. Transl. and eds. by Guyer, P., Wood A. W. (The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, B 144–145. Here I refer to the segmentation of the deduction where the unity of the manifold is proven relative to an empirical consciousness given in general (§§15–20), prior to its necessary connection to the forms of spatial-temporal sensibility (§§22–26).

³ By "objective validity" I refer to the categories functioning as sufficient conditions for the unification of a manifold in general, whereas "objective reality" denotes their necessity in constituting a concrete spatial-temporal object (a thing).

⁴ Kant, I., 1998. *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*. Ed. by Timmermann, J. Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, B 169. *Nur bis hieher habe ich die Abteilungen in Paragraphen nötig gefunden, weil wir es mit den Elementarbegriffen zu tun hatten*

The division of the deduction into two sections can be justified starting from §21 *Observation*. “[...] the empirical consciousness of a given manifold [my emphasis] in a single intuition is subject to a pure *a priori* self-consciousness, exactly as empirical intuition is subject to a pure sensible intuition, which also takes place *a priori*. The above proposition is the beginning of a deduction of the pure concepts of the understanding [...]”⁵ Another fragment outlines what will be proven in the following paragraphs: “In what follows (§26) it will be shown, from the way in which the empirical intuition [my emphasis] is given in sensibility, that the unity of this intuition is no other than that which the category prescribes in general [...] to the manifold of a given intuition”⁶

That is to say, in §§15–20 it is proven that the unity of the manifold is given by the categories, relative to an empirical consciousness given in general, whereas in §§22–26 it is proven that the unity of the manifold of a spatial-temporal sensible intuition is given only through the intervention of the categories. In other words, the categories are conditions of possibility for knowledge, and through the necessity of unifying any manifold, they simultaneously possess objective validity. Kant’s argumentation, however, will not be entirely faithful to this division of purpose, as the author intertwines arguments favorable to both stages. A hypothesis worth considering is that the first part of the transcendental deduction of the categories in the B edition argues for the sufficiency of the categories for knowledge *in general*, while the second part argues for their necessity in producing valid knowledge *according to the forms of sensibility*. Thus, the transcendental deduction would argue that the categories are both necessary and sufficient for knowledge.

Paragraphs §15–§20

Paragraph §15 debates the possibility of a connection of the manifold in general. The connection of the manifold given to intuition is the result of spontaneity. Intuition itself is merely receptivity, meaning it does not produce any necessary connection of that manifold. It follows that only the

⁵ Ibid., B 144: [...] *das empirische Bewußtsein eines gegebenen Mannigfaltigen einer Anschauung ist eben so wohl einem reinen Selbstbewußtsein a priori unterworfen, wie empirische Anschauung einer reinen sinnlichen, die ebenfalls a priori statt hat. – Der obige Satz ist der Anfang einer Deduktion der reinen Verstandesbegriffe [...]*.

⁶ Ibid., B 144–145: *In der Folge (§ 26) wird nun aus der Art, wie die empirische Anschauung in der Sinnlichkeit gegeben wird, gezeigt werden, daß die Einheit derselben keine andere sei, als welche die Kategorie in genere [...] dem Mannigfaltigen einer gegebenen Anschauung überhaupt vorschreibt;*

understanding can produce that synthesis. One of the premises from which we start is that the understanding is a faculty of synthesis, sensibility one of reception, and neither produces the result of the other. Moreover, it starts from the premise that the manifold is given separately, successively (this premise was demonstrated in transcendental deduction A, which we abstract from in edition B). The basis of this idea is the fact that whatever is analyzed must previously have been synthesized. The connection in question need not be conscious; it can be a connection of the manifold of intuition or even of concepts. In the case of the synthesis of the manifold of intuition, Kant states that it does not matter whether this (intuition) is sensible or non-sensible. In the *Transcendental Aesthetic*, empirical and non-empirical (pure) intuitions were defined based on their content. The former have empirical content and the latter have pure content, but both are sensible. Kant brings into discussion here the *non-sensible* intuition, which can only be what he calls intellectual intuition. The claim of this paragraph is, therefore, that even in the case of non-sensible intuition, the understanding is what produces a synthesis of the manifold. How such an understanding would produce a synthesis can only be found through speculation, not proven (for generic consciousness, non-sensible intuition is exclusively a hypothesis that can only be thought, but by no means objectively valid, since we cannot abstract from our own cognitive faculties). However, if this thesis is juxtaposed with Kant's claim that, in the case of intellectual intuition, the categories no longer have any validity, because along with the intuition of a thing, it is also created, the following problem arises: what kind of synthesis does the understanding produce, and moreover, by means of what concepts? Here a contradiction seems to arise: if the understanding is intuitive, then it no longer uses categories, and if intuition does not produce any synthesis, what kind of support does the understanding have to produce the connection? These speculations are marginal to the purpose of the *Critique of Pure Reason*; they do not affect the main argument in any way. The reasoning that leads to these conclusions starts from how a rational being endowed with sensibility reaches knowledge, and then, through an exercise of imagination, certain features are abstracted. The contradiction the argument reaches, whether it pertains to the nature of the new faculty (the intuitive understanding) or resides in the impossibility of applying those conclusions to human knowledge, shows one thing: namely, that our cognitive faculties are none other than the ones mentioned—sensibility and understanding. In the following paragraphs, Kant will address the possibility of the divine, intuitive understanding, in order to argue the necessity and uniqueness of

the categories for knowledge.

The concept of *synthesis* shows that “we can represent nothing as combined in the object without having previously combined it ourselves, and that among all representations, combination is the only one which cannot be given through objects”.⁷ Following an argument similar to the one in the first edition, it can easily be shown that this connection cannot be given by objects because only following the intervention of the understanding is an object composed; thus, only what the understanding has united in the object can subsequently be analyzed. But here Kant does nothing more than an analysis of the concept of connection, and it was previously established at the beginning of this paragraph that the connection of a manifold cannot come from the senses or from elsewhere, but only from the understanding”.⁸ In the footnote on the same page, Kant preempts a possible objection. If representations are identical, can they be thought analytically one through the other? The answer is negative, because even if the analysis of representations allows the relation of identity between them, the synthesis was made through the consciousness of those representations, so that even if they are identical, the consciousness of them is not, because it differs objectively from the other in temporal succession. The identity relation of representations is itself synthetic, unitary. The necessity of unity is demanded by the very objectivity of knowledge, which, without this unity, would not be possible, and would consist only of a concatenation of representations that would have no claims to consistency. It is, once again, obvious that the category of unity alone cannot provide this unity of synthesis, because it is that unity (indivisible) thought in relation to multiplicity, therefore quantitatively, whereas the unity targeted here is qualitative. What is not clear, following the interpretation of the deduction from the first edition, is the statement: “The category already presupposes combination”.⁹ But, abstracting from the first edition of the deduction, it has been established up to this point that we have pure concepts of the understanding which are used in judgments as logical functions. The categories at this moment do not have a transcendental character; their role in the process of organizing the objectivity of experience has not yet been deduced. Thus, all that can be said is that, to use the categories (as indicated in the metaphysical deduction), the connection

⁷ Ibid., B 130: *wir uns nichts als im Object verbunden vorstellen können, ohne es vorher selbst verbunden zu haben, und unter allen Vorstellungen die Verbindung die einzige ist, die nicht durch Objecte gegeben [...] werden kann.*

⁸ Ibid., B 130–131: *Der Begriff der Verbindung führt aber, außer dem Begriffe des Mannigfaltigen und der Synthesis desselben, noch den der Einheit desselben bei sich.*

⁹ Ibid., B 131: *Also setzt die Kategorie schon Verbindung voraus.*

of the manifold must already be established, because here the logical use of the categories is involved, not the transcendental one. Only later will it be proven that the logical use of the categories has as its ground their transcendental employment. Therefore, the unity that the objectivity of experience necessarily requires is given neither by the senses nor by the categories (with the previous mention), so that the only possibility of explanation must be sought “higher up [...] namely in that which contains the ground of the unity of diverse concepts in judgments”.¹⁰

Paragraph §16 presents the original synthetic unity of apperception, a unity required in the previous analysis. “The I think must be able to accompany all my representations; for otherwise something would be represented in me which could not be thought at all, and that is equivalent to saying that the representation would be impossible, or at least would be nothing to me.”¹¹ Reformulated, the argument maintains that any representation can be accompanied by its consciousness, and if it cannot be accompanied by the corresponding consciousness, then it means that, for the subject, it has no relevance. It is highlighted by the author that this consciousness is necessary regarding the possibility of accompanying a representation, but it does not necessarily accompany every representation. In other words, I can have representations of which I am not conscious, but I cannot have representations of which I cannot be conscious, or at least, if I have them, they have no meaning for me, and I cannot use them in any way. Furthermore, the entire discourse about representations of which I cannot be conscious is inherently aporetic, because it actually speaks about what cannot be spoken about, according to the premises of the discourse.

If this judgment must be consistent with any representation about which I can say it is mine, then it can be deduced from here that the entire manifold of intuition also has a necessary relation, regarding its possibility, with the judgment: *I think*. The mentioned judgment is an act of the understanding and cannot be considered as belonging to sensibility because, above all, being a judgment, it must include a synthesis, which cannot be a product of receptivity. But this judgment should not be thought of as a representation of a substantial *I*, which would subsist permanently; the “I” is not identified with the soul. It is merely a function of synthesis. Kant calls the “I think” judgment “pure apperception,” or “original apperception”. This is

¹⁰ Ibid.: *höher [...] nämlich in demjenigen, was den Grund der Einheit verschiedener Begriffe in Urteilen [...] enthält.*

¹¹ Ibid., B 131–132: *Das: Ich denke, muß alle meine Vorstellungen begleiten können; denn sonst würde etwas in mir vorgestellt werden, was gar nicht gedacht werden könnte, welches eben so viel heißt, als die Vorstellung würde entweder unmöglich, oder wenigstens für mich nichts sein.*

pure inasmuch as it is distinguished from empirical apperception; the latter is an apperception of the internal states of the subject, constantly changing, so that it cannot accompany the representations of the manifold to confer unity upon them. Moreover, pure apperception is considered original precisely because it must be able to accompany all other representations, “being one and the same in all consciousness”.¹² “The unity of this representation I call also the transcendental unity of self-consciousness, in order to indicate the possibility of a priori knowledge arising from it.”¹³ The relation with the identity of the subject takes place not by the fact that pure apperception accompanies any representation, but “by the fact that I add one representation to another and am conscious of their synthesis”.¹⁴ Thus, if all my representations must be able to be accompanied by pure apperception, the latter in turn is not possible except when a synthesis of a manifold is achieved; it itself does not have a content of its own, so as not to depend on the material of sensibility. Therefore, any analytical unity of apperception is possible only because a synthetic unity of it was previously achieved. All representations can be united in one consciousness and called “mine,” and only in this way is the synthesis of the manifold possible, because otherwise “I should have as many-colored and diverse a self as I have representations of which I am conscious”.¹⁵

Since pure apperception is a condition of possibility for the synthesis of any manifold, because it must be able to accompany any synthesis and is the condition of the consciousness of any synthesis inasmuch as it is thought, and, moreover, is achieved only within the synthesis of the manifold, having no proper content, it “precedes a priori all my determinate thinking”.¹⁶ Kant admits that this principle of the identity of apperception, the *I think* judgment, is an analytical principle, because identity is an analytical relation. But, even if it is so, it still contains a synthesis, that of the manifold of intuition, which cannot reach unity outside pure apperception. Only through intuition can the manifold be given, and only applied to a manifold does pure apperception have meaning.

Paragraph §17 shows that the principle of the synthetic unity of apper-

¹² Ibid., B 132: *in allem Bewußtsein ein und dasselbe ist.*

¹³ Ibid.: *Die Einheit dieser Vorstellung nenne ich auch die transzendente Einheit des Selbstbewußtseins, um die Möglichkeit der Erkenntnis a priori aus ihr zu bezeichnen.*

¹⁴ Ibid., B 133: *dadurch, daß ich eine Vorstellung zu der andern hinzusetze und mir der Synthesis derselben bewußt bin.*

¹⁵ Ibid., B 134: *ich ein so vielfarbiges, verschiedenes Selbst haben würde, als ich Vorstellungen habe, deren ich mir bewußt bin.*

¹⁶ Ibid., *vor allem meinem bestimmten Denken a priori vorhergeht.*

ception is the supreme principle of all employment of the understanding. Just as in the case of sensibility the supreme principle of any intuition was that the entire manifold be subject to the forms of sensibility, similarly, the supreme principle of the unity of synthesis relative to the understanding is that the sensible manifold be subject to the conditions of transcendental apperception. "Under the first principle stand all the manifold representations of intuition, in so far as they are given to us; under the second, in so far as they must be capable of being combined in one consciousness".¹⁷

The relation of representations to an object presupposes the unity of those representations, because otherwise the object cannot be conceived. But this unity is possible due to transcendental apperception. Therefore, pure apperception is what ensures the relation of representations to the corresponding objects, thus making knowledge possible. The very possibility of the understanding is grounded on this unity of apperception.

Kant brings back into discussion the intuitive understanding. The unity of apperception is a principle of knowledge only for "[...] an understanding through whose pure self-consciousness in the representation 'I am', the manifold of intuition would at the same time be given".¹⁸ Thus, through the representation of my own state, if pure apperception is devoid of content, it means that the understanding is not intuitive, and its content must come from sensibility. But how is pure apperception possible in the representation devoid of content: "*I am*"? Since, as Kant stated earlier, transcendental apperception is itself possible only in the case of a synthesis of representations; it contains a synthesis, even if it reflects an analytical principle. What exactly is connected in the representation "*I am*" since nothing manifold is given? Moreover, the existence of this "*I*" must be an empirical existence, that is, sensory. I consider that the argument must be interpreted from the following perspective: since a pure apperception devoid of any content is not possible for the human understanding, it means that all content must come from sensibility. If a pure apperception without the contribution of sensibility were possible, then the only possibility to have a content would be an intuitive understanding which, along with thinking of an object, would also lead to the creation of that object. It is easily observed that this is not the case with the human understanding. In arguing the impossibility of another type of understanding, Kant states that the human understanding cannot form "the least concept of any other possible understanding, either of one

¹⁷ Ibid., B 136–137: *Unter dem ersteren stehen alle mannigfaltige Vorstellungen der Anschauung, sofern sie uns gegeben werden, unter dem zweiten, sofern sie in einem Bewußtsein verbunden werden müssen.*

¹⁸ Ibid., B 138–139: *ein Verstand, durch dessen reines Selbstbewußtsein in der Vorstellung: Ich bin, zugleich das Mannigfaltige der Anschauung gegeben würde.*

that would itself intuit, or of one that, while possessing a sensible intuition, would possess one of a different kind from that which underlies space and time.”¹⁹ But, if a concept about another type of understanding cannot be constituted, what kind of concept is what Kant calls divine understanding, or intuitive understanding, from which he deduces the conclusion that thinking an object is the same as producing it? A certain kind of concept is possible since we speak of the “intuitive understanding”. This is, as referred to at the beginning of the work regarding the concepts of “happiness”, “fate”, etc., a usurped concept, which has no meaning, but can have a corresponding reality. The “intuitive understanding” is not a discursive concept, nor an empirical one, and even less a pure, original concept. It is a negative concept, obtained by eliminating the possibility of a manifold given through sensibility. The intuitive understanding is inherently contradictory; it cannot be thought simultaneously as intuitive and as a function of synthesis, so it could have an absolute reality, which however could never be an object of knowledge for us. The intuitive understanding has the same significance as the concept of a “square circle” – it is impossible to know, although it exists as a term in language and we can operate various judgments with it, in a meta-discourse.

Paragraph §18 summarizes the previous ideas about transcendental apperception. “The transcendental unity of apperception is that unity through which all the manifold given in an intuition is united in a concept of the object.”²⁰ Up to now it has been shown that the transcendental unity of apperception is necessary for the knowledge of the object; but this fragment says more than that, namely that this unity is what reunites the manifold given by intuition into the concept. What remains to be proven is how transcendental apperception, in its unity, reunites the manifold, meaning it produces the synthesis. Is apperception more than a condition of the possibility of synthesizing a manifold that constitutes itself into an object, an active function, of reuniting the manifold? It can also be interpreted otherwise. As transcendental unity, apperception reunites the manifold into a concept about the object. Transcendental unity, however, presupposes more than the simple requirement of consistency of the manifold with the judgment “I think”, but at this moment Kant does not yet present these synthesis functions that constitute the transcendental unity of apperception and that re-

¹⁹ Ibid., B 139: *nicht den mindesten Begriff von einem andern möglichen Verstande machen können, weder von einem solchen, der selbst anschaute, noch der zwar einer sinnlichen Anschauung, aber von anderer Art, als die im Raume und der Zeit zum Grunde liegt, fähig wäre.*

²⁰ Ibid.: *Die transzendente Einheit der Apperzeption ist diejenige, durch welche alles in einer Anschauung gegebene Mannigfaltige in einen Begriff vom Objekt vereinigt wird.*

alize the synthesis of the manifold. They will be presented in the following paragraphs, so the statement at the beginning of this fragment must be taken with the reservation of the lack of proof in its favor. It is still uncertain *how* apperception conditions the synthesis of the manifold.

At the end of the paragraph, the differences are resumed between the subjective unity of consciousness, which is always empirical and changing, and the objective unity of consciousness, *a priori* and permanently identical with itself. The former is a determination of inner sense, whereas the latter is a condition of possibility of the former and has an objective validity.

Paragraph §19 details the role of categories in the scheme of knowledge, by referring to the logical form of all judgments, a form that consists in the objective unity of the apperception of the concepts contained therein. The logic of his time presents judgment as the relation between two concepts, which displeases Kant, because this definition applies exclusively to categorical judgments and does not account for hypothetical or disjunctive judgments. Another Kantian dissatisfaction is the distinct presentation of the four syllogistic figures, which in fact, in his opinion, are but a single figure (the first) and variations of it. But, bypassing these logical obstacles, what matters here is the relation established by the understanding between concepts. If the definition of judgment is a clear one or if the four syllogistic figures are indeed distinct and independent, these problems affect rather the metaphysical deduction of the categories and less their transcendental deduction. In the relation established between concepts, if one distinguishes what belongs to the understanding from what belongs to reproductive imagination, to the extent that the intervention of reproductive imagination is merely subjective, while the activity of the understanding is objective, “I find that a judgment is nothing but the manner in which given modes of knowledge are brought to the objective unity of apperception.”²¹ Thus, to judge presupposes, as in the case of the synthesis of any representations, the requirement of consistency with pure apperception. The difference between a simple association of representations and a judgment is given by the copula “is”, which distinguishes subjective unity from objective unity. It designates “the relation of the representations to the original apperception, and their necessary unity”.²² Even if the judgment is empirical, hence contingent, it nonetheless includes a necessity, namely that the relation in intuition of representations to one another, although not necessary, is made “in virtue

²¹ Ibid., B 141: *so finde ich, daß ein Urteil nichts andres sei, als die Art, gegebene Erkenntnisse zur objektiven Einheit der Apperzeption zu bringen.*

²² Ibid., B 142: *Beziehung derselben auf die ursprüngliche Apperzeption und die notwendige Einheit derselben.*

of the necessary unity of apperception in the synthesis of intuitions, that is, according to principles of the objective determination of all representations, in so far as knowledge can be acquired by means of these representations”.²³ All these principles, Kant says, are derived from the fundamental principle of the transcendental unity of apperception. The confusion that arises stems from the qualification of necessity conferred on all judgments when it is known from the *Introduction* that only *a priori* judgments have this attribute, not the empirical ones. What is necessary in any judgment is the unity of apperception, which is itself *a priori*, but this unity does not have a content independent of sensibility, such that it produces a necessary judgment regarding the relation of the subject with the predicate. Moreover, if one takes into account that *a priori* judgments are necessary since they do not rely on experience, then understanding that any judgment is necessary, since the synthesis of representations is made according to the necessity of transcendental apperception, is erroneous, because the necessity of a judgment is not given by the relation with transcendental apperception, but is given, if applicable, by the relation between its representations. In other words, the synthesis of the representations of the manifold must be made, to become a cognition, in accordance with the requirements of the unity of original apperception, but these requirements are not a sufficient condition of the necessity of the synthesis, but only a necessary one. Kant offers two examples: the judgment “bodies are heavy”²⁴ is not a necessary judgment, even if the synthesis of the representations of “body” and “weight” was made necessarily respecting the conditions of the unity of pure apperception. These conditions make this judgment a cognition, but they do not make it a necessary judgment. Cognition represents an objective relation of representations, unlike their simple association in reproductive imagination. The same representations remain at the status of subjective unity if stated in the following formulation: “If I support a body, I feel an impression of weight”.²⁵ This latter judgment is called in the *Prolegomena* a judgment of perception, which constitutes a synthesis of a manifold, but does not reach the level of an objective unity. The two representations are not united in the object, so that I can say “It, the body, is heavy”;²⁶ they do not represent something independent of the subject’s state, of the one who thinks that judgment. In the *Prolegomena*, the latter judgment, the judgment of perception, is named

²³ Ibid.: *vermöge der notwendigen Einheit der Apperzeption in der Synthesis der Anschauungen, d. i. nach Prinzipien der objektiven Bestimmung aller Vorstellungen, sofern daraus Erkenntnis werden kann*

²⁴ Ibid.: *Körper sind schwer.*

²⁵ Ibid.: *Wenn ich einen Körper trage, so fühle ich einen Druck der Schwere.*

²⁶ Ibid.: *Er, der Körper, ist schwer.*

so only with the reservation that, in fact, it does not represent a judgment proper – according to the definition given above for judgment B 141.

The principles that “objectively determine all representations”²⁷ are in fact the categories, all of them resulting from the original apperception. Of course, the principles of pure understanding, which will be treated later, are those rules that condition the synthesis of the manifold into an objective unity, but they themselves are rules of applying the categories to experience, so, down to the last condition, they are also derived, or “deduced” from transcendental apperception. Paragraph §18 leaves undecided the way in which pure apperception, in its unity, conditions the unity of the synthesis of the manifold. In paragraph §19 the problem still remains undecided, but a new perspective is added to it: the same unity of original apperception is the condition both for the objective unity of the synthesis of the manifold and for the objective unity of the synthesis of representations in a judgment. The statement from the metaphysical deduction “The same function which gives unity to the various representations in a judgment also gives unity to the mere synthesis of various representations in an intuition; and this unity, in its most general expression, we entitle the pure concept of the understanding”²⁸ thus finds a partial foundation. It is not yet proven that these principles are in fact the categories deduced in the mentioned chapter. But, according to Kantian theory, judgment is nothing but a representation of representations, so that regardless of the origin of representations, through intuition or (indirectly) reproductive imagination, they will be synthesized through the same process.

Paragraph §20 argues that all sensible intuitions are subject to categories as conditions under which alone their manifold can come together in one consciousness. Summarizing the argument up to this point, it can be said that any knowledge begins with a synthesis of a manifold, which is the work of spontaneity. But, the concept of knowledge presupposes objectivity, so that synthesis must be objective. Any synthesis must be in agreement with transcendental apperception which conditions any representation that can be “mine”. The unity of the synthesis can only be given by the unity of transcendental apperception, an apperception that is merely a function that has no other content than that procured by sensibility. The transcendental unity of apperception also conditions the synthesis of representations in a judgment (a representation of representations).

²⁷ Ibid.: *die objektive Bestimmung aller Vorstellungen.*

²⁸ Ibid., A 79 / B 104–105: *Dieselbe Funktion, welche den verschiedenen Vorstellungen in einem Urteile Einheit gibt, die gibt auch der bloßen Synthesis verschiedene Vorstellungen in einer Anschauung Einheit, welche, allgemein ausgedrückt, der reine Verstandesbegriff heißt.*

Paragraph §20 argues that the functions the understanding uses to give unity to the synthesis of representations in judgment are “the logical function of judgments”,²⁹ so that what was deduced in paragraphs §§9–12 becomes: the categories are rules for the synthesis of the manifold and conditions for the unity of transcendental apperception. The categories are derived (deduced) from the fundamental principle of the unity of transcendental apperception, which is original apperception, by considering its logical function in judgments.

Pure apperception is not identical to the transcendental unity of apperception. When speaking of *unity*, what is kept in mind is a unitary synthesis of a manifold – a synthetic unity, or the analysis of such a unity – an analytical unity. Reference is never made (directly and exclusively) to the category of unity, opposed to multiplicity. Moreover, pure apperception is merely a function, which only by obtaining a sensible content (pure or empirical) can produce the unity of pure apperception. The following concepts are considered identical: “pure apperception”, “transcendental apperception” and “original apperception”. The first expression emphasizes independence, especially from sensibility, the second expression specifies it as a condition of possibility of experience, and the last specifies its non-derived character. Original apperception is distinguished from subjective, empirical apperception. The transcendental unity of apperception presupposes the necessary intervention of categories. Not every manifold reaches an objective unity, but any knowledge presupposes this objective unity.

Paragraph §21. The categories ensure the unity of the synthesis of the manifold of sensibility. But, is it possible that that unity is obtained by other means too? Because what was stated was only that pure apperception uses categories to unify the sensible manifold. Thus, if other ways of unifying intuition are possible, then the categories no longer have objective validity; they will be contingent. If it is proven that they are necessary, only then can it be stated that they are objectively valid, namely that they have transcendental reality and, at the same time, are conditions of possibility of knowledge. Up to this point they can only be considered as some concepts, which, like any concept, include rules for synthesizing the manifold (and empirical concepts contain such rules of synthesis). Proving that these concepts are conditions of possibility of experience means showing that they apply to all experience, or in other words, are conditions of possible experience. The possibility of other ways of unifying the manifold is rejected by Kant by considering the variant of a non-sensible intuition (as I showed earlier),

²⁹ Ibid., B 143: *die logische Funktion der Urteile*.

meaning the intuitive understanding. This variant being rejected, the categories prove their necessity regarding a sensible intuition. However, the application of categories to a particular type of intuition, namely the spatial-temporal one, remains to be explained. The question can be raised whether there is a difference between necessary conditions of possibility and sufficient conditions of possibility. I believe this difference rightly appears when speaking of the conditions of reality of a thing. But, regarding the conditions of its possibility, the difference disappears. Conditions of possibility cannot be non-necessary (contingent), because then something would be possible without them, so they would no longer be conditions of possibility. A condition of reality can be non-necessary, because in its absence that thing is still possible, which would not be the case if a condition of its possibility were suppressed. Thus, if a condition is necessary, it is also a condition of possibility.

Paragraph §21 presents the following argumentative path:

In the sequel (§ 26) it will be shown, from the way in which the empirical intuition is given in sensibility, that its unity is no other than that which the category (according to § 20) prescribes to the manifold of a given intuition in general. In thus explaining a priori the validity of the categories in respect of all objects of our senses, the purpose of the deduction will first be fully attained.³⁰

In other words, if it is shown that only by means of categories can one reach the unity of the synthesis of a specific intuitive manifold (spatial-temporal), it is proven that they are necessary for knowledge and that, therefore, they have objective validity for our knowledge. The deduction will start from the way empirical intuition is given, so previously presented arguments will be resumed, but this time the emphasis will not fall on the possibility of achieving the unity of synthesis through categories, but on the particularity of the way this unity is achieved.

Kant maintains in this paragraph that the premise from which one starts was the fact that the manifold is given prior to the synthesis of the understanding and independent of it. Another paragraph seemingly contradicts what I announced to be the strategy of the transcendental deduction and its purpose in the following paragraphs.

³⁰ Ibid., B 144–145: *In der Folge (§ 26) wird nun aus der Art, wie die empirische Anschauung in der Sinnlichkeit gegeben wird, gezeigt werden, daß die Einheit derselben keine andere sei, als welche die Kategorie (nach § 20) dem Mannigfaltigen einer gegebenen Anschauung überhaupt vorschreibt, und dadurch also, daß ihre Gültigkeit a priori in Ansehung aller Gegenstände unserer Sinne erklärt wird, die Absicht der Deduktion zuerst völlig erreicht werden.*

But for the peculiar property of our understanding, that it can produce a priori unity of apperception solely by means of the categories, and only by such and so many, no further ground can be given, any more than why we have precisely these and no other functions for judgments, or why space and time are the only forms of our possible intuition.³¹

What was previously announced, namely that in what follows it will be shown that the unity of intuition is none other than that which the category prescribes in general, is now contradicted by the statement that the unity of *a priori* apperception is given only by the categories and no reason can be brought for this fact. I propose the following solution to the aporia through conceptual delimitations. A first difference between the two statements is that the first speaks of the unity of intuition, while the second speaks of the unity of *a priori* apperception. The specific difference between these is that the unity of intuition must be, and always is, consistent with the experience it makes possible. Being a unity of a sensible manifold, be it pure or empirical, it must be subject to the forms of sensibility and the forms of the understanding. So that, this manifold cannot contradict possible experience. Judgments of perception, invoked several times on other occasions, are not taken into account here, because they do not contain a unity of synthesis. Moreover, judgments of perception could not contradict possible experience by the fact that they could state something that would not be in consensus with the forms of the understanding. A judgment of perception asserts a state of the subject, which becomes a proper judgment only if considered as such; without its reference to the subject, it is merely a sensation or a perception, which however cannot deceive – only judgments about what the senses offer us can deceive us, not the senses themselves. On the other hand, the unity of *a priori* apperception is not, necessarily, in agreement with possible experience, as Kant will argue in the following paragraphs; *to know* and *to think* are not the same thing. Any concept can be in agreement with the pure concepts of the understanding without being able to designate a spatial or temporal object. Such a concept would only have to take into account the mathematical categories (according to the classification from the metaphysical deduction of the categories – those of quantity and those of quality), because the dynamical ones (the categories of rela-

³¹ Ibid., B 145–146: *Von der Eigentümlichkeit unseres Verstandes aber, nur mittelst der Kategorien und nur gerade durch diese Art und Zahl derselben Einheit der Apperzeption a priori zu Stande zu bringen, läßt sich eben so wenig ferner ein Grund angeben, als warum wir gerade diese und keine andere Funktionen zu Urteilen haben, oder warum Zeit und Raum die einzigen Formen unserer möglichen Anschauung sind.*

tion and modality), which always concern a relation to something existing, could not be applied to a non-spatial and non-temporal object.

I believe that what Kant argues in the last fragment of paragraph §21 is the impossibility, or at least the difficulty, of providing a motivation for the fact that the human understanding is the way it is. But this does not remove the task of proving that only through categories can knowledge be obtained. In other words, it must be shown that these categories are objectively valid, but it cannot be argued why the understanding uses categories, just as a reason cannot be offered for the fact that sensibility receives the manifold through spatial and temporal forms. Kant does not attempt in the objective deduction to ground the faculty of thinking, but the use of this faculty and its claims to knowledge. It is worth mentioning that only regarding the understanding does the problem of a subjective deduction arise, and not concerning sensibility, or imagination (depending on how it is thought in relation to the understanding – whether they form together one faculty, spontaneity, or whether they are separate).

Paragraphs §22–§26

Regarding the employment of the understanding, Kant subjects to attention in paragraph §22 the application of categories to objects other than those of experience. Knowledge, as has been said on other occasions, has two major components: intuition and the category. Through intuition the object is given, and through the category it is thought. But if the latter is missing from the cognitive process, then knowledge can no longer be achieved. An object that is only thought, without any possible intuition corresponding to it, never reaches more than an idea about a form (not in the spatial sense). If it is impossible to associate an intuition with it, then that object is not and can never be an object of experience. Moreover, since intuition is always sensible, the concept must be related to the senses, but not necessarily to sensations. With the help of pure intuition (opposed to the empirical one, which contains sensations) *a priori* knowledge about objects is possible, “but only as regards their form, as appearances”.³² The fragment continues with a seemingly surprising statement: “whether there can be things which must be intuited in this form, is a question not yet decided.”³³ It was argued in the *Transcendental Aesthetic* that any phenomenon must be comprehended

³² Ibid., B 147: *aber nur der Form nach, als Erscheinungen.*

³³ Ibid.: *ob es Dinge geben könne, die in dieser Form angeschaut werden müssen, bleibt dabei noch unausgemacht.*

within the forms of sensibility. But whether the forms of sensibility comprehend any phenomenon is an unanswered problem, because we cannot have knowledge about objects that cannot be brought into experience in any way. I can say, however, that if something is a phenomenon for me, then it is certainly in accordance with the forms of sensibility. If the quoted fragment were to abstract from the possibility of the existence of a thing, considering only its existence, then the answer would no longer be problematic, because I indeed need a sign of experience to say that there are things in accordance with pure intuitions and concepts. But here we speak of the possibility of something existing in accordance with my *a priori* knowledge. Mathematical concepts have a meaning insofar as an experience is found to conform to them. This conclusion leads to the statement that “[...] all mathematical concepts are not by themselves knowledge, except in so far as one presupposes that there are things which can be presented to us only in accordance with the form of that pure sensible intuition”.³⁴ The consequence resulting from this, with respect to the pure concepts of the understanding, is that they, even when they unify a manifold of pure sensible intuition, do not yield knowledge unless they can be related to empirical intuitions, “that is, they serve only for the possibility of empirical knowledge. This knowledge is called experience.”³⁵ The categories therefore have validity only regarding possible experience, or in other words, possible empirical knowledge (empirical knowledge is not itself possible outside pure knowledge). Starting from the statements about mathematical concepts, a consequence can also be deduced: a mathematical judgment, moreover, a synthetic *a priori* judgment is a piece of knowledge if an object can exist that is in accordance with it, meaning if this object corresponds to a possible thing. From here, by obversion: if an object in accordance with a synthetic *a priori* judgment cannot exist, this cannot be a piece of knowledge. The whole argument can be restructured as follows: a pure intuition has as its object a phenomenon. The same synthesis of intuition has a thing as its object only if existence is added to it. But, in order to add such an attribute, an empirical intuition is needed, because only *a priori*.

Kant argues that even in the case of space and time, their employment is limited to the relation with the objects of the senses. The forms of sensibility have no reality outside the senses. But

³⁴ Ibid.: *Folglich sind alle mathematische Begriffe für sich nicht Erkenntnisse, außer sofern man voraussetzt, daß es Dinge gebe, die sich nur der Form jener reinen sinnlichen Anschauung gemäß uns darstellen lassen.*

³⁵ Ibid.: *d. i. sie dienen nur zur Möglichkeit empirischer Erkenntnis. Diese aber heißt Erfahrung.*

the pure concepts of the understanding are free from this limitation, and extend to objects of intuition in general, be it similar to our own or not, if only it be sensible and not intellectual. But this further extension [...] does not help us. For they are then mere empty concepts of objects.³⁶

If an object of a non-sensible intuition is admitted as given, it can be represented by all the attributes of sensible intuition, but in a negative manner, stating how it is not, but this does not procure knowledge. By merely saying that our intuition does not apply to this object, it is impossible to apply any category to it, because, ultimately, what manifold would it have to unify?

In the following paragraph, Kant introduces a difference regarding the synthesis of the manifold. He calls the synthesis of the manifold in a sensible intuition a figurative synthesis (*synthesis speciosa*) B 151, and distinguishes it from the synthesis of an intuition in general, called the synthesis of the understanding (*synthesis intellectualis*) B 151 – about both it can be said that they are transcendental, not only because they precede *a priori* any knowledge, but also because they ground other *a priori* knowledge. Of course, the difference between the two types of syntheses is the genus-species difference, the former being the application of the latter to a sensible intuition. The figurative synthesis, insofar as it relates to a sensible intuition, is called the transcendental synthesis of imagination, and imagination is “the faculty of representing in intuition an object that is not itself present”³⁷ Through this subjective condition, imagination belongs to sensibility, although its synthesis is a function of spontaneity.

In so far as imagination is spontaneity, I sometimes also entitle it the productive imagination, and thereby distinguish it from the reproductive, whose synthesis is entirely subject to empirical laws [...] and which, therefore, contributes nothing to the explanation of the possibility of *a priori* knowledge, and for this reason belongs not to transcendental philosophy, but to psychology.³⁸

³⁶ Ibid., B 148: *die reinen Verstandesbegriffe sind von dieser Einschränkung frei und erstrecken sich auf Gegenstände der Anschauung überhaupt, sie mag der unsrigen ähnlich sein oder nicht, wenn sie nur sinnlich und nicht intellektuell ist. Diese weitere Ausdehnung [...] hilft uns aber nichts. Denn es sind alsdann bloße leere Begriffe von Objekten [...]*

³⁷ Ibid., B 151: *Einbildungskraft ist das Vermögen, einen Gegenstand auch ohne dessen Gegenwart in der Anschauung vorzustellen.*

³⁸ Ibid., B 152: *So fern nun die Einbildungskraft Spontaneität ist, nenne ich sie auch bisweilen die produktive Einbildungskraft, und unterscheide sie dadurch von der reproduktiven, deren Synthesis lediglich empirischen Gesetzen ... unterworfen ist, und welche daher zur Erklärung der Möglichkeit der Erkenntnis *a priori* nichts beiträgt, und um deswillen nicht in die Transzendentalphilosophie, sondern in die Psychologie gehört.*

It can be argued that imagination, as a reproductive function, belongs to receptivity, and as a productive function, belongs to spontaneity.

The secondary discussion, concerning the deduction of the categories, is continued by Kant by specifying a paradox: inner sense “presents even ourselves to consciousness only as we appear to ourselves, not as we are in ourselves, since we intuit ourselves only as we are inwardly affected, and this seems to be contradictory”³⁹ The understanding, not being a faculty of intuitions, cannot have a manifold of its own, so as to have a direct relation with its own reality. The manifold is given to the understanding, namely by sensibility, which in turn is affected by objects, so on this path the understanding cannot have knowledge about itself as it is, but only as it appears to itself. The explanation is quite simple; as Kant states: “I, as intelligence and thinking subject, know myself as an object that is thought, in so far as I am given to myself in intuition also, only, like other phenomena, [...] this problem presents no greater or less difficulty than how I can be an object to myself at all.”⁴⁰ In the transcendental synthesis of the manifold of representations in general, I am conscious of myself, but this consciousness is not an act of intuiting, but an act of thinking, which means that it cannot be knowledge, but only an idea. “The ‘I think’ expresses the act of determining my existence. [...] But the mode in which I am to determine it is not thereby given.”⁴¹ However, without an intuition, this judgment cannot determine existence. Furthermore, transcendental apperception, as a function of the understanding, manifests itself only in the synthesis of a manifold, which means that it takes place only if it relates to an intuition. From which it follows that any determination of existence presupposes a relation to an intuition, whether it represents a piece of knowledge or not. “[...] I exist as an intelligence which is conscious solely of its power of combination”,⁴² which, however, has only a sensible content.

Paragraph §26 was announced (§21) as a second part of the transcendental deduction. Up to now,

³⁹ Ibid., B 152–153: *daß er uns selbst dem Bewußtsein nur so darstellt, wie wir uns selbst erscheinen, nicht wie wir an uns selbst sind, weil wir uns nämlich nur so anschauen, wie wir innerlich affiziert werden...*

⁴⁰ Ibid., B 155: *Ich, als Intelligenz und denkend Subjekt, erkenne mich selbst als gedachtes Objekt, sofern ich mir noch überdem in der Anschauung gegeben bin, nur gleich andern Phänomenen...*

⁴¹ Ibid., B 157: *Der Satz: Ich denke, drückt den Aktus aus, der mein Dasein bestimmt[...]aber die Art, wie ich es bestimmen soll [...] ist dadurch noch nicht gegeben.*

⁴² Ibid., B 158: *ich existiere als Intelligenz, die sich lediglich ihres Verbindungsvermögens bewußt ist.*

The possibility of the categories as a priori knowledge of objects of an intuition in general was exhibited (§§20, 21). We are now to explain the possibility of knowing a priori, by means of categories, whatever objects *Gegenstände* may present themselves to our senses, not indeed in respect of the form of their intuition, but in respect of the laws of their combination.⁴³

The purpose of the second part of the transcendental deduction is achieved by relating the unity of the categories to our particular (spatial-temporal) intuition. This was abstracted from previously, in the first part of the deduction (§§15–20), as the understanding was considered separately from sensibility, and the way a sensible manifold is given was not taken into account. Thus, by proving that the very way the manifold of an intuition is given to us is subject to the categories, it is shown that only through categories can we reach the unity of synthesis. The argument is not entirely new; it was also brought up in §17:

To know anything in space, for instance, a line, I must draw it, and thus synthetically bring about a determinate combination of the given manifold, so that the unity of this action is at the same time the unity of consciousness (as in the concept of a line), and it is through this unity of consciousness that an object (a determinate space) is first known. The synthetic unity of consciousness is, therefore, an objective condition of all knowledge [...]⁴⁴

Kant defines the synthesis of apprehension here as “the combination of the manifold in an empirical intuition, whereby perception, that is, empirical consciousness of the intuition (as appearance), is possible.”⁴⁵ The synthesis of apprehension must conform to the forms of sensible intuition. Space and time, as forms of this sensibility, are at the same time intuitions, which therefore determine the unity of the manifold. Therefore, the unity of the synthesis is given first *a priori*, as a condition of the synthesis of any ap-

⁴³ Ibid., B 159: *die Möglichkeit der Kategorien als Erkenntnisse a priori von Gegenständen einer Anschauung überhaupt (§ 20. 21) dargetan worden. Jetzt soll die Möglichkeit, durch Kategorien die Gegenstände, die nur immer unseren Sinnen vorkommen mögen, und zwar nicht der Form ihrer Anschauung, sondern den Gesetzen ihrer Verbindung nach, a priori zu erkennen [...] erklärt werden.*

⁴⁴ Ibid., B 137–138: *Um irgend etwas im Raume zu erkennen, z.B. eine Linie, muß ich sie ziehen, und also eine bestimmte Verbindung des gegebenen Mannigfaltigen synthetisch zu Stande bringen, so daß die Einheit dieser Handlung zugleich die Einheit des Bewußtseins (im Begriffe einer Linie) ist, und dadurch allererst ein Objekt (ein bestimmter Raum) erkannt wird. Die synthetische Einheit des Bewußtseins ist also eine objektive Bedingung aller Erkenntnis...*

⁴⁵ Ibid., B 160: *die Zusammensetzung des Mannigfaltigen in einer empirischen Anschauung, dadurch Wahrnehmung, d.i. empirisches Bewußtsein derselben (als Erscheinung), möglich wird.*

prehension, because intuitions have an *a priori* content. From this it follows that an *a priori* knowledge of nature is possible, so that through categories the understanding determines the objects that can be given to the senses and, moreover, also determines the relations between objects. It can be stated, consequently, that the understanding prescribes laws to nature, and the categories are necessary elements of any human knowledge, which means that they have objective validity in relation to possible experience. Even if the understanding prescribes laws to nature, nevertheless, particular laws cannot be entirely deduced *a priori*; they must be in conformity with the *a priori* ones, but the contribution of experience is also needed to deduce them completely. The stages of the transcendental deduction in its second part (§§22–26) can be summarized as follows:

The goal: Categories are necessary for the knowledge of objects of a sensible spatial-temporal intuition.

- Categories are valid (support knowledge) only with regard to possible experience – §§22, 23.
- The understanding determines inner sense in accordance with the synthetic unity of apperception, thus categories have objective reality for a spatio-temporal intuition – §24.
- Categories procure an *a priori* knowledge of nature – §26.

The result of this deduction is that: “we cannot have *a priori* knowledge of any object except in so far as it is an object of possible experience.”⁴⁶

The necessity of knowledge can also have other alternatives, which Kant attempts to eliminate. Mainly, he refers to two: extracting necessity from experience, which is not possible, as we cannot have a complete induction, and incomplete induction leads only to probable results. The second possibility is the implantation of the categories in us by the Creator, so that they are thus in conformity with nature. This possibility is also excluded, as it is hard to maintain. The conclusion would still lack necessity, because not even phenomena could be known objectively anymore; all that could be said would be: “I am so constituted that I cannot think this representation otherwise than as thus combined”.⁴⁷ But all knowledge would be in this case only an illusion. Three levels of knowledge are distinguished here: absolute knowledge, of things in themselves, independent of our way of construct-

⁴⁶ Ibid., B 166: *daß uns keine Erkenntnis a priori möglich sei, als lediglich von Gegenständen möglicher Erfahrung.*

⁴⁷ Ibid., B 168: *ich bin so gebaut, daß ich diese Vorstellung nicht anders als so verbunden denken kann.*

ing reality; knowledge of phenomena, which takes into account the *a priori* forms of the mind *Gemüt*; and illusion, a deceptive knowledge, which, as will be argued in the continuation of the chapters of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, has multiple causes.

I believe that the two parts of the transcendental deduction of the categories can be interpreted as follows: relating the categories to sensible intuition is necessary to present them as conditions of experience, because, without this argument, being only conditions of the unification of a manifold in general, they have objective validity, but it does not follow from this that they can also have objective reality; in other words, it does not follow that they are constitutive of a spatial-temporal object, i.e., of a thing. One can imagine a being having the same categories as ours, but completely different forms of sensibility. For this being, the categories will not ground the same mathematical and empirical judgments that we necessarily think. In this case, the categories would not necessarily ground synthetic *a priori* judgments, as they appear in the exact sciences targeted by Kant. It must be noted that the philosopher starts from the question: “How are mathematics and physics possible?” So, the general purpose is to ground certain already given cognitions. For this reason, the relating of categories, in the transcendental deduction, to sensible, spatial-temporal intuition is necessary. The question is further asked: why didn’t he do this at the beginning of the deduction? The answer I think can be this: if it had been argued in the announced variant, then the universal validity of the categories with reference to any manifold would no longer have been proven. So, in another order of ideas, the first part of the transcendental deduction argues the *objective validity* of the categories, and the second part argues their *objective reality*.

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