

The Transcendental Deduction of the Pure Concepts of Understanding

from the First (A) Version of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*

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For a gloss on this Deduction and especially Part II, Section 4, the reader is invited to review a revision of the publication of the translator's essay entitled "[Circles In The Air](#)" by [Kant-Studien](#) in 1996.

Note: It will very helpful for the reader to first read the [Translator's Notes](#).

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Translator's Notes

Technical Notes concerning this Translation

In this translation I have identified each sentence by paragraph and its order within the paragraph. For example, TDA II 3, 5.1 refers to this (A) version of the Transcendental Deduction, the second part, third division of that part, paragraph 5 of that division and sentence 1 of that paragraph, e.g.,

- 5.1 But since we are dealing only with the manifold of our representations,
and since that X (the object) which corresponds to them is nothing apart from us,
and yet since it is supposed to be something distinct from all our representations,
it is clear that the unity which the object makes necessary can be nothing other than the formal unity of the consciousness in the synthesis of the manifold of the viewing.

Due to the excessive length of many of Kant's sentences, I have broken them up into smaller sentences, but presented all together under the appropriate designation for that complete sentence. Also, as in the example of 5.1 above, I have spaced complicated sentences to make them more accessible to the reader in English.

The footnotes by Kant himself I identify with an asterisk and present at the end of the relevant paragraph. And so instead of footnotes they might here be more precisely called paragraph notes.

For a gloss on this Deduction and especially Part II, Section 4, the reader is invited to review a revision of the publication of my essay entitled "[Circles In The Air](#)" by Kant-Studien in 1996.

Regarding some technical words, I use concept for *Begriff*, representation for *Vorstellung* (instead of "depiction" which I often used in my earlier writings); appearance for *Erscheinung* (where I have used "specter" or "looks" in many of my other writings on Kant); recognition for *Erkenntnis* (instead of the more commonly used "cognition" or "knowledge"); manifold for *Mannigfaltigkeit*; and viewing for *Anschauung* (rather than the almost universal "intuition"). Accordingly the rainbow would not be a thing but merely the appearance of an object, or perhaps the repre-

sensation or looks of a bow just as the face in the cloud would not be a face itself, but, at most, the appearance or looks of a face. And the Big Dipper would not be anything on its own, but entirely the way of looking at certain stars, and where different people will see different things. For more on this see [Anschauung](#).

The Anschauung is a very important term. Let me point to some object, e.g., a chair. I can see this appearance as representing several objects, depending upon my anschauung.¹ It can represent a chair, or a piece of furniture, or a type of wood or metal, or a particular color, or a certain shape or size. It all depends upon my anschauung, i.e., my view or take of the object.

An Appeal To The Reader

Please contact me with any suggestions as to the translation itself or of the explanatory footnotes. I can be reached at pmr#&kantwesley.com where #& is replaced by @.

Viewing (or Looking) and Understanding

What we see and sense in general ends up as a projection within the brainarium. For example, light waves from a light source strike an object and then some are reflected by the object and some of these reflected waves in turn enter the eye and are converted into electrical impulses which travel along the optical nerves to the brain where finally a picture/appearance (*Erscheinung*) of the object unfolds within the brain to consciousness.²

Space and time are the form of the outer and inner sense, respectively. They are pure lookings at things, the viewing or *Anschauung* (at-look). If I see something to the left or right of something else, that left and right are not things on their own nor are they relationship of things on their own, but merely the way that I look at

¹ I am deliberately avoiding the capital A on anschauung (contrary to the German rule) in order to suggest that this term might very well be incorporated into English without translation.

² Even more: the reflected light waves passing through the eye lens are reversed (left and right) and projected upside down on the retina. And the optical nerve from the right eye pass into the left side of the brainarium and likewise for the left eye. Within the brain then a correction is made and an image of the object arises.

things, my take on things, my view of things.³ A memory is *now*, of course, whenever I am conscious of it, but as a memory it is looked upon and considered or viewed as before or earlier, and thus to this extent is a function of my looking (with respect to timing), my *anschauung*. When I look at my cup of coffee I see it, let us say, as the second cup this morning, and since that "second" is not any aspect of the cup, it is obvious that that is a viewing of, or my take on, the cup, my way of looking at the cup, my *anschauung*. Even how I look at something in space or time is subjective, and I make it objective by orienting myself to others within my brainarium, e.g., my left will be your right if we are facing each other. What we see when we look at something is very subjective and individual and depends upon our experience and exposure. Again: see [Anschauung](#).

Understanding something means a necessitation or connection of some manifold, and this is accomplished by means of a concept. The understanding itself is comprised of a set of certain pure concepts which are called categories.⁴ By means of these categories a manifold or diversity of sensitive data⁵ is unified via some rule,⁶ which is a connective device (the concept of the object), and the data is necessitated in this way. For example the manifold of legs and the top are unified as parts of a single object, a table, and in this wise the manifold is necessitated, i.e., it is understandable that the legs and top are configured as they are, e.g., that the legs are positioned between the top and the floor,⁷ because the table is an surfaced elevated for human use in writing, etc.

³ If space were something real on its own or the relationship of real things, then I could look as long and hard as I might and I would never be able to discern a here or a there or a left or a right. These are merely forms of my looking.

⁴ There are four classes of the pure concepts of understanding, i.e., quantity, quality, relationship and mode, with each class made up of three categories, e.g., those of relationship being: substance, causation and reciprocity, and representing time as enduring, successive and simultaneous, respectively. All these are connective devices, as it were, whereby two representations are unified into one, much as 1 and 2 are unified in the number 3.

⁵ Sensitive data would be either a pure viewing such as the three sides of a triangle traced out in mid air, or an empirical viewing such as the legs and top of a table, or even the top as an extended surface.

⁶ The 20th Century philosopher, Ludwig Wittgenstein, objected to Kant's understanding of the importance of rules for recognitions of objects and experience, and instead argued that the connection of the various uses of a word was like a rope where no strand went the entire length of the rope. All games, for example, could not be joined by any common rule/description. To counter this I offer this rule describing all games: a game is an activity undertaken for the sake of an arbitrary rule, and would not be undertaken otherwise.

⁷ It is by means of this empirical necessitation that we are able to recognize a broken table, one where the legs are above the top, for example, in being repaired and in an upside down position.

Metaphysical Deduction of the Categories

In order to understand the context of the deduction of the categories we need to be aware that these categories are not, and cannot be, derived from experience and are not contained in any appearance. David Hume establishes this very clearly, especially with regard to the concept or category of causation. No matter how many times lightening is followed by thunder, there is no necessity in the viewing of this sequence.⁸ As a result we can understand that the notion of causation is a priori (preceding and independent all experience).

And this very independence of the categories from all empirical data suggests a problem, namely how is it that something that we devise of ourselves, e.g., the concept of causation, would have any relevance and application to the appearances/*Erscheinungen* of the brainarium which arise independently of our understanding? We can dream up the notion of a unicorn, for example, but that would not in anyway suggest that there were any appearance possible to which this concept might be applied.

Transcendental Deduction of the Categories

The transcendental (knowledge-enabling) deduction of the categories will show how it is that a concept which is devised before and independently of any experience, i.e., a priori, can have application to the appearances which in turn are given entirely independently of the concept in the brainarium.⁹ Essentially the application will be justified by showing that it is only by means of this concept that perception and experience are possible in the first place.

In order to prepare for this deduction it is helpful to consider what we mean by perception and by experience. We will look first to perception.

Perception denotes a “careful take” (*Wahr-nehmung*) and so is not momentary and fleeting (as when we sight things while driving a car while preoccupied, the so-

⁸ This is called the metaphysical deduction of the categories, namely that the concept cannot have been derived from experience. Actually [David Hume](#) came to treat causation as nothing more than an abbreviation for saying: every time A has appeared B has followed, and every time B has appeared, it was following an A. For Hume this was simply a matter of customary behavior.

⁹ So while the metaphysical deduction shows that a concept is arrived at independently and before all exposure to appearances, this transcendental deduction will show how such a concept, even though devised by the mind independently of appearances, finds application to the appearances, and indeed necessarily.

called “auto pilot”). It has to do with what Kant in the B Deduction called “paying attention”. I have likened it to the “second look” when you “make sure”, e.g., checking the clock to make sure that you did indeed set it, as you thought you had, but having done so while preoccupied and not paying attention. And so in a sense there is an a priori aspect of the perception, namely various elements are consciously apprehended and kept in mind as a single thing in search of the object, i.e., the concept of which necessitates the unification of these elements.

Accordingly then we are dealing with a perusal of some appearances and accumulating a manifold of these, e.g., noticing that the legs are between the top and the floor (in the perception of a table). We apprehend a manifold which is seen as a single, composite thing in the viewing/intuition/*Anschauung* (again like a face in the cloud or looking at and seeing the Big Dipper in the Northern night sky), and we remember it and then we also associate the manifold with such as not only legs and top (which is no better than some sequence in the alphabet, e.g., H and I and J), but with the legs below the top, or between the top and the floor. That would be an association, arranging the manifold according to some kind of rule¹⁰ in pursuit of necessitation of the manifold. Kant's own example of perception in his subsequent *Prolegomena* was: when the sun shines on the stone, the stone grows warmer. That is a rule which describes the careful look at the manifold, but, again, has no suggestion of any necessity and does not denote a unified consciousness, but at this stage more a rote remembrance.

Now the **recognition** is very clear and constitutes knowledge/*Erkenntnis*. Here we conceive of an object according to a rule which is universal and is binding on all recognized objects, i.e., in accordance with the category, and also binds the immediate manifold of the perception and results in a unified consciousness. With regard to the stone the recognition is that the sun light *warms* the stone, and so where it is obviously such that, and then also why, the perception holds true, i.e., the reason that the stone is warm when the sun is shining on it is because the light of the sun is warm and thus causes the stone to warm up. And the reason the legs are between the top and the floor is because they are a table and a table is a flat surface elevated by legs for human convenience in use. Since this manifold of the perception is now integrated into the unified consciousness of self, we have a recognition.

¹⁰ When I try to remember certain numbers I like to make up a rule to describe them, e.g., today it was 321, which is very easy, and it is nice, for me, to find a rule like this, i.e., there are the same number of digits as the first number, and then each subsequent numeral decreases by 1. All this, Kant tells us, is the work of the understanding which is to be understood as a capacity for providing rules, connective rules.

The **concept of an object** is a rule which determines and then connects a particular manifold in the appearance in the context of a single object called nature.¹¹ Once this concept/rule accords with a category of the connective understanding, the appearances in the manifold then represents the object.

Perception, therefore and now obviously, is a function of the category as the only means for achieving to a unified consciousness (called “of self”) for it is in pursuit of the object of experience (originally called something general = X) that the perception is first undertaken, namely in this apprehension of a manifold, the careful sighting (paying attention) in the viewing/intuition/*Anschaung* of a composite thing, i.e., a manifold seen as a single thing (face in the cloud, a tree, table, Big Dipper, etc.) and then a careful, relatively a priori, look at the manifold in order to associate the manifold and discover the object that the manifold represents.¹²

Now it is possible to have an empirical viewing of some object, e.g., a table or a tree or a face in the cloud, without achieving to a perception, by simply seeing a something accompanied by a total absence of thought, and then seeing something else and then something else, etc., in a progression like the ABC's where upon B, A is forgotten and we are conscious of B, and which might lead to a C and whereupon then B is forgotten, etc., a disjointed consciousness. And so the perception is based on the premise that the manifold represents something, an object, i.e., can be unified, and it is in pursuit of that object that we first come to apprehend and re-

¹¹ Kant speaks of a single experience, even as there is a single nature, and all so-called individual experiences are recognitions, all of which together make up this single experience. We need to keep in mind that the perception is not yet integrated into this single, all-encompassing experience, but when it becomes an recognition, then this integration is complete. With a perception, therefore, we are still wondering and trying to figure it out and how it fits in with all our recognitions. See especially the “slamming door” at the end of this section.

¹² Even the perception arises as a function of the category as the entire point and purpose in apprehending and reproducing a given manifold, for all this is undertaken in anticipation of a unification of the manifold. First, as we will see in TDA II 1-3, we apprehend and retain the manifold, and then we utilize the productive imagination in pursuit of some binding/connection, and which binding is based on the categories, and which binding necessitates the manifold by means of the provision of an object, and that object expresses a unified consciousness, where diverse consciousness, e.g., legs and top, are made into one, e.g., legs *of* the table and top *of* the table. Accordingly all perceptions are undertaken in anticipation of the recognition (objective perception) of an object and indeed of an object which fits in with a unified consciousness with respect not only of the immediate manifold, but also of experience in general. The primary justification for the application of the categories to the appearances is that the perception would not occur in the first place were it not for an anticipation of a connected manifold per those categories.

produce (remembering as we go) and associate the manifold that happens to stand out to us in the empirical viewing.¹³

So then this is how it goes (and a short review): there is the empirical viewing of something (like the table) just like there is a pure viewing of a triangle or circle traced out in mid air. And there is no consciousness of self involved (other than the unity called “paying attention”), but merely some manifold composed of some diverse appearances, like the face in the cloud and seen as such, but totally without necessity. This is the careful apprehension and collection of the manifold (taking it all in), and then the reproduction of the manifold and association by the imagination via the application of some rule, e.g., when the sun shines on the stone, the stone gets warm. From this perception we move to the recognition when we have unified and necessitated the manifold via the concept of an object (which we devise for this very purpose), and where it is assumed (here we come to the **affinity of all the appearances**¹⁴) that this object is compatible with all objects, or more precisely: this perception is compatible with all perceptions because the appearances are connected (directly or remotely), i.e., the appearances are part and parcel of a single object = nature. Regarding the stone and the sun we would now say in the recognition: the warmth of the sunlight causes the stone to grow warm.

And the **unified consciousness of self** arises by means of the necessitation of the sensitive manifold via the concept of the object and in accordance with the connective categories. Before this unification the consciousness is disjointed and held together, if at all, by rote. The consciousness of 1 is different from the consciousness of 2 and only when they are unified in the number 3 have we attained to a unified consciousness of self. Or the consciousness of legs and the consciousness of a top

¹³ I can easily imagine that my dog, Jacky, can look at me hundreds of times every day and not realize that I have two hands, as opposed to five or six (and not even to mention a left and right hand, which even most people don't notice). I don't think he has ever apprehended me, although he has seen me all the time. I'm not sure he knows that I am actually not twins or a bunch of clones who resemble each other, some in motorcycle outfits, some in pajamas, some naked (and I am not even sure he knows that my skin is not just another garment like the pants and shirt). In fact I am not even sure he sees me as opposed to my face and my arm and my leg and my hand and my fingers, etc., in the same way that I look out and see the trunk and the branch and the leaves and the clouds and the sky and the mountains, etc., i.e., a disjointed this and that. The apprehension of the perception is a conscious, careful look to determine a manifold, to establish a fact, as we might say.

¹⁴ This is one of the most critical and important aspect of Kant's thinking regarding recognition, namely that we automatically and in advance of all experience make the assumption that all the appearances that invade our eyes and the brainarium in general are connected, either directly or remotely. This is the primary basis of human experience and which works to make all perceptions compatible with each other eventually, each being an element in a general experience of a single all-encompassing nature (which corresponds to the categorical make up of the human mode of understanding).

are disjointed and are finally unified in the consciousness of the object, table, so that the legs becomes the legs of the table, etc. And as the three straight lines (sides of a triangle) are necessitated by the rule of common end points and become a single thing (a triangle) consisting of a manifold (the three sides). Preceding all combination of a diverse and disjointed consciousness there is the potential for unification called the pure apperception.

The **pure apperception** (a potential for unified consciousness) is the capacity for paying attention and it must precede all experience because it is only by means of the apprehension and retention of data (the elements of paying attention [TDA II 1 & 2]) that we come to the first perception (which represents a determined fact, but which is not yet necessitated by being incorporated into a general experience) and which then leads [TDA II 3 & 4] to the recognition (necessitating the viewing and at the same time unifying the consciousness by including this perception in the single all encompassing experience, the focus of which is nature).¹⁵ And so the pure apperception is the potential for self awareness and the capacity for the perception, and when the manifold of data is unified via the object/rule and in accordance with a category of the understanding there arises an actual recognition of self which can then be considered in pure thought as in Descartes' "I think, therefore I am".

The **association** is a difficult term in the Deduction. As I understand it there are two aspects. There is the Law of Association (see especially the TDA II 2) where we are speaking of how it is that by exposure we come to associate terms, so that when we see lightening we expect to hear the sound of thunder. This is an empirical law. The other use seems to be an a priori search for relevant information. For example, in the case of the [Slamming Door](#) below, upon the perception of the door trying to shut itself against my hand, I try to find something which I can associate with this as a cause, and find it in the open window. In the case of the [Phantom Rain](#) I perceive the sound of rain and, since the sky is sunny, I look about to find something to associate with this sound, and find it in the fluttering price tags of the recently purchased potted plants.

Recap. We have a connective understanding consisting of various categories. When we wish to figure something out or to understand some situation, we undertake a perception which is premised on the possible connections available via the categories and which entails an accumulation of data by means of distinguishing

¹⁵ This unification of the consciousness may not be immediate, and until this is accomplished we remain with just a perception and not yet a recognition. In the case below of the Balky Bike it took several days for a recognition of the situation to arise. The information of the perception (the manifold of the appearances) would be included as part of my experience, but not yet integrated.

time into the relevant (obtaining data) and the irrelevant.¹⁶ We then mull over and associate this data, utilizing our productive imagination, in search of a rule which will necessitate it. The rule, of course, will also have the category as the standard of acceptability. Once a rule is discovered which is consistent with a category, we can supply a name and we have a concept whereby then the manifold of the perception is necessitated and we end up with the recognition of the object of that concept. Due to the necessity of conformity with the categories (required for a unified consciousness), all of our recognitions will mesh and fit together as part of a single understanding and a single nature. The original prompt to undertaking an investigation (leading to the perception) is the assumption on the part of the understanding that all appearances are connected in one way or another (the so-called affinity of all appearances). As a result of all this we are able to realize that not only experience (connected perceptions) but even perception itself is dependent upon the categories. This certification of the utility and necessity of the categories of the understanding with respect to the appearances (given independently of those categories) is the goal of this transcendental deduction.

Examples of Perceptions and Recognitions

Slamming Door

I live in a high rise condo. I am leaving my unit and shutting the door and suddenly it seems to shut itself, putting pressure on my hand as I stand outside the unit in the hallway. That was funny, I think to myself (for it had never happened before); and in an effort to confirm that, I open the door again and, sure enough, the door presses against my hand in an effort to shut itself. This second, "making sure" look constitutes what Kant would call a perception. I was taken by this hint of something odd and I had undertaken a deliberate test of that and paid attention to what I was doing and discovered that the door indeed tried to shut itself and had pushed against my hand. So this was a fact. But why? How could this be? Here, of course, with this very question I am already assuming the *affinity* of all the appearances, namely that there is a reason for this, a connection (for all appearances are connected, one way or another), and this assumption is the basis for me to look about

¹⁶ As the second footnote to Section 24 of the B version of the Deduction Kant had this to say about paying attention: "I do not understand why people find so much difficulty about the inner sense being affected by ourselves. Every time we pay attention to something we have an example of this. For there the understanding always determines the inner sense conformable to the connection which it thinks to the inner viewing which corresponds to the manifold in the synthesis of the understanding. How frequently the mind is affected in this way can be easily perceived within each person."

to find something which could be associated with this appearance (of the slamming door) in a possible connection. The door had never done anything like this before and so something must have changed (which is a conclusion based on the Second Analogy of Experience, namely causation [and which is only incidentally considered here in this treatment of the Transcendental Deduction] and which means that the word “event” is a synonym for “effect”). Again I opened the door in an effort to find something to associate¹⁷ with this odd occurrence and noticed that the window was open, which was very rare and occasioned at this point in time by some painting that I done in the unit and in an effort to rid the codon air of the fumes. Not only was the window open, but the curtains were flapping in a breeze. Both the pressure of the door and the open window and wind were elements of the apprehension and which I was keeping in mind by reproducing them all together as a manifold. But where would the breeze be going? for the all the other doors in the hallway were closed. Then I suddenly remembered that in the hallway were exhaust ducts which acted by gravity, i.e., warm air would slowly rise through them to the vents in the roof as air might enter the hallway via the occasional opened unit and elevator doors (and worked to freshen the air in the otherwise sealed hallway). This information was added to the growing manifold of data in my effort to find something to associate with this odd occurrence. And in a flash, it all came together in a unified consciousness whereby the manifold of the perceptions were necessitated, and thus constituted a recognition. The air within the building was much warmer than the external air (this was in the winter, but I didn’t make that association immediately), but could not easily escape through the ducts because there were no intake ducts for air to enter the hallway (except, again, when a door and a window were open). When I opened the door to my unit this constituted an opening for the cooler air to enter the building through my condo window and enabled the warmer, interior air to rise rapidly to the roof through the vents, thus permitting the outside air to enter my condo. When I had tried to close the door, this was like a valve or damper in the airflow system set up by the exhaust ducts and the open window, and the pressure of the moving air was strong enough to force the door to close without my assistance. Thus I had unified the manifold in my consciousness and had done so in a way that was integrated with all my perceptions in general (as functions of a single nature, i.e., warmer air rises and cooler air sinks) via the category of causation. I had explained and necessitated the slamming door by means of the concept of a valve in a air flow system.

¹⁷ This rather remarkable assumption on the part of the human, deliberately looking for something to associate with what has happened, is an a priori search which is prompted by the productive imagination and based upon the affinity (connection of all appearances in one way or another) which is in turned based upon the category as the only means for unifying the human consciousness.

Briefly: I apprehended the pressing of the door and the open window (and fluttering curtains denoting a movement of air). I kept this manifold in mind in my reproduction as I looked for something to tie in with this, to associate with it, and then added also the hallway vents leading to the roof and the cooler air outside the building. Then, maintaining presence of mind, I put this all together in the form of the object via my productive imagination, namely a “chimney” where both the door and the window played the role of dampers or valves. The perception was now a recognition and it all made sense, i.e., the manifold was necessitated and unified in my consciousness and fit in with my general experience, e.g., the play of warm and hot air.

The critical component for Kant's purposes in the deduction is that the deliberate reopening of the door (the beginning of the perception in paying attention to make sure) was premised on the affinity of connection of the appearances and the basis of all connection, i.e., the categories of understanding. Without them it would not have occurred to me to take a second look (perception) and try the door again. And so to this extent even perception is dependent upon the affinity and that in turn upon the category-connections of our understanding.

Phantom Rain

I want to include another example of this process in the hopes that it will aid the students of Kant to try to catch themselves in process of engaging in the steps related to a connection and recognition.¹⁸ I am sitting out on the porch (my new home in the mountains) one afternoon and suddenly I am taken by a pitter-patter sound. I pay attention and hear the sound of rain drops falling down the roof's drain pipe close by (or so I thought). A perception and apprehension and retention. But there is no rain and not even any clouds, and the only possibility might be that my solar hot water heater on the roof has sprung a leak. Here we add to the perception obtaining a growing manifold. But I think that is highly unlikely and dismiss that as not associable. As I listen longer and stare out into the garden I suddenly notice that the wind is blowing (something which is perhaps associable) and is blowing the price tags attached to two potted plants that I had purchased that morning and which were sitting in the garden waiting to be planted. A manifold of perceptions has arisen now: the sound, no rain and the wind and the slight clatter of the wind-blown price tags. And so suddenly my imagination puts it all together and

¹⁸ We usually look for and make connections automatically and do not pay attention to what we are doing, and thus forget the process. If we can learn to pay attention to the process of what we are about, we can see ourselves engaging in precisely what Kant is talking about in this TDA.

I recognize what is going on: the sound of rain drops was actually the noise made by the price tags being blown against the pots by the wind (and which were close to the drain pipe). Now a connection was made and the sound of the “dripping rain water” was explained, and I had necessitated the manifold and unified the consciousness. Thus a recognition. As in the previous case of the slamming door, my look for an explanation (the object) was predicated on the affinity of appearances and the connective categories. Otherwise I would simply have enjoyed the sound of rain on that sunny afternoon and the beautiful vista before me.

Balky Bike¹⁹

When the brand new motorbike first suddenly sputtered to a stop on the way home from the dealer, I was confused and looked about to see if I had thrown the stop switch on the bike by accident. I couldn't see anything amiss. And then it cranked up again and sounded ok, and so I thought that it was just some fluke = a happenstance.²⁰ And so I took off again. Then suddenly after a little while it sputtered to a stop again. Now I tried to make associations. I checked the gas lever and looked everything over again including the gas tank, thinking that maybe it was almost empty. But the tank had gas enough. And then again it cranked up and sounded ok again. And so I just shook my head and started again, no problem, but with some trepidation about what might happen next. This happened twice more before I finally reached home. Something was definitely amiss. Perhaps something the dealer had done or failed to do.

I had taken in a manifold of a new bike that suddenly stops and then starts up and runs fine for a while, before going through all that again. I kept it in mind. This running and stopping was very sporadic, only now and then. I could find nothing to associate with this peculiar functioning.

A couple of days later I could make a further association, this time with the weather. I had realized that the bike was cranky only when I was riding to work in the morning, and when going home, it worked fine. So I included this in the manifold and kept all this in mind as I sought to make some association. (Probably someone more familiar with motorbikes could already have suspected a certain

¹⁹ This example, but not this terminology, was utilized in my [“Circles in the Air”](#) essay appearing in 1996 in the *Kant-Studien*.

²⁰ I don't think that “fluke” is a term suitable for Kant's system. Here it will have meant an odd cause which would not be repeated.

problem based on this information, this manifold of perceptions.) Still I could not conceive of what was happening (which, again, was an assumption of my understanding, namely there is a cause for this and it can be discovered by considering all aspects of the bike and the driving and the fuel, etc., and it just had not yet been discovered [the affinity of all appearances]).

So far then and subjective speaking, we have the apprehension of a manifold (the bike and its sporadic failures and per TDA II 1) and a retention of this manifold via a reproduction of the imagination (TDA II 2) and where I am trying to put things together and solve this problem.

This is the perception, the recognition of an individual fact (of a manifold), but without understanding and unification in a single apperception.

During this period of the bike problems I was also using my imagination not only to reproduce and remember the manifold (start, stop, etc.) but also to make associations with something, with anything, that might be at play, some evidence of the actual cause of this odd behavior (“odd” given the concept of the motor bike as a rationally contrived and presumably well engineered machine).

Two days later and during the warm part of the day I removed the gas tank cover (to check on the level of gasoline in the tank) and heard a hissing sound; and suddenly everything (the manifold of irregularity in performance) came together and I saw or perceived the object, namely what all this manifold represented. The vent in the tank for the gravity feed from the gas tank into the engine must have gotten partly clogged somehow and in cold weather a partial vacuum was forming in the tank and keeping the gasoline from entering freely and properly into the engine below the tank (and via gravity). But in hot weather, when the bike functioned very well, the gas was expand and trying even to force itself out to the engine and despite the clogged vent (and also into the engine making for good performance) and also caused the hissing when I removed the cover during the heat of the day.

Now I had attained to a recognition. For I had conceived of an object for the apprehended and reproduced (and associated) manifold to represent, namely a clogged tank vent system. Now I understood the behavior of the bike, and it fit in with all my perceptions concerning the bike, and all motorbikes and machines and everything else in the world. And later the dealer confirmed my conclusion and made a repair.

Two things to now take from all this.

1. The connection of the manifold of my looking and perceiving was a function of a rule, called the concept of the object, which necessitates the manifold (sputtering only in cool weather). This necessitation is a function of the productive imagination as it takes the reproduced manifold and seeks to make associations in an attempt to combine the manifold (of the perceptions) in accordance with one of the categories of connection (causation). And this connection is an expression of the original a priori conscious of self called the pure apperception (whereby I was keeping the manifold in a single consciousness, but not yet unified, i.e., by mere reproduction). The categories enabled a manifold to be joined as parts of a single object. This join or connection represents a numerically identical apperception, a consciousness of the disparate elements of a manifold or composite as seen in my looking, but now as seen as parts of a single thing, as representing an object (faulty gas line). Due to this makeup of the apperception to obtain its unity by means of the categories of understanding (“now I understand”), it follows that no appearance can represent an object for us except by means of the category. There is no connection except via the appropriate category (here that of causation). Indeed even the perception itself is dependent upon the category as the basis for paying attention to the manifold of the bike’s functioning in an effort to find the problem in the first place.

2. The second consideration obtains from this. Namely it is one thing for the recognition of a given appearance to be subject to the categories, but it is still another thing to know this is to be expected and even required, that there are no such things as “flukes” and that all the appearances are connected per a transcendental affinity known as a totally interconnected nature. It was for this reason that I had undertaken associations; I was in search for a connection in the manifold of the perception. This is the reason that perceptions are held in abeyance until they are integrated in with all the perceptions which together make up a single experience (which is a composite of all recognitions); or if they don’t repeat, then eventually perhaps just forgotten (until by some circumstance the solution is seen, at which point the “fluke” is recalled and counted as solved = the manifold is perceived consistently with the composite of all perceptions called experience).

The upshot of this second consideration is that all the appearances fit together in a single nature, and so an explanation must be forthcoming, even if difficult to uncover and piece together at any given moment.

Nature is the ultimate Transcendental Object = X and it encompasses all of the appearances, and so they are all under laws of a single nature and which, therefore,

can be discovered and recognized. The choice before the human, perhaps one could say, is between treating the appearance as a thing on its own (as the animals surely do), or else treating it as merely the appearance of some object (ultimately = nature). If we consider it as a thing on its own, there would be no justification for looking for any necessitation in the manifold of the balky bike (for then it would be a thoughtless look at a manifold in the appearances). The only option is to treat the appearance as the representation of an object (here a correctly engineered bike with some defect). But all representations, obviously, are functions of the apperception (for they can only be *my* representations via this apperception) and so also in conceiving of the manifold of appearances and assigning an object for that manifold to represent. And since the possibility of an actual connection depends on the makeup of the apperception as the capacity for unification, and since that unification in turn depends upon the categories, we can understand how all the appearances must be subject to the categories, for otherwise they cannot represent anything at all and consequently would have to come across to us as things on their own.²¹ And likewise (as stated above) even the perception of paying attention is dependent upon the category as the foundation of an orderly world (in our view).

More generally speaking, we can say there are two components concerning perception and recognition, namely:

1. Subjective. The capacity for apprehending and collecting a manifold of appearances, and then reproducing that as a manifold and associating it in an attempt to find a rule (concept) which would necessitate the manifold so that it represents an object.
2. Objective. Here the focus is on the apperception. There is a single self-consciousness which must permeate all representations. The rule for the necessitating of the manifold (above in the subjective component) must accord with a category in order to be assimilated into the apperception.

Review of TDA II

Now we may take a broader look at TDA.II. We are given a manifold in the senses (looking or viewing or *anschauung*) which is called a synopsis. We apprehend that

²¹ The most we could do with things on their own would be to memorize them or develop associations, à la David Hume, in terms of the frequency or intensity of the exposure to the thing, i.e., a perception, but where there would be no a priori insistence or even conception of a recognition of the object. It would be like dealing with an alphabet instead of numbers (see [Two Metaphors](#)).

manifold or composite (TDA.II.1) and we reproduce and keep it in mind (TDA.II.2). In order to recognize an object we must conceive of something which were so constituted that it would have to appear as the manifold appears to us. We are not restrained by the apprehended order (which is subjective) and can play with the manifold in an effort to find an objective apprehension.²² When we come up with this rule of connection we recognize the object as being represented by the manifold (TDA.II.3)²³. Essentially this connection of the manifold of the appearance is based on the transcendental unity and identity of the apperception, the consciousness of self which is numerically identical with all perceptions (TDA.II.4) and where we are able to keep the entire manifold in mind and fit it in with all our recognitions. This identity is maintained by devising the unifying manifold-unifying rule so that necessitated manifold will also reflect the connective categories of our understanding. Consequently it is clear that all appearances which are to be recognized as objects are subject to these connective categories. Otherwise the perception of the manifold is entirely subjective and disjointed and not connected with any identical consciousness of self, and thus essentially meaningless.

But then how to we make sure that the recognition of this object is consistent with the recognition of another object or with another recognition of this same object? Experience is a single composite of all of the recognitions. The categories, by providing for the connection of the perceptions in a single experience, also then give the connection of any single object so that its perception can join in the common experience. And so the connection of a given appearance via an object is undertaken in a universal manner so that all the perceptions whatsoever will be and remain connected.

But then why do we think that all the appearances are subject to this connection, that they represent objects rather than just being things on their own which we may memorize if we wish, i.e., where everything is simply a fluke? We do in fact make this assumption. What is our justification for doing this?

²² In the case of Bally Bike the original apprehension (dealt with in TDA II 2) began with a stuttering and stop of the bike and then encompassed the performance in cool and warm weather, but then the objective apprehension (per the productive imagination) came to begin with the cooler weather and then the halting of the bike. This reordering and association would be a function of the productive (as opposed to the merely reproductive) imagination. And later, of course, the beginning element (not known until later) was the faulty tank vent.

²³ For example we conceive of a table as an elevated surface for human usage and by means of that unify the top and the legs as parts of a single object, i.e., the table.

It is only in this way (by the manifold being subject to the conditions of the unified and identical apperception) that we can have the appearances represent anything at all and not instead be the so-called things on their own. If the appearances don't represent an object, then they are things on their own and can never be understood by the human,²⁴ and so there would never be any justification for going beyond, or even to initiate, a perception, which is a manifold which could be simply considered as happenstance and which is observed, memorized and mentally reproduced by rote. It would include just appearances as: trees get smaller at a distance and people tend to speak more softly at a distance, where distant dogs (at a distance) morph into mail boxes when approached, and where large chunks of melting snow on the side of the road ahead turn into discarded white plastic trash bags closer up. This would be the character of our consciousness: entirely isolated and unique and no more connected than the ABC's.²⁵

In a word: the appearance is either a thing on its own (or better: thoughtless object of the viewing/*anschauung*), or it is the representation of some object (nature = law-driven connections). To be a representation of any object it must comply with the connective conditions of the unity of the apperception. And that means connection of the manifold via the rule connecting the manifold into representations of the relevant object, and also at the same time in accordance with the category, which is necessary for the unification of the apperception. And so by looking at all the appearances as representations of some, as yet undetermined, object we subject them to the categories. This is Kant's transcendental affinity of all the appearances.

Connection of the manifold for a single recognition is one with the connection of the manifold of all recognitions in a single experience.

Now let's step even further back and see what we have accomplished so far. We began our inquiry concerning knowledge by considering the way things appear to us. This is not the thinking *of* the object, but rather the looking *at* the object. We

²⁴ Since the appearance of a table, for example, can serve as a representation of a table or of the color brown, let us say, or a certain shape, etc., what is the manifold of the appearance of a table without a concept of the object that the particular table under consideration to represent? It would represent nothing and simply be a thing on its own.

²⁵ In the TDA.II.4 Kant stresses the fact that it is only via the connective capacity of the apperception (via the categories of the pure understanding) that appearances can represent anything at all. He speaks of "thoughtless objects of our looking" while here I call them the thing on its own. Strictly speaking Kant is more accurate, for the object of our looking does appear in terms of the forms of our looking, i.e., space and time, and these are not binding on things on their own which cannot be looked at, but only thought in a negative way, e.g., not this and not that.

see all things, which can ever come to our sight, in terms of space and time. We don't get space and time from the images of things, but add them as the peculiar way that we happen to notice things, how we look at and see them, how we view, our *anschauung* of, or take on, appearances. We see them here and there, and now and earlier. We can't get this from experience. This is within us as the form of human looking/viewing or *anschauung* in general. Accordingly we know that we don't see things on their own as rather objects of our looking which for us are entirely appearances, i.e., manifolds seen as single things and made up of sensations (like, indeed, the face in the cloud). Faces don't exist in the cloud, but are a product of our imaginative looking, our *anschauung* and our capacity for grasping a manifold in terms of time and space.²⁶ What we know of space and time, e.g., that two sides of a triangle are greater than the third, and that something can both be and not be, but only at different times, we supply of ourselves as our way of looking. These hold for all things which can ever possibly arise to our sight and senses, and all appearances are thus subject to the conditions of our looking and only exist as objects in our looking, and that is always space and time.

So here we understand how all appearances are thus subject to time and space in order to be objects for us.

Then Kant introduces the thinking into the equation and shows how the various possible judgments that humans make are in an order, and reflect certain connective concepts called the categories of understanding. We saw that we could not have come to these categories via experience (the metaphysical deduction), just as we could not have come to the notions of time and space via experience; rather they are added to the impression of the senses in order to have experience. And so they are simply connective devices for representing states of mind called concepts. Now we want to see how it is that these concepts that we ourselves arrive it independently of all experience could nevertheless be binding of the appearances just as space and time bind them, i.e., necessarily.

And that is what then we undertook above to show. The object is a unified consciousness where a manifold of consciousness is singular and identical (held together in one presence of mind). Therefore the only way an object can be recognized (with thought and *anschauung/viewing* matching) is in accordance with the requirements of a unified consciousness, and for the human that means the categories of our understanding. So that shows that any given object is subject to the

²⁶ What we see when we look and view, i.e., the *anschauung*, is essentially a function of our background and exposure, e.g., spying a face in a cloud depends first on discerning a face on the front of a human head (and "front" is also a way of looking at the head).

categories. But how about all the objects together? How can we be sure that we are putting all objects together in a compatible way? And how can we be sure that all appearances are representations of objects? Might not some of them be merely appearances, i.e., things on their own?

The key to this puzzle lies in the notion of representation, of having a “stand in” or a “stand for” or “example of”. As things on their own appearances are whatever they are and are beyond the pale of human knowledge. As objects of looking without thought (without the connection of the manifold) they are in space and time, but they are much like things on their own in that they are unpredictable and spontaneous (like faces in clouds) and at best might be memorized or naturally associated through exposure, somewhat like the ABC's. There is no necessitation in the appearances as such. We could have a host of unrelated and unique perceptions of all sorts of things (and it would be less organized than a dream, as Kant puts it). We approach the objects of the looking with an expectation of making sense of them, for we conceive of them not as things or thoughtless objects of the looking (like a face in the cloud), but as representations of something. And that something is the object. And again this is the affinity of all appearances which is based on the category makeup of our understanding.

The option is clear: essentially speaking we intellectually approach the manifolds of the appearances in the empirical looking as being either things on their own, or else as merely representation of things. The object which all of these appearances would represent is nature. Nature (law abiding existence) is the ultimate transcendental object.

Thus the reason that the appearances are subject to the categories is that categorical connection is the only way that we can think any object that the appearances can represent to us. The only way that the appearances can represent something instead of being something (an object of looking, like the face in the cloud) is by means of the apperception, and the condition for a unified apperception is the category of human understanding. Accordingly all appearances are subject to the categories of understanding, the form of our thinking, just as they are subject to the forms of our looking in space and time.

In this way then Kant completes the transcendental deductions of the categories in application to the appearances just as he has done with the transcendental deduction of the applicability of time and space (as the peculiar forms of our looking) to

those same appearances. The categories of the understanding are necessary for even the first perception to be undertaken.²⁷

Now we can turn to the Deduction itself.

²⁷ Again I would strongly recommend that the reader consider the essay "[Circles in the Air](#)" for a more expansive discussion of this Transcendental Deduction A and especially the very difficult Part II.

Deduction of the Pure Concepts of Understanding

1. Section. Concerning the Principles of a Transcendental Deduction in General

- 1.1 When jurists speak of authority and claims in a legal process, they distinguish the question about what is lawful (*quid juris*) from that concerning what is factual (*quid facti*), and although they require proof of both, the first of these, concerning the authority (for the establishment of the legal claim), they call the deduction.
- 1.2 We avail ourselves of a host of empirical concepts without any challenge, and also, even without a deduction, we consider ourselves justified in ascribing a sense and an imagined meaning to them because we always have experience at hand to prove their objective reality.
- 1.3 But there are also usurped concepts such as luck and fate which are bantered about with almost universal approbation, but which occasionally are challenged with the question: *quid juris*? At that point there is often some embarrassment with regard to their deduction, for no one can demonstrate a clear, lawful basis for the justification of their usage either from experience or from reason.
- 2.1 But among the many concepts making up the very mixed web of human recognitions there are some which are determined for a pure usage a priori (in complete independence of every experience), and the authority of these concepts always has need of a deduction because a proof from experience would not suffice for the legitimacy of such usage. And yet we insist upon knowing how these concepts, which do not arise out of any experience, might still refer to objects.
- 2.2 Such an explanation of the manner as to how concepts might refer a priori to objects I call their transcendental deduction, and I differentiate this from an empirical deduction which would show how a concept were acquired through experience and through reflection about that experience. The empirical deduction, therefore, would not concern the lawfulness of the concept, but rather only the fact of the possession of that concept.

- 3.1 We are already in possession of two classes of concepts which are thoroughly different, even though they agree by each class referring entirely a priori to objects; I am speaking of the concepts of space and time, as the forms of sensitivity, and of the categories, as the concepts of the understanding.
- 3.2 To want to pursue an empirical deduction of these would be a complete waste of time. The very character of their nature lies in their reference to objects without having borrowed anything for their representation from experience.
- 3.3 Therefore if a deduction of these concepts is necessary, then it will always have to be transcendental.
- 4.1 But concerning these concepts (as indeed with every recognition) we can, of course, seek out in experience, if not the principle of their possibility, still at least the opportunity for their generation where then the impressions of the senses supply the first occasion for the awakening of the entire recognition capacity with respect to these concepts and the production of experience, namely a material for the recognition from the senses and also a certain form of ordering them from the internal source of the pure viewing and thinking which (latter), upon the occasion of the former, is first brought into exercise and produces the concepts.
- 4.2 Such a hint of the first strivings of our recognition power in order to ascend from individual perceptions to universal concepts, is doubtlessly of great utility, and we may thank the celebrated [Locke](#) for first preparing the way for this.
- 4.3 But a deduction of the pure concepts a priori can never take place in this manner, for such a deduction is not to be found in this way; and due to their future usage, which is to be entirely independent of experience, these concepts must be able to produce a quite different birth certificate than that of an origin from experience.
- 4.4 This attempted physiological derivation, therefore, which actually cannot even be called a *deduction*, concerning as it does a *quaestio facti*, I will call the *explanation* of the possession of a pure recognition.

- 4.5 It is clear, therefore, that there can only be a transcendental deduction of these pure concepts and in no way an empirical one, and that the latter, with respect to the pure concepts a priori, are nothing other than vain attempts with which only those who have not comprehended the entirely peculiar nature of these recognitions can ever occupy themselves.
- 5.1 But now even though the only way that a possible deduction of the pure recognitions a priori, namely in a transcendental manner, can be admitted, it still is not clear that it is so unavoidably necessary.
- 5.2 Above we pursued the concepts of space and time to their sources by means of a transcendental deduction, and explained and determined their objective validity.
- 5.3 Independently of this transcendental deduction, geometry proceeds along its secure way through sheer recognitions a priori without needing to petition philosophy for a certification with regard to the pure and lawful derivation of its foundational concept of space.
- 5.4 But the usage of the concept in this science only touches upon the external sense world, whereof space is the pure form of its viewing, in which therefore every geometrical recognition, because it is based on a viewing a priori, has immediate evidence, and the objects are given through the recognition itself, a priori (with regard to the form) in the viewing/anschauung).
- 5.5 In contrast to this there begins with the pure concepts of understanding an unavoidable need to seek a transcendental deduction, and not only of them, but even of space, because since they do not speak of objects through the predicates of viewing and sensitivity, but rather of pure thinking a priori, they refer to objects without any condition of sensitivity, and these pure concepts, since they are not based on experience, can also not show any object a priori in the viewing on which they might base their synthesis before every experience and, therefore, not only raise suspicions about the objective validity and limits of their own usage, but make even the concept of space equivocal by their inclination to utilize it out beyond the conditions of the sensitive viewing, for which reason also a transcendental deduction was necessary for it.

- 5.6 Thus the reader must be convinced of the unavoidable necessity of such a transcendental deduction before taking a single step in the field of pure reason. Otherwise he gropes about blindly and, after making wrong turns everywhere, must still return to the ignorance from whence he started.
- 5.7 But he must also be aware in advance of the unavoidable difficulty so that he not complain of the darkness in which the subject itself is deeply encased, nor become annoyed too quickly about the removal of obstacles; for here the alternatives are either to give up completely all claim to insights of pure reason in the most coveted of realms, namely out beyond the boundaries of all possible experience, or else to bring this critical investigation to a completion.
- 6.1 Earlier, with the concepts of space and time, we were able with little exertion to grasp how these, as recognition a priori, still must necessarily refer to objects, and how they made possible a synthetic recognition of objects, and independently of every experience.
- 6.2 For there, since it was only possible by means of such pure forms of sensitive that an object appears to us, i.e., can be an object of an empirical viewing, it follows that space and time are pure viewings which contain a priori the conditions of the possibility of objects as appearances, and the synthesis in these has objective validity.
- 7.1 The categories of the understanding, on the other hand, do not at all represent the conditions by which objects are given in the viewing. Accordingly objects may appear to us in any case without having to refer necessarily to the functions of the understanding and, therefore, without these containing the a priori conditions of these objects.
- 7.2 Hence a difficulty arises here which was not encountered in the field of sensitivity, namely how subjective conditions of the thinking should have objective validity, i.e., render conditions of the possibility of every recognition of the objects; for without functions of the understanding appearances can still always be given in the viewing.

- 7.3 Take, for example, the concept of cause, which denotes a particular sort of synthesis, where upon something, A, something entirely different, B, is posited according to a rule.
- 7.4 It is not clear a priori why appearances should contain something like that, i.e., why they should be subject to a law of cause and effect (for experience cannot be introduced in proof, because the objective validity of this concept must be able to be established a priori) and it is, therefore, a priori doubtful whether such a concept not be entirely empty and encounter no object anywhere among the appearances.
- 7.5 For that objects of the sensitive viewing must conform to the formal conditions of sensitivity, space and time, lying a priori in the mind, of that there is no doubt, because otherwise they could not be objects for us, for they could not be viewed. But that they also would conform to conditions which the understanding needs for the synthetical insight of thinking, there the consequence is not so obvious.
- 7.6 For it might well be the case that appearances were so constituted that the understanding would never find them conformable to the conditions of its unity and that everything would lie in such confusion that, for example, in the series of the appearances nothing would offer itself which would render a rule of synthesis and correspond accordingly to the conditions of cause and effect, and with the result that this concept would be entirely empty, void and without meaning.
- 7.7 But appearances would not cease to offer objects to our viewing, for the viewing has utterly no need of the functions of the thinking.
- 8.1 If some one thought to free himself from the tedium of this examination by saying that experience offers countless examples of such regularity of the appearances, which give a sufficient occasion for the abstraction of the concept of cause, and thereby likewise to insure the objective validity of such a concept, then that person does not realize that in this way the concept of cause cannot ever arise. Indeed this concept must be based entirely a priori in the understanding or else given up entirely as a mere fancy.

- 8.2 For this concept unwaveringly requires that something, A, is of the sort that a something else, B, follows upon it necessarily and in accordance with an utterly universal rule.
- 8.3 Now appearances do indeed provide cases from which a rule were possible, according to which something customarily occurs, but never that the succession be necessary. Hence the synthesis of cause and effect possesses a dignity which one can simply not express empirically, namely that the effect not merely comes additively to the cause, but rather that it is necessitated through that and arises from it.
- 8.4 The rigorous universality of the rule is not at all a property of empirical rules which can obtain comparative universality, i.e., expanded utility, through induction.
- 8.5 But now we see that the usage of the pure understanding concept would be entirely different if one wanted to treat it only as an empirical product.

Transition to the Transcendental Deduction of the Categories

- 1.1 There are only two ways that synthetic representations and their objects can meet, refer to one another in a necessary way and accompany each other, as it were.
- 1.2 Either the object alone makes the representation possible, or the representation alone makes the object possible.
- 1.3 If the former, then the referral is only empirical, and the representation is never possible a priori.
- 1.4 And this is the case with appearances, with respect to that aspect of them which belongs to sensation.
- 1.5 But if it is the second case, then since representations themselves on their own do not actually produce the objects (for we are not speaking here of their causality by means of the will), the representation is still determining a priori with respect to the object if it is only possible through the representation to recognize something as object.
- 1.6 But there are two conditions subject to which alone the recognition of an object is possible, first viewing, whereby it, solely as appearance, is given; and second the concept, by means of which an object corresponding to that viewing will be thought.
- 1.7 But it is clear from the above that the first condition, namely that, to which alone the objects can be sighted, already in fact lies a priori in the mind as the basis to the objects with respect to their form.
- 1.8 With this formal condition of sensitivity, therefore, all appearances accord necessarily, because they can only appear through this condition, i.e., be empirically looked at and given.
- 1.9 But now the question arises as to whether the concepts a priori might not also precede as conditions, subject to which alone anything, even if not looked at, still will be thought in general as an object; for then every empirical recognition of the objects will accord with such concepts in a necessary way, be-

cause, without their presupposition, nothing is possible as an object of experience.

- 1.10 But now in addition to the viewing of the senses, whereby something is given, every experience contains yet a concept of an object, which is given in the viewing or appears. Accordingly then concepts of objects in general, as conditions a priori of all experiential recognitions, will lie as the foundation. Consequently the objective validity of the categories as concepts a priori will rest upon the fact that through them alone experience (in accordance with the form of thinking) is possible.
- 1.11 For in this way they refer necessarily and a priori to objects of experience, because only by means of them in general can any sort of an object of experience be thought.
- 2.1 The transcendental deduction of all concepts a priori, therefore, has a principle to which the entire investigation must be aimed, namely: they must be recognized as the conditions a priori of the possibility of experiences (be it the viewing, in which they are encountered, or the thinking).
- 2.2 Concepts, which render the objective basis of the possibility of experience, are precisely for that reason necessary.
- 2.3 The development of experience, however, in which they are encountered, is not their deduction (but rather their illustration), because otherwise they would still be contingent.
- 2.4. Without this original referral to possible experience, in which all objects of recognition come forth, their referral to any sort of object would not be comprehensible.

2. Section. The A Priori Foundations for the Possibility of Experience

- 1.1 It is entirely contradictory and impossible for a concept to be generated completely a priori and refer to an object without belonging to the concept of a possible experience or at least consisting of the elements of such.
- 1.2 For since no viewing would correspond to such a concept, and since viewings in general make up the entire field or subject matter of possible experience (by means of which alone an object can be given to us), the concept would have no content.
- 1.3 Indeed a concept a priori which did not refer to a viewing would really be only the logical form for a concept and not itself the actual concept by means of which something were thought.
- 2.1 If, therefore, there are such things as pure concepts a priori, then while they may not, of course, contain anything empirical, they must still be utter conditions a priori of a possible experience, upon which alone their objective reality can be based.
- 3.1 To determine how pure concepts of understanding are possible, we must uncover the conditions on which the possibility of experience depends and which would remain as a foundation for it even if we were to abstract from all empirical aspects of the appearances.
- 3.2 A concept which expressed this formal and objective condition of experience universally and sufficiently, would be called a pure concept of understanding.
- 3.3 Once I have pure concepts of understanding, of course, I can think of objects which are perhaps impossible or, if not actually impossible per se, still cannot be given in any experience, because something would be left out of the connection of their concepts which belonged necessarily to the condition of a possible experience (in the concept of a ghost), or perhaps it would entail an extension of a pure concept which is further than experience can encompass (in the concept of God).

- 3.4 But even though the elements to all recognitions, even to arbitrary and inane fancies, can certainly not be borrowed from experience (for otherwise they would not be recognitions a priori), they must still always contain the pure conditions a priori of a possible experience and its object. Otherwise not only would nothing be thought through them, but they themselves, without data, could not even have arisen in thought.
- 4.1 Now these concepts, which contain a priori the pure thinking for every experience, are found to be the categories, and it is already a sufficient deduction for them and a justification of their objective validity if we can prove that it is only by means of them that an object can be thought.
- 4.2 But because in such a thought more than the single capacity, i.e., the understanding, is involved and because even this, as a capacity of recognition which is to refer to objects, has need of an explanation concerning the possibility of this referral, we must consider the subjective sources which make up the foundations a priori for the possibility of experience, not with regard to their empirical, but rather to their transcendental constitution.
- 5.1 If every representation were entirely alien to the other, isolated, as it were, and separate from it, then nothing like a recognition, i.e., a whole of compared and connected representations, would ever arise.
- 5.2 If, therefore, I attribute to the sensitivity a synopsis because it contains a manifold in its viewing, there will always be a synthesis corresponding to this, and only by means of spontaneity can the receptivity make connected recognitions possible.
- 5.3 Now this is the basis of a three-fold synthesis which appears necessarily in every recognition: the apprehension of the representations as modifications of the mind in the viewing, the reproduction of these representations in the imagination, and their recognition [*Rekognition*] in the concept.
- 5.4 These provide us with a clue to three subjective recognition sources which actually make possible the understanding and, through this, every experience as an empirical product of the understanding.

Preceding Reminder

- 6.1 The deduction of the categories involves so many difficulties and necessities such an intense inquiry into the first grounds of the possibility of our recognitions in general that in order to avoid the wide scope of a complete theory and still not miss anything in such a necessary inquiry, I have found it more advantageous to prepare the reader in the following four sections than to instruct him; and not to present the elucidation of the elements of the understanding systematically until the subsequent third part.
- 6.2 For that reason the reader will have to remain somewhat in the dark, which is at first unavoidable on a path which has never been trod before, but who, I hope, will be fully enlightened in that third part.

1. The Synthesis of the Apprehension in the Viewing

- 1.1 Our representations may arise from whence they will, whether effected through the influence of outer things or through internal causes, and whether they have arisen a priori or empirically as appearances; nevertheless, as modifications of the mind, they belong to the internal sense and, as such, all our recognitions are ultimately subject to the formal conditions of the internal sense, namely time, in which they altogether must be ordered, connected and brought into certain relationships.
- 1.2 This is a universal remark which we must thoroughly lay as the foundation to all that follows.
- 2.1 Every viewing contains a manifold within itself which still would not be represented as such if the mind did not distinguish the time in the sequence of the impressions upon one another; for, as contained in one moment, no representation can ever be anything other than absolute unity.
- 2.2 Now in order that out of this manifold there arises unity of the viewing (as perchance in the representation of space) first the perusal of the manifold is necessary and then the collection of that manifold, which action I term the apprehension because it is focused directly upon the viewing which offers indeed a manifold, but can never effect this as such and indeed as contained in one representation without a synthesis arising.
- 3.1 Now this synthesis of the apprehension must also be exercised a priori, i.e., with respect to the representations which are not empirical.
- 3.2 For without it, we would not be able to have either the representations of space nor of time, for these can only be generated through the synthesis of the manifold which the sensitivity offers in its original receptivity.
- 3.3 We have, therefore, a pure synthesis of the apprehension.

2. The Synthesis of the Reproduction in the Imagination

1.1 There is a law (merely an empirical one, of course) according to which representations which have frequently followed or accompanied one another finally congregate and combine in such a way that one of them produces a transition of the mind to the other according to an enduring rule and even without the presence of the object.

1.2 But this law of reproduction presupposes that the appearances themselves are actually subject to such a rule, and that in the manifold of their representations a coincidence or succession actually takes place in conformity with certain rules;

for otherwise our empirical imagination would never have anything to do commensurate to its capacity and, therefore, would remain concealed in the interior of the mind as a dead faculty, not even known to us.

1.3 If cinnabar were sometimes red, and sometimes black, sometimes light and sometimes heavy, if a person appeared sometimes in one animal shape and sometimes in another, if on the longest day the land were sometimes covered with fruit and sometimes with ice and snow, then my empirical imagination would never be able to find the least opportunity for recalling the heavy cinnabar upon the representation of red; or if a certain word sometimes meant one thing and sometimes another, or if the same thing were called one thing at one time and something else at another without there being a certain rule to which the appearances were already subject of themselves, then no empirical synthesis of the reproduction could take place.

2.1 Therefore there must be something which makes this very reproduction of the appearances possible by being the a priori basis of their necessary, synthetic unity.

2.2 We recognize this very quickly once we recall that appearances are not things on their own, but rather the sheer play of our representations which finally resolve into determinations of the inner sense.

2.3 If we can now establish that even our purest viewings a priori procure no recognition except to the extent they contain such a connection of the manifold that a thorough synthesis of the reproduction is made possible, then this synthesis of the imagination is also based a priori upon principles preceding

all experience and we must assume a pure, transcendental synthesis of that imagination as the foundation for even the possibility of experience (which necessarily presupposes the reproducibility of the appearances).

- 2.4 Now it is clear that if I draw a line in thought, or think the time from one midday to the other, or if I merely want to represent a certain count, I would necessarily first have to grasp in thought each of these representations of the manifold, one after the other.
- 2.5 And if I were always to forget the preceding (the first parts of the line, the preceding parts of the time, or the units represented successively) and not reproduce them as I proceeded to the subsequent one, then an entire representation would never be able to arise, nor any of the thoughts just mentioned; indeed not even the purest and first fundamental representations of space and time.
- 3.1 The synthesis of the apprehension is, therefore, inextricably linked with the synthesis of the reproduction.
- 3.2 And since the former constitutes the transcendental basis of the possibility of all recognitions in general (not merely the empirical, but also even those pure and a priori), the reproductive synthesis of the imagination belongs to the transcendental actions of the mind, and with regard to this inclusion we will call this capacity the transcendental capacity of the imagination.²⁸

²⁸ This [blog](#) may be helpful in understanding in this section.

3. The Synthesis of the Recognition [*Rekognition*] in the Concept

- 1.1 Without being aware that what we are thinking now is precisely what we were thinking a moment ago, all reproduction in the series of the representations would be pointless.
 - 1.2 For there would be a new representation in the present state which would not at all belong to the act by means of which it was to have been gradually generated, and its manifold would never make up a whole, because the unity which only the consciousness can provide would be lacking.
 - 1.3 If I forget, while counting, that the units which I presently have in mind have been gradually added by me, then I would recognize neither the generation of the quantity through this successive addition of ones, nor also, therefore, the count; for this concept consists solely in the consciousness of the unity of the synthesis.
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- 2.1 The word concept itself might aid us here.
 - 2.2 For this is a consciousness which unites into a single representation the manifold which was gradually looked at and then reproduced.
 - 2.3 This consciousness can frequently be very weak; so much so in fact that we connect it with the generation of the representation only in the effect and not in the act itself. But regardless of that difference, a consciousness must always be encountered, even if the distinctive clarity is not, and without this consciousness concepts are not possible at all nor, in their absence, any recognition of objects.
-
- 3.1 First we need to make clear what is meant by the expression "an object of representations".
 - 3.2 Earlier we indicated that appearances were really nothing other than representations which must not be looked at in just this way as objects on their own (independently of the representational capacity).

- 3.3 But then what do we mean when speaking of an object corresponding to, and hence then also differing from, a recognition?
- 3.4 Obviously this object must be thought of only as a something in general = X, because apart from our recognition we have nothing to place in opposition to it in order then to correspond to it.
- 4.1 And yet we find that our thought of the reference of all recognitions to their object entails some sort of necessity, for a recognition is not haphazard or arbitrary, but rather a priori determined in a certain way. Indeed it is by reference to the object that recognitions also necessarily agree among themselves with regard to it, i.e., they must have that unity which makes up the concept of the object.
- 5.1 But since we are dealing only with the manifold of our representations, and since that X (the object) which corresponds to them is nothing apart from us, and yet since it is supposed to be something distinct from all our representations, it is clear that the unity which the object makes necessary can be nothing other than the formal unity of the consciousness in the synthesis of the manifold of the viewing.
- 5.2 For we say we recognize an object when we have effected synthetic unity in the manifold of the viewing.
- 5.3 But this is impossible unless the viewing were capable of production according to a rule through such a function of synthesis that makes the reproduction of the manifold necessary a priori, and a concept uniting this manifold possible.
- 5.4 We think of a triangle, for example, by being cognizant of the assemblage of three straight lines according to a rule whereby such a viewing could be presented at any time.

- 5.5 Now this unity of the rule determines all the manifold, and limits it to conditions which make the unity of apperception possible, and the concept of this unity is the representation of the object = X which I think through the cited predicates of a triangle.
- 6.1 Every recognition requires a concept, regardless of how imperfect or vague, and it is always something general with respect to its form, and which serves as a rule.
- 6.2 The concept of a body, for example, serves as a rule for our recognition of external appearances with respect to the manifold which is thought in that concept.
- 6.3 But it can be a rule of viewings only in this way: with given appearances it represents the necessary reproduction of their manifold, and hence the synthetic unity of the consciousness we have of them.
- 6.4 Upon the perception of a something apart from us, therefore, the concept of body makes the representation of extension necessary, and along with it that of impenetrability, shape, etc.
- 7.1 There is always a transcendental condition as the basis to every necessity.
- 7.2 Therefore a transcendental basis of the unity of the consciousness must be encountered in the synthesis of the manifold of all our viewings, hence also in the concept of objects in general, consequently then of all objects of experience, for without this it would be impossible to think any sort of object to our viewings; for this object is nothing more than that something concerning which the concept expresses such a necessity of the synthesis.
- 8.1 Now this original and transcendental condition is none other than the transcendental apperception.

- 8.2 The consciousness of one's self, according to the determinations of our state, is merely empirical with regard to the inner perception, always changeable, renders no enduring or abiding self in the flood of the inner appearances, and is commonly referred to as the inner sense or empirical apperception.
- 8.3 That which is to be represented as numerically identical cannot be so thought by means of empirical data.
- 8.4 There must be a condition which proceeds all experience and even makes this possible, which is to make such a transcendental presupposition valid.
- 9.1 Now no recognitions can take place within us, nor any connection and unity among them,
without that unity of consciousness which precedes all data of the viewing and solely in reference to which every representation of object is possible.
- 9.2 This pure, original, unchangeable consciousness I will call the transcendental apperception.
- 9.3 That such a name is warranted is clear from the fact that even the purest, objective unity, namely that of the concepts a priori (space and time), is only possible through the referral of the viewings to it, i.e., to this apperception.
- 9.4 The numerical unity of this apperception, therefore, lies a priori as a foundation to all concepts just as much as the manifold of space and time is the foundation to the viewings of the sensitivity.
- 10.1 But it is just this transcendental unity of the apperception which takes all possible appearances which could ever be together in an experience, and makes a cohesion of all these representations in accordance with laws.
- 10.2 For this unity of consciousness would be impossible if the mind, in the recognition of the manifold, were not aware of the identity of its function in combining this (manifold) synthetically in a recognition.
- 10.3 The original and necessary consciousness of the identity of one's self, therefore,

is at the same time a consciousness of an equally necessary unity of the synthesis of all appearances according to concepts,

i.e., according to rules which not only make them reproducible necessarily, but also in that way determine an object to their viewing,

i.e., the concept of a something in which they necessarily cohere.

For the mind could not possibly think the identity of its own self in the manifold of its representations, and certainly (not) a priori, if it were not cognizant of the identity of its action in subjecting every synthesis of the apprehension (which is empirical) to a transcendental unity by means of which its cohesion (that of the apprehension), according to rules a priori, is first made possible.

- 10.4 And now we are also in a better position to determine our concept of an object in general.
- 10.5 All representations, as such, have their object and can in turn be objects of other representations.
- 10.6 Appearances are the only objects which can be given to us immediately, and that in them which refers immediately to the object is called viewing.
- 10.7 But now these appearances are not things on their own, but rather only representations, which in turn have their own object which, therefore, cannot be observed by us and which therefore may be termed the non-empirical, i.e., transcendental, object = X.
- 11.1 The pure concept of this transcendental object (which, with all our recognitions, is actually always the same = X) is what can procure objective referral to an object, i.e., objective reality, in all our empirical concepts in general.
- 11.2 Now this concept can contain no determined viewing at all and, therefore, will pertain to nothing except that unity which must be encountered in a manifold of the recognition to the extent it refers to an object.
- 11.3 But this referral is nothing other than the necessary unity of the consciousness, hence also of the synthesis of the manifold by a common function of the mind in combining that manifold into a single representation.

11.4 Now since this unity must be considered as necessary a priori (because otherwise the recognition would be without any object),

the referral to a transcendental object, i.e., the objective reality of our empirical recognition, will rest upon the transcendental law that

all appearances, to the extent objects are to be given to us through them, must stand under an a priori rule of their synthetic unity by means of which alone their relationship in the empirical viewing is possible,

i.e., they must stand under the conditions of the necessary unity of apperception in an experience just as much as they must stand under the formal conditions of space and time in a viewing,

indeed it is by means of the former (the necessary unity of apperception) that every recognition is first possible.

4. Preliminary Explanation of the Possibility of the Categories as A Priori Recognitions

- 1.1 There is only a single experience in which all perceptions are represented in thorough and orderly cohesion; just as there is only one space and time in which all forms of the appearance and every relationship of being or not being take place.
- 1.2 If someone speaks of diverse experiences, these are only so many perceptions to the extent they belong to one and the same general experience.
- 1.3 Actually it is precisely the thorough and synthetic unity of the perceptions which makes up the form of experience, and this is nothing other than the synthetic unity of the appearances by means of concepts.
- 2.1 Unity of synthesis by means of empirical concepts would be entirely contingent, and if these were not based on a transcendental foundation of unity, it would be possible for a swarm of appearances to fill our souls without experience ever being able to arise from them.
- 2.2 But in that case, every reference of the recognition to the object would vanish because of the lack of connection according to universal and necessary laws. And so while there would certainly be a viewing devoid of all thought, it would never be a recognition, and hence nothing at all for us.
- 3.1 The a priori conditions of a possible experience in general are simultaneously conditions of the possibility of the objects of experience.
- 3.2 Now I assert that the categories introduced earlier are nothing other than the conditions of the thinking in a possible experience, just as space and time contain the conditions for the viewing in that possible experience.
- 3.3 Hence these categories are also fundamental concepts for thinking objects in general to the appearances and have, therefore, a priori, objective validity, which is what we actually wanted to know.

- 4.1 But the possibility and indeed even the necessity of these categories depend upon the relationship which the entire sensitivity, and hence also all possible appearances, have to the original apperception where everything is necessarily conformable to the conditions of the thorough unity of self-consciousness, i.e., must stand under universal functions of synthesis, namely the synthesis by means of concepts wherein alone the apperception can prove a priori its thorough and necessary identity.
- 4.2 The concept of a cause, for example, is nothing other than a synthesis (of what follows in the temporal series with other appearances) according to concepts, and without such unity, which has its rule a priori and subjugates the appearances to itself, no thorough, universal and necessary unity of consciousness would be encountered in the manifold of the perceptions.
- 4.3 But then these perceptions would also belong to no experience, and hence would be devoid of any object and no more than a blind play of representations, i.e., less than a dream.
- 5.1 Every attempt, therefore, to derive these pure understanding concepts from experience and to ascribe to them a merely empirical birth, is doomed to failure.
- 5.2 I do not even need to mention, e.g., that the concept of cause entails a feature of necessity which no experience whatsoever can provide, teaching, as it does, that an appearance customarily follows upon something, but not that it must do so necessarily nor that we could infer the appearance from that something a priori and entirely universally as a condition.
- 5.3 But what about the empirical rule of association which we must unquestionably accept once we assert that everything in the series of succession of events is subject to rules such that nothing happens unless something else precedes, upon which it always follows? What is the basis of this as a law of nature, I ask, and how is even this association possible?
- 5.4 The basis of the possibility of the association of the manifold, to the extent it lies in the object, is called the affinity of the manifold.
- 5.5 I ask, therefore, how do you make the thorough affinity of the appearances understandable (that they do and must stand under enduring laws)?

- 6.1 According to my principles this is quite easy.
- 6.2 All possible appearances, as representations, belong to the entire, possible self-consciousness.
- 6.3 But from this consideration, as a transcendental representation, the numerical identity is inseparable and a priori certain because nothing can enter into a recognition except by means of this original apperception.
- 6.4 Now since this identity is necessary in the synthesis of every manifold of the appearances to the extent this manifold is to become empirical knowledge, it follows that the appearances are subject to a priori conditions to which their synthesis (of the apprehension) must be thoroughly conformable.
- 6.5 But now the representation of a universal condition by which a certain manifold (regardless of what it might be) can be posited is called a rule, and if it must be so granted, a law.
- 6.6 Therefore all appearances stand in a thorough connection according to necessary laws, and hence in a transcendental affinity, regarding which the empirical affinity is merely a consequence.
- 7.1 It certainly seems nonsensical and curious that nature should arrange itself according to the subjective foundations of our apperception and should even depend on that with regard to its conformity to order.
- 7.2 But when we consider that this nature is nothing but a complex of appearances, hence not a thing on its own, but rather a flood of representations of the mind, then we will not wonder to find nature in the radical capacity of all our recognitions, namely in the transcendental apperception and in that unity whereby alone it can be called an object of every possible experience, i.e., nature; and that also for that reason we are able to recognize this unity a priori, hence also as necessary, which we would not be able to do if it were independent of the first sources of our thinking as such.

- 7.3 For in that case I would not know where we were to obtain the synthetic propositions of such a universal unity of nature, because in that case we would have to borrow them from the objects of nature itself.
- 7.4 But since this could only occur empirically, nothing would be derived from that except contingent unity, but which does not by far reach to the necessary cohesion which we mean by nature.

3. Section. The Relationship of the Understanding to Objects in General, and the Possibility of Recognizing Them A Priori

- 1.1 We now want to unify and present cohesively what we presented as isolated and individual in the previous sections.
- 1.2 There are three subjective recognition sources upon which the possibility of an experience in general and the recognition of its objects depend: sense, imagination and apperception. Each of these can be considered empirically, i.e., in the application to given appearances, but all are also a priori elements or fundamentals which make this empirical usage first possible.
- 1.3 The sense represents the appearances empirically in the perception, the imagination in the association (and reproduction), and the apperception in the empirical consciousness of the identity of these reproduced representations with the appearances whereby they were given, hence in the recognition.
- 2.1 But there is an a priori basis for each of these three.
For the perception we have the pure viewing (with respect to it as a representation, the form of the inner viewing, time).
For the association there is the pure synthesis of the imagination.
And for the empirical consciousness there is the pure apperception, i.e., the thorough identity of one's self with all possible representations.
- 3.1 Now if we want to pursue the internal foundation of this linkage of the representations to the point where they all merge in order first to obtain unity of recognition for a possible experience, we must begin with the pure apperception.
- 3.2 No viewing is anything to us nor does it concern us in any way if it cannot be incorporated into consciousness, be that directly or indirectly, and in this way alone is recognition possible.

- 3.3 We are a priori conscious of the thorough identity of ourselves with respect to all representations which can ever belong to our recognition, and this as a necessary condition of the possibility of all representations (since in any case these only represent something within me by belonging to one consciousness with all others, hence by being at least subject to connection into a single one).
- 3.4 This principle stands firmly a priori and can be called the transcendental principle of the unity of every manifold of our representations (hence also in the viewing).
- 3.5 Now the unity of the manifold in a subject is synthetic; therefore the pure apperception gives us a principle of the synthetic unity of the manifold in every possible viewing.*

* Kant's footnote:

- 1.1 This statement, which is of great importance, is to be given considerable attention.
- 1.2 All representations are necessarily subject to a possible, empirical consciousness, for if they were not and if it were entirely impossible to be conscious of them, that would mean they did not even exist.
- 1.3 But every empirical consciousness is necessarily subject to a transcendental consciousness (preceding every particular experience), namely that of myself as the original apperception.
- 1.4 It is, therefore, utterly necessary that in my recognition every consciousness belongs to one consciousness (of myself).
- 1.5 Now here is a synthetic proposition which is recognized a priori, and which renders in this way the basis for synthetic propositions a priori which concern the pure thinking in the same way that space and time concern those propositions having to do with the mere viewing.
- 1.6 The synthetic proposition that every diverse, empirical consciousness would have to be connected in one single self-consciousness, is the utterly first principle of our thinking in general, and it is synthetic.
- 1.7. But we need to remember that the mere representation "I" in reference to all others (whose collective unity it makes possible) is the transcendental consciousness.
- 1.8 Now this representation may be clear (empirical consciousness) or unclear; this does not matter, indeed not even its reality is important. But what is im-

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portant is that the possibility of the logical form of every recognition rests necessarily upon the relationship to this apperception as a capacity.

- 4.1 But this synthetic unity presupposes a synthesis, or encompasses it, and if this synthetic unity is a priori necessary, then the synthesis itself must also be a priori.
- 4.2 Therefore the transcendental unity of the apperception refers to the pure synthesis of the imagination as an a priori condition of the possibility of every assemblage of the manifold in a recognition.
- 4.3 But only the productive synthesis of the imagination can take place a priori; for the reproductive depends on conditions of experience.
- 4.4 Therefore the principle of the necessary unity of the pure (productive) synthesis of the imagination in light of the apperception is the basis of the possibility of every recognition, and especially of experience.
- 5.1 Now we term the synthesis of the manifold in the imagination transcendental if, without regard to any distinction in the viewing, it aims merely at the connection of the manifold a priori. And the unity of this synthesis is called transcendental if, with reference to the original unity of the apperception, it is represented as a priori necessary.
- 5.2 And since this latter lies as the basis of the possibility of every recognition, the transcendental unity of the synthesis of the imagination is the pure form of every possible recognition, through which, therefore, all objects of a possible experience must be represented a priori.
- 6.1 The unity of the apperception with regard to the synthesis of the imagination is the understanding, and this same unity with regard to the transcendental synthesis, the pure understanding.
- 6.2 In the understanding, therefore, are pure recognitions a priori which contain the necessary unity of the pure synthesis of the imagination with reference to all possible appearances.

- 6.3 But these are the categories, i.e., pure concepts of the understanding. Hence the empirical, recognitional capacity of the human necessarily contains an understanding which pertains to all objects of the senses (even if only by means of the viewing) and to their synthesis through the imagination as data for a possible experience.
- 6.4 Now since this referral of the appearances to a possible experience is just as necessary (for without it we would not achieve to any recognition at all through them, and they would not concern us in the least), it follows that the pure understanding, by means of the category, is a formal and synthetic principle of all experience, and that the appearances have a necessary referral to the understanding.
- 7.1 Now we will present the necessary cohesion of the understanding with the appearances by means of the categories by beginning from below, i.e., from the empirical.
- 7.2 The first that is given to us is appearance which, if we combine it with consciousness, is called perception. (Without the relationship to an at least possible consciousness, appearance would never be able to be an object of experience and, therefore, nothing at all for us, and because it has no objective reality on its own and only exists in the recognition, it would be nothing whatsoever).
- 7.3 But because every appearance contains a manifold, hence diverse perceptions being encountered dispersed and individual as such in the mind, a connection of these, which they cannot have in the senses themselves, is necessary.
- 7.4 There is within us, therefore, an active capacity for the synthesis of this manifold, and this capacity we call imagination; and its action, executed immediately on the perceptions, I call apprehension.*
- 7.5 This means that the imagination is to bring the manifold of the viewing into a picture; hence it must previously take the impressions into its capacity, i.e., apprehend them.

* Kant's footnote:

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- 1.1 No psychologist seems to have considered the imagination being a necessary ingredient of the perception itself.
 - 1.2 That is because we typically thought of this capacity partly as limited to reproduction and partly because we thought that the senses not only supplied us with impressions, but also even assembled these and brought forth pictures of objects. But it is beyond doubt that something more than the receptivity of the impressions was required, namely a function for their synthesis.
-
- 8.1 But it is clear that even this apprehension of the manifold alone would produce no picture and no cohesion of the impressions if a subjective basis were not at hand to call one perception, from which the mind transits to another, over to the following ones, and thereby to describe entire series of these, i.e., a reproductive capacity of the imagination, which then also is only empirical.
-
- 9.1 But if representations were to be reproduced without distinction, just as they were gathered together, no determined cohesion would develop from them, but rather only disordered heaps, and hence no recognition at all. Therefore their reproduction must have a rule according to which a representation must be combined in the imagination with one of these rather than with another.
 - 9.2 This subjective and empirical basis of the reproduction according to rules we call association of the representations.
-
- 10.1 But if this unity of association did not also have an objective basis such that it were impossible for the appearances to be apprehended by the imagination except under the condition of a possible synthetic unity of this apprehension, then it would be entirely accidental for appearances to fit into a cohesion of human recognition.
 - 10.2 For even though we had the capacity for associating perceptions, it would still remain entirely undetermined and contingent whether they were actually associable as such;

and in case they were not, then a flood of perceptions and indeed an entire sensitivity would be possible in which considerable empirical consciousness would be encountered in my mind,

but disjointed and without belonging to a consciousness of myself.

But that is impossible,

- 10.3 for it is only by counting all my perceptions to one consciousness (the original apperception) that I can say with all perceptions that I am conscious of them.
- 10.4 Therefore there must be an objective basis, i.e., preceding all empirical laws of the imagination, whereupon would rest the possibility, indeed the necessity, of a law reaching through all the appearances, namely to consider them altogether to be such data of the senses that are associable as such and subject to universal rules of a thorough connection in the reproduction.
- 10.5 This objective basis of all association of the appearances I call the affinity of the appearances.
- 10.6 But this we can encounter nowhere else than in the fundamental proposition concerning the unity of the apperception with respect to all recognitions which can ever belong to me.
- 10.7 According to this all appearances whatsoever must so enter the mind or be apprehended so that they accord with the unity of the apperception, which would be impossible without a synthetic unity in their connection, which therefore is also objectively necessary.
- 11.1 The objective unity of every (empirical) consciousness in one consciousness (the original apperception) is, therefore, the necessary condition even of every possible perception, and the (close or remote) affinity of all appearances is a necessary consequence of a synthesis in the imagination which is a priori based on rules.
- 12.1 The imagination, therefore, is also a capacity of a priori synthesis, which is why we call it the productive imagination. And to the extent it aims at nothing further than the necessary unity in the synthesis of all manifold of the appearance, it can be termed the transcendental function of the imagination.
- 12.2 It is indeed curious, but nonetheless quite illuminating from the preceding, that it is only by means of this transcendental function of the imagination

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that the affinity of the appearances first becomes possible, and with this the association and through this finally the reproduction according to laws, and consequently experience itself.

- 13.1 For the steady and abiding I (the pure apperception) constitutes the correlate (*correlatum*) of all our representations to the extent it is even possible to become conscious of them, and every consciousness belongs to an all-encompassing, pure apperception just as much as every sensitive viewing as a representation does to a pure, internal viewing, namely time.
- 13.2 Now this apperception is what must be added to the pure imagination to make its function intellectual.
- 13.3 For on its on, the synthesis of the imagination, even though executed a priori, is still always sensible because it only binds the manifold as it appears in the viewing, e.g., the shape of the triangle.
- 13.4 But by means of the relationship of the manifold to the unity of the apperception, concepts (which belong to the understanding) can emerge, but only by means of the imagination in reference to the sensitive viewing.
- 14.1 We have, therefore, a pure imaginative capacity as a fundamental capacity of the human soul, one which lies a priori as the basis to every recognition.
- 14.2 By means of it we bring the manifold of the viewing on one hand into connection with the conditions of the necessary unity of the pure apperception on the other.
- 14.3 Both extremes, sensitivity and understanding, must cohere necessarily by means of this transcendental function of the imagination; because otherwise the former would indeed render appearances, but no objects of an empirical recognition, hence no experience.
- 14.4 The actual experience, which arises from the apprehension, association (and reproduction), and finally the recognition [*rekognition*] of the appearances, finds concepts in the latter, the highest (of the merely empirical elements of experience), and these concepts make the formal unity of experience possible, and with it, every objective validity (truth) of the empirical recognition.

- 14.5 Now these foundations of the recognition of the manifold, to the extent they concern merely the form of an experience, are the categories.
- 14.6 Upon them, therefore, every formal unity in the synthesis of the imagination is based, and by means of this also every empirical usage of that (in the reproduction, association, apprehension) down to the appearances, because only by means of these elements can they belong to the recognition and in general to our consciousness, hence to us.
- 15.1 Therefore we ourselves introduce the order and regularity of the appearances which we call nature, and also would not find such there if we or the nature of our minds had not done this originally.
- 15.2 For this unity of nature is to be a necessary, i.e., an a priori certain, unity of the connection of the appearances.
- 15.3 But how could we bring about a priori a synthetic unity, were not subjective foundations of such unity contained a priori in the original recognition sources of our mind, and were these subjective conditions not simultaneously objectively valid by being the foundations of the possibility of recognizing in general an object in experience?
- 16.1 We have already explained the understanding in various ways: as spontaneity of the recognition (in contrast to the receptivity of the sensitivity), as a capacity for thinking, or even a capacity for concepts, or yet of judgments, which explanations, when properly considered, blend into one.
- 16.2 Now we can characterize it as the capacity for rules.
- 16.3 This characterization is fruitful and comes close to the essential nature of the matter.
- 16.4 Sensitivity gives us the forms (of the viewing), but understanding the rules.
- 16.5 The understanding is ever occupied with perusing the appearances with an eye toward discovering some sort of rule for them.

3. Section - The Relationship Of Understanding To Objects In General,
And The Possibility Of Recognizing Them A Priori

- 16.6 Rules, to the extent they are objective (hence adhering necessarily to the recognition of the object), are called laws.
- 16.7 Even though we learn many laws through experience, these are nonetheless only particular determinations of yet higher laws, among which the highest (under which all others stand) are taken a priori from the understanding itself, and are not borrowed from experience, but rather provide the appearances with their law-likeness, and precisely in that way make experience possible.
- 16.8 The understanding, therefore, is not merely a capacity by which the appearances are compared in order to make rules. It is itself the legislator preceding nature, i.e., without the understanding there would not even be a nature, i.e., there would not be any synthetic unity of the manifold of the appearances according to rules. For appearances, as such, cannot take place apart from us, but rather exist only within our sensitivity.
- 16.9 But this, as an object of recognition in an experience, with everything which it (the experience) may contain, is only possible in the unity of the apperception.
- 16.10 But this unity of the apperception is the transcendental foundation of the necessary law-likeness of all appearances in an experience.
- 16.11 Precisely this unity of the apperception with respect to a manifold of representations (i.e., to determine it from a single representation) is the rule, and the capacity of these rules is the understanding.
- 16.12 All appearances, therefore, as possible experience, lie just as a priori in the understanding and obtain their formal possibility from it, as they lie, as mere viewings, in the sensitivity and are only possible, with regard to their form, through this.
- 17.1 As exaggerated and nonsensical as it may seem, nonetheless, to say that the understanding is itself the source of the laws of nature, and hence of the formal unity of nature, is entirely proper and commensurate to the object, namely experience.

- 17.2 Empirical laws as such, of course, can certainly not derive their origin from the pure understanding any more than the immeasurable manifold of the appearances can be sufficiently grasped from the pure form of the sensitive viewing.
- 17.3 But all empirical laws are only particular determinations of the pure laws of the understanding, under which and according to the form of which those empirical laws are first possible, and by which the appearances receive a form of regularity, even as also all appearances, regardless of the diversity of this empirical form, still must always be conformable to the conditions of the pure form of the sensitivity.
- 18.1 By means of the category, therefore, the understanding is the law of the synthetic unity of all appearances and in that way makes experience first and originally possible according to its form.
- 18.2 But in the transcendental deduction of the categories, we were not to accomplish any more than make comprehensible this relationship of the understanding to the sensitivity and, by means of this, the objective validity of its pure a priori concepts, and thereby to establish their origin and truth.

Representational Summary of the Correctness and Unique Possibility of this Deduction of the Pure Concepts of the Understanding

- 1.1 If the objects, with which our recognition is employed, were things on their own, then we would be able to have absolutely no concepts of these a priori.
- 1.2 For where would we then be able to derive these concepts?
- 1.3 If we take them from the object (without examining here yet again how this object could become known to us), then our concepts would be merely empirical and not concepts a priori.
- 1.4 If we take them from within ourselves, then that, which is merely within us, cannot determine the constitution of an object which differs from our representations, i.e., any reason as to why there should be a thing which should match something that we have in mind, instead of all these representations being empty.
- 1.5 On the other hand if all we are dealing with are appearances, then it is not merely possible, but in fact even necessary, that certain concepts a priori would precede the empirical recognition of the objects.
- 1.6 For as appearances they will make up an object which is merely within us, because as a mere modification of our sensitivity apart from us nothing is to be encountered at all.
- 1.7 Now even this representation expresses this as necessary: that all these appearances, thus all objects which can occupy us, are all together within me, i.e., are determinations of my identical self, i.e., a thorough unity of these in one and the same apperception.
- 1.8 But in this unity of the possible consciousness (whereby the manifold, as belonging to one object, is thought) the form of every recognition of objects also consists.
- 1.9 The manner, therefore, as to how the manifold of the sensitive representation (viewing) belongs to one consciousness, heralds every recognition of objects as their intellectual form, and even makes up a formal recognition of all objects a priori in general, to the extent they are thought (categories).

- 1.10 The synthesis of these through the pure imagination, the unity of all representations with respect to the original apperception, precedes every empirical recognition.
- 1.11 Pure concepts of the understanding, therefore, are for that reason possible a priori, and indeed even necessary because our recognition has nothing to do with anything except experience, the connection and unity of which (in the representation of an object) is encountered within us, thus precedes before every experience, and must first make these possible with respect to form.
- 1.12 And from this foundation, the only possible one of all, our deduction of the categories has then also been conducted.

Next: [to the B version of the Transcendental Deduction of the Categories of the CPR.](#)

Or: [to the remainder of the Transcendental Analytic.](#)