5 Logical and Moral Aliens within Us

Kant on Theoretical and Practical Self-Conceit

G. Anthony Bruno

In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant defines general logic as the science of "the absolutely necessary rules of thinking, without which no use of the understanding takes place".[1] One prominent reading of Kant's general logic denies the intelligibility of a logical alien, a thinker whose laws of thinking actually contradict ours, on the grounds that no violation of such laws counts as a thought.[2] On this reading, general logical laws are not norms that thought ought to yet may not obey, but are essentially constitutive of understanding as such. There is no thought if such laws are suspended, no real other to what we regard as thinking. A logical alien is accordingly incoherent.

The constitutive reading exclusively concerns general logic, a logic that abstracts from any difference among objects and so cannot specify laws that are necessary for thinking correctly about objects of experience in particular. This deficiency of general logic is partly what motivates Kant's critical turn to transcendental logic, which, by expounding the conditions of our cognition of objects of intuition, provides "a logic of truth".[3] The constitutive reading accordingly brackets the normative function of critique, which is to employ transcendental logic, along with transcendental aesthetic, in determining the conditions of possible experience and in diagnosing the transcendental illusion that obscures truth by confusing such conditions with determinations of things in themselves.

While the constitutive reading has textual support in its favour, its focus on general logic restricts its concern to a third-personal logical alien, a thinker so radically unlike us as to be unthinkable. It thereby neglects what I take to be Kant's primary concern with a first-personal alien, a thinker so radically like us that we naturally overlook it. I want to suggest that the critically relevant logical alien for Kant's theoretical philosophy is transcendental rather than general, a knower whose laws of experience purport to contradict ours. I develop the idea of a transcendental logical alien in order both to direct the debate in which the constitutive reading figures toward more properly Kantian concerns and to show that this alien has a moral analogue in Kant's practical philosophy.

To anticipate, consider that a dogmatist is a transcendental logical alien insofar as she takes herself to follow experiential laws unlike ours, viz., categories applied

DOI: 10.4324/9781003142133-9

independently of sensibility to things in themselves. Her laws exclude our (and all) forms of sensibility by purporting to enable cognition without synthesizing a manifold of intuition. Whereas the general logical alien judges what is logically impossible and so what is arguably unthinkable, the transcendental logical alien purports to judge what is really impossible or beyond possible experience. Unlike the former alien, the latter is thinkable, viz., as reason fallen prey to transcendental illusion. As I will argue, this alien is not really other. She is us, alienated from her (our) experiential laws—self-alienated in judgment. While the constitutive reading sheds light on Kant's conception of general logic, focusing exclusively on this logic overlooks the crux of a Copernican revolution: grasping our laws of experience as ours is not constitutive of our reason, but rather is normative for reason's theoretical self-knowledge, i.e., knowledge of ourselves within our theoretical bounds.

One strategy open to the constitutive reading is to analogize the inability to think against general logical laws to the inability to freely act against the moral law.[4] On this analogy, the understanding violates general logical laws, not by itself, but with the addition of sensibility; analogously, pure practical reason violates the moral law, not by itself, but with the addition of inclination. With this analogical strategy, we can say that the moral law is not normative for, but constitutive of, pure practical reason, viewed in isolation from inclination. I want to suggest further that just as the critically relevant logical laws must refer to human sensibility, the critically relevant moral law must refer to human inclination. This will reveal a moral analogue to the transcendental logical alien.

Again, to anticipate, consider that an evil agent is a moral alien insofar as she opposes our moral law by raising self-love to an unconditional practical principle. She acts on subjective grounds passed off unconditionally as objective grounds. And yet she regards her action as in perfect accord with duty, as if her inclinations perfectly align with morality. This alien, too, is thinkable, viz., as an agent succumbing to the moral illusion of effortless virtue. As I will further argue, this alien is not really other. She is us, alienated from her (our) moral law—self-alienated in action. While the aforementioned constitutivist strategy sheds light on the moral law, focusing on that law's analogy to Kant's general logic overlooks the crux of a spiritual revolution: grasping the moral law as ours is not constitutive of our will, but rather is normative for reason's practical self-knowledge, i.e., knowledge of ourselves within our practical bounds.

My aim is to shift from the question of whether logical laws constitute our thinking to the question of whether grasping our experiential and moral laws as ours constitutes our reason. In this, I take my lead from Kant's concepts of theoretical and practical self-conceit. It is self-conceit to judge about existence beyond the bounds of sensibility, just as it is to make one's inclinations into unconditional grounds of action. Hubris of this sort obscures the lawful structure that is proper to our judgment and action. It exhibits a lack of self-knowledge that yields the analogous delusions of dogmatism and evil and that demands a critique of theoretical and practical reason. Critique provides a norm for correcting alienation from our logical and moral laws and thus for facilitating

self-knowledge. Insofar as we are naturally given to self-alienation, it is crucial to supplement the current debate by turning toward the first-personal alien, for only this sort of alien can clarify Kant's conception of self-conceit.

In what follows, I trace the normative trajectory from self-conceit to self-knowledge in judgment (Sections 6.1–6.2) and in action (Section 6.3), drawing an analogy between the logical and moral aliens within us. I then consider the relative contingency of transcendental logic in light of its pre-Kantian background and post-Kantian reception (Section 6.4).

1

In *The Basic Laws of Arithmetic*, Frege says that the laws of thought prescribe "the way in which one ought to think if one is to think at all" and infers that imagining beings "whose laws of thought flatly contradicted ours" invites a "type of madness".[5] If to think is to think logically, following the laws of thought, then illogical thought—the total violation of these laws as opposed to the occasional logical mistake—is not simply incorrect, but is not thought at all. This is why imagining logically alien beings courts madness. It is to "acknowledge and doubt a law in the same breath", i.e., to consider a law as constituting what we can think yet not what can as such be thought, and is thus "an attempt to jump out of one's own skin".[6] If we cannot but think according to the laws of thought, if there is nothing intelligible that they rule out, then thinking of logical aliens is unintelligible.

A difficulty arises in expressing this unintelligibility. It seems that it cannot be to posit an act that we are unable to perform, for the purportedly impossible act has no sense. Denying the thinkability of illogical thought lacks intelligible content and so this denial, it seems, is not even a candidate for thought. For Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, the task is to expose as illusory the very idea that there is a standpoint from which we could distinguish 'true' laws of thought from 'false' laws. With no such standpoint, it would follow that the study of the laws of thought expresses no knowledge. As Wittgenstein says, "propositions of logic say nothing".[7] In "The Search for Logically Alien Thought", James Conant suggests that, by denying that logic can be regarded as an organon or instrument for knowledge, Wittgenstein's position is plausibly a "vindication" of Kant's view in the first *Critique* that "general logic, considered as an organon, is always a logic of illusion".[8]

In tracing the development of the necessity of logical laws from Aquinas to Hilary Putnam, Conant provides support for reading Kant's general logic as a science of rules that are "constitutive of the possibility of thought",[9] in contrast to normative readings that deny thought's essential constitution by such rules.[10] Matthew Boyle endorses Conant's view that, by abstracting from all object domains, Kant's general logic articulates the laws that govern the "form of coherent thought", laws "whose violation is impossible" insofar as this "represents no intelligible possibility whatsoever".[11] Clinton Tolley argues that general logical laws are not norms that thought can violate, since if nothing that violates

logical laws counts as thinking, such laws must be taken to distinguish between, not correct and incorrect thinking, but rather "thought and *non*-thought".[12] While Tyke Nunez diverges from this view by arguing that we can regard a logical mistake as an exercise of understanding, he holds that it is nevertheless not a genuine thought.[13] In Putnam's words, "for Kant, [general] logic is simply prior to all rational activity".[14] Although I cannot adjudicate the constitutive/normative debate here, constitutive readings give reasons to think that Kant allows for no general logical alien. The form of thinking is not a boundary separating human from foreign kinds of thought, since thinking entirely against the laws of thought is senseless. Hence Kant says in his rebuttal of Eberhard in "On a Discovery Whereby Any New Critique of Pure Reason Is to Be Made Superfluous by an Older One", "the principle of contradiction is a principle that is valid for all that we can possibly think, whether or not it is a sensible object with a possible intuition attached, because it is valid for thought in general, without regard to any object. Thus, whatever conflicts with this principle is obviously nothing (not even a thought)".[15]

I want to shift the focus to what, for Kant, is a distinct and more salient alien, viz., one who transgresses, not the form of thinking, which is the topic of general logic, but the form of experience, which is the topic of transcendental logic. This transcendental logical alien takes herself to occupy a cognitive standpoint different from ours, one from which she applies the categories to things in themselves rather than to appearances, i.e., to the wrong domain of objects. It is a standpoint from which she seems to work with the categories beyond the forms of human sensibility, i.e., with the wrong set of experiential laws. She apparently contradicts our experiential laws by regarding space and time as things in themselves and the categories as the sole rules for synthesizing the unity of objects.[16] Employing categories beyond possible experience, making "material use" of formal principles, results from her exclusive reliance on general logic, which leads her to judge "without distinction about objects that are not given to us"[17] and hence to neglect the proper form of experience.[18] This alien's error reveals to Kant the need for a critique of reason.

The transcendental logical alien's error is not a mistaken judgment about an object, which would result from the interference of the understanding's application of concepts by "contingent conditions of the subject" like attention, doubt, and conviction. Kant compares such a mistake to the interference of pure practical reason's application of the moral law by conditions like feeling, inclination, and passion.[19] The alien's error is rather a mistaken decree about nature, which is dogmatically assumed to be an aggregate of things in themselves. For us, nature is the "order and regularity" that "we ourselves bring into appearances",[20] a necessary unity contributed by the mind. The alien neglects the understanding in its legislative function as the origin of the highest laws of nature. As Kant says toward the end of the A-Deduction, the understanding is "the legislation for nature, i.e., without understanding there would not be any nature at all, [no] synthetic unity of the manifold of appearances in accordance with rules".[21] The alien purports to legislate the categories over the wrong domain, against their

function as laws of the unity of phenomenal nature. She overlooks their function by failing to submit the logical grounds of her judgment to "the critical eye of a higher and judicial reason", which would secure for her the "complete renunciation of all pretensions to dogmatic authority".[22]

It may seem that a transcendental logical alien's error is that she transgresses the forms of sensibility while still conforming to the categories, i.e., that she does not transgress the entirety of our experiential laws. But her error is more complete. By not recognizing the forms of sensibility as among her experiential laws, she deprives the categories of their function as experiential laws, since they must have empirical use, absent which "all of our cognitions […] remain completely empty".[23] Worse yet, even assuming that she possesses and uses all and only our categories, without critique she cannot grasp these categories as categories, i.e., as pure concepts to which she has a deducible right and which therefore can be counted among her laws. At best, she deploys concepts whose meanings she does not fully grasp and is consequently prone to misuse them. She has possessions as opposed to property.[24] Worse still, without a deduction of the categories, she cannot show how they differ from usurpatory concepts like 'fate' and 'fortune'.[25]

It may also seem that a transcendental logical alien's error consists either in the mere aspiration to violate our experiential laws or in their actual violation, i.e., that she either innocently thinks a divine standpoint or actually attains one. But neither of these options capture the dogmatist's position, for, on the one hand, we can regard Kant's regulative idea of the highest being as innocently thinking beyond the world of sense[26] and, on the other hand, no one is God. This leaves the dogmatist somewhere in between. Her error is not innocent thinking, for she makes claims about existence and espouses doctrines that are meant to guide our actions. Neither an idle thought nor a view from nowhere, the dogmatist's position offers an organizing principle for life, albeit a misguided one. Her transgression is accordingly genuine. As Kant says in the Antinomy of Pure Reason, "attempts" at using ideas of reason beyond experience are "dogmatic" and therefore guilty of "pretense" and "immodesty".[27]

Unlike her general counterpart, a transcendental logical alien is not unintelligible, for she transgresses the bounds of experience, not the bounds of thought. She transgresses the logical and aesthetic form of the relation of cognitions to objects—"the form of a possible experience in general"—yet adheres to the logical form of the relation of cognitions to each other—"the form of thinking in general".[28] She recognizes that no thought can contradict general logic, but fails to see why "no cognition can contradict [transcendental logic] without at the same time losing all content, i.e., all relation to any object, hence all truth".[29]

If a transcendental logical alien were unintelligible, then to imagine her would invite the madness that Frege associates with imagining a general logical alien. Moreover, if denying the thinkability of general logical aliens lacks sense and so disqualifies itself as a proposition—if drawing the limits of expression does not exclude "something one *could not* do",[30] as Wittgenstein says in the *Philosophical Investigations* —then, were a transcendental logical alien similarly

unintelligible, Kant would have to view propositions about her as nonsensical. Yet, in the Appendix to Chapter III of the Analytic of Principles, he says:

> we cannot understand anything except that which has something corresponding to our words in intuition. If the complaints "That we have no insight into the inner in things" are to mean that we do not understand through pure reason what the things that appear to us might be in themselves, then they are entirely improper and irrational; for they would have us be able to cognize things, thus intuit them, even without senses, consequently they would have it that we have a faculty of cognition entirely distinct from the human not merely in degree, but even in intuition and kind, and thus that we ought to be not humans but beings that we cannot even say are possible, let alone how they are constituted.[31]

This passage affirms the intelligibility of a transcendental logical alien in its response to the dogmatist's complaint that our understanding applies to things' spatiotemporal relations and affords "no insight into the inner in things".[32] Rather than cast this complaint as senseless, Kant calls it "improper and irrational", using normative terms to imply the violation of a standard, a standard that defines human understanding by its relation to sensibility, by "something corresponding to our words in intuition". The dogmatist's complaint suggests the occupation of a nonhuman standpoint, the possession of a cognitive faculty that differs from ours "not merely in degree, but even in intuition and kind". Yet, far from courting madness, the dogmatist's suggestion exhibits a comprehensible error, viz., the claim to metaphysical cognition through mere concepts. The error is comprehensible because it illustrates Plato's observation, of which Kant approves in the First Book of the Transcendental Dialectic, that

> our power of cognition feels a far higher need than that of merely spelling out appearances according to a synthetic unity in order to be able to read them as experience, and that our reason naturally exalts itself to cognitions that go much too far for any object that experience can give ever to be congruent.[33]

We cognize only what appears to us. But we desire cognition beyond appearances, where reason represents ideals of systematic unity and moral virtue. Hence, in the A-Preface, Kant calls the dogmatist's metaphysical visions "beloved delusions",[34] for they are of valued ideals, even if one's concepts of them may be amphibolous, i.e., ambiguous due to equivocation between proper and improper uses of the understanding. In other words, her delusions are beloved by her, not *qua* logical alien, but *qua* reasoner, for they are images to which we are naturally drawn. Thus, when Kant characterizes dogmatism as a "lust for knowledge" whose satisfaction requires "magical powers" whose possibility we cannot explain, he does not indulge what Conant calls an "illusion of thought", but

rather conceives the genuine possibility of an "illusion of knowledge",[35] viz., the transcendental illusion that mistakes the conditions of our experience for determinations of things in themselves and that owes to reason's "peculiar fate" of raising questions it can neither dismiss nor answer.[36] Thinking a transcendental logical alien is neither mad nor nonsensical.

The transcendental logical alien is naturally absent from the constitutivist-normativist debate, whose logical terms are strictly general. By abstracting from any division among objects, such as between things in themselves and appearances, general logic is indifferent to the laws of experience and so "can never" secure the "synthetic unity of the manifold in intuition".[37] Still less can general logic distinguish dogmatic from critical philosophy, permissive as it is of any formally valid doctrine.

To be sure, transcendental logical laws must adhere to general logical laws insofar as the form of experience cannot violate the form of thinking.[38] Transcendental logic even relies on general logic in that, to prove that the categories "spring pure and unmixed from the understanding", not from the "whim or chance" of divine implantation or social convention, the categories must be metaphysically deduced from forms of judgment that abstract from all content.[39] Nevertheless, Kant defines transcendental logic as a science for determining "the origin, the domain, and the objective validity" of *a priori* cognition of objects.[40] Such a science involves an account of, not only the metaphysical origin of the categories on which such cognition depends, but also the validity and the proper domain of their application.

To prove that the categories are not only original to the understanding but also have valid use, their validity must be transcendentally deduced for the proper domain of objects. This proof is driven by the question *quid juris*, concerning our right to possess and use the categories.[41] We face this question on pain of indiscriminately using, and thus misusing, the categories:

> the reader must be convinced of the unavoidable necessity of such a transcendental deduction before he has taken a single step in the field of pure reason; for he would otherwise proceed blindly, and after much wandering around would still have to return to the ignorance from which he had begun.[42]

A skeptical crucible is required to interrupt reason's dogmatic path.[43] But general logic cannot formulate the question *quid juris* regarding the categories' valid use in experience, given its indifference to classes of objects, tolerance for mutually inconsistent doctrines, and susceptibility to the "pretension", which amounts to "nothing but idle chatter", that it is a tool for expanding cognition.[44] Granting that transcendental logic must accord with general logic, it does not proceed from the latter as if from a premise. As we will see in Section 6.2, the premise on which transcendental logic rests is reason's interest in self-knowledge.

2

I have so far considered the transcendental logical alien's distinguishing error, her intelligibility in contrast to her general counterpart, and her absence in the recent debate about Kant's general logic. It is crucial now to observe that this alien is not another kind of subject in logical space, traversing a distant orbit. She is us, insofar as we disown our form of experience. She is us, insofar as we are alienated from ourselves, from our proper experiential laws and domain of objects. In Chapter I, Section II of the Doctrine of Method, Kant locates this alien on the arc of human reason's path to maturity:

> The first step in matters of pure reason, which characterizes its childhood, is **dogmatic**. The […] second step is **skeptical**, and gives evidence of the caution of the power of judgment sharpened by experience. Now, however, a third step is still necessary, which pertains only to the mature and adult power of judgment, which has at its basis firm maxims of proven universality, that, namely, which subjects to evaluation, not the *facta* of reason, but reason itself, as concerns its entire capacity and suitability for pure *a priori* cognitions; this is not the censorship, but the **critique** of pure reason.[45]

It is not merely intelligible that one renounces one's experiential laws: this error defines reason's very beginnings. Our first step in "matters of pure reason", i.e., in metaphysics, is marked by ignorance of our "capacity and suitability" for *a priori* cognition. We are given to incautious judgment of things in themselves, particularly when swayed by the "*facta*" or deeds of reason observed in authority and tradition. As Kant elaborates in "On a Discovery", dogmatism exhibits "general trust" in logical principles, a blind faith whose correction requires "general mistrust" of synthetic judgments whose ground in our cognitive faculty is not yet secured.[46] Our second step raises the skeptical question *quid juris*, but does so in a mood of hope so that we may answer it, in a third step, by laying rightful claim to the categories as grounds for synthetic judgment. Prior to our rational maturation, however, we are apt to ignore our forms of sensibility, misuse our categories, and hypostatize our ideas, i.e., to succumb to an "alluring", "natural and unavoidable" illusion that "can fool even the most rational" because it owes, not to inferential inattentiveness or perceptual deception, but to our human perspective.[47] In this, we are self-alienated.

Crucially, our transgression of the form of experience is just as natural as our arrival, via critique, at "the mature and adult power of judgment". As Kant says in the Introduction, critique is

> natural, if one understands by this word that which properly and reasonably ought to happen; but if one understands by it that which usually happens, then conversely nothing is more natural and comprehensible than that this investigation should long have been neglected.[48]

While we "ought" to evaluate our cognitive faculty, this is not what "usually happens" insofar as dogmatism marks our first step in metaphysics. Indeed, this is both our first step and our permanently possible detour, for transcendental illusion "irremediably attaches to human reason, so that even after we have exposed the mirage it will still not cease to lead our reason on with false hopes, continually propelling it into momentary aberrations that always need to be removed", not unlike the perspectival illusion that the rising moon appears larger even to an undeceived astronomer.[49] Hence, in Book II of the Dialectic, Kant observes "a wholly natural antithetic, for which one does not need to ponder or to lay artificial snares, but rather into which reason falls of itself and even unavoidably".[50] Initially and ever-possibly, reason is dogmatic. Critique is therefore a norm that reason can violate without losing its standing as reason.[51] Although "nothing (not even a thought)" can conflict with general logical laws, reason can and does conflict with transcendental logical laws. This further demonstrates why alienation from our experiential laws poses neither the madness nor the nonsense of Frege's alien. Grasping the *a priori* logical and aesthetic elements of cognition is normative for, not constitutive of, human reason. It is, Kant says in the Appendix to the Dialectic, "a duty for a philosopher".[52]

In a late-1773 letter to Herz, Kant declares that his critique promises to "bring the previous puzzles of the self-isolating reason under certain and easily applied rules", and while he does not specify these puzzles, he implicates them in "a science that has been so long cultivated in vain by half the philosophical world".[53] We saw that metaphysics is a science whose cultivation coincides with reason's maturation, a fruitless process if self-alienation goes unchecked. Reason is "self-isolating", then, insofar as it is alienated from its own experiential laws, as they are determined by this science. In self-alienation, we are charmed by the fantasy of expanding cognition through merely self-consistent thought, unable, with general logic alone, to evaluate our capacity for *a priori* cognition.

The promise of Kant's philosophy is that we can transform the logical alien in us, the self-opacity embodied in the oscillation between dogmatism and skepticism, by taking a critical turn in logic. Since general logic, the science of the rules of thinking, permits any consistent doctrine, it is powerless to halt the cycle of "anarchy" in metaphysics.[54] Its content-indifference offers no orientation. By contrast, transcendental logic, the science of the rules for thinking of objects *a priori*, is uniquely capable of determining the origin, domain, and objective validity of *a priori* cognition. It respects general logic, but serves reason's maturation. Taking general logic as the sole constraint on metaphysics exemplifies reason's naturally dogmatic path. Transcendental logic intervenes by guiding reason toward self-knowledge, thinking according to, but not from, general logic. Hence, Kant's turn in logic serves critique as a norm that we genuinely can violate, a norm that distinguishes between, not thought and non-thought, but mature and immature reason. Whereas Frege's alien is an illusion of thought, Kant's alien is thinkable as reason's original fall.[55] Moreover, whereas Frege's alien is accessible (if at all) third-personally as someone radically unlike us, Kant's alien is uniquely accessible first-personally as someone radically like us.

The logical alien in us resembles Baumgarten, who, in a late-1770s *Reflexion*, Kant calls "sharp-sighted (in little things), but not farsighted (in big ones)", and a "good analyst, but not an architectonical philosopher".[56] General logic allows us to explicate the form of thinking objects without distinction. But it cannot help us to envision, much less correct, our transgression of the bounds of the "world of sense".[57] Confined to this logic, one is, like Baumgarten, a "Cyclops among metaphysicians", for he is "missing one eye, namely, critique".[58] Without a critical turn in logic, we suffer myopia in architectonic matters and are prone to distorted visions.[59]

Architectonic matters are not "big" simply due to complexity. They are significant because having them in view is inseparable from having ourselves in view. As Kant says in the Preface, critique secures reason's "rightful claims" to *a priori* cognition only by satisfying "the most difficult of all its tasks, namely, that of self-knowledge".[60] Critique affords self-knowledge insofar as justifying metaphysical claims demands "a study of our inner nature", an account of our form of experience and of the "good and purposive vocation" of the problems that reason sets for itself.[61] Skepticism is thus "a resting place", "not a dwelling-place for permanent residence", for it interrupts our dogmatic path so that critique can bring us "to self-knowledge".[62] Hence, architectonic myopia is a kind of self-opacity. Failing a turn in logic leaves us analytically "sharp-sighted", but blind to ourselves.[63] This sharpens the transcendental logical alien's distinctive error. Hers is a mistaken decree about nature, but since "there would not be any nature at all" without her understanding, her decree exhibits a lack of self-knowledge. As Kant says, understanding confined to general logic,

> which does not reflect on the sources of its own cognition, may get along very well, but cannot accomplish one thing, namely, determining for itself the boundaries of its use and knowing what may lie within and what without its whole sphere.[64]

Among thinkers, there can be no stranger to general logical laws. But reason is a stranger to transcendental logical laws when it is ignorant of the categories as among its experiential laws, when it is a stranger to itself.[65] Kant traces reason's self-alienation to the "dogmatic self-conceit" of conflating conditions of experience with determinations of things in themselves, to the hubris of legislating the categories over the wrong domain.[66] As he says in the Doctrine of Method, critical philosophy aims to reveal "the deceptions of a reason that misjudges its own boundaries" and to bring "the self-conceit of speculation back to modest but thorough self-knowledge".[67] Reason's maturation, we can now say, has the specific character of progressing from the "deceptions" of hubris to the "modest[y]" of knowing its proper limitations. Only self-knowledge secured by critique can overcome self-conceit, for only if we strike down theoretical self-conceit and determine the bounds of experience can we rule out spurious metaphysical problems:

> if the understanding cannot distinguish whether certain questions lie within its horizon or not, then it is never sure of its claims and its possession, but must always reckon on many embarrassing corrections when it continually oversteps the boundaries of its territory (as is unavoidable) and loses itself in delusion and deceptions.[68]

The trajectory from self-conceit to self-knowledge, from hubris to humility, is normative, not constitutive. One ought to adopt "the skeptical way of treating the questions that pure reason puts to [itself]" so as to discard "dogmatic rubbish, and put in its place a sober critique, which, as a true cathartic, will happily purge such delusions along with the punditry attendant on them".[69] But, as Kant notes, "[o]ne does not turn directly from error toward truth, but first to consciousness of one's ignorance and suspension of judgment. One is made wary by experience, but does not become more insightful from this alone".[70]

In Chapter II of the Transcendental Dialectic, Kant shows how transforming the logical alien in us must not only contend with self-conceit, but also guard against "the appearance of a modest self-knowledge", whereby we deem ourselves unfit to resolve antinomies concerning the world's spatiotemporal bounds, containment of simples, compatibility with freedom, and inclusion of a necessary being.[71] The error here is to stall at skepticism, reason's second step. It is to confuse the "skeptical method" that "aims at certainty" with a "principle of artful and scientific ignorance".[72] True modesty requires acknowledging that an antinomy "concerns an object that can be given nowhere but in our thoughts"; real self-knowledge consists in recognizing that an antinomy's subject matter "cannot be given to us at all, but rather we must seek the cause in our idea itself".[73] Once we see that our "world-concepts"[74] denote tasks for thinking that we give to ourselves, we can grasp the bounds and purpose of the use of our reason. Our interest in this sort of self-knowledge, while not a condition on mere thinking,[75] is what motivates our critical turn to transcendental logic.

We saw that critique is a norm for self-knowledge, our failure to satisfy which exhibits the delusions of self-conceit. We also saw that this error is no less natural for our reason than its correction. This reveals a striking fact: insofar as disowning our experiential laws is our initial and ever-possible orientation, the logical alien in us is partly what makes us human.[76] Our fate is not only to raise irresistible and unanswerable questions, but also, and just as peculiarly, to treat them hubristically as if their answers yield knowledge. Critique is the norm that stands between this natural self-conceit and the self-knowledge we achieve through a turn in logic, through a Copernican revolution that humbles us by orienting us toward the true subject matter of such questions, viz., reason itself. Whereas general logic distinguishes thought from non-thought, transcendental logic enables critique to distinguish between mature and immature reason. In other words, whereas there is no capacity for thought for which general logic is normative,[77] there is a capacity for thought for which transcendental logic and its critical appropriation are normative.

I turn now to consider the moral analogue to the logical alien in us by examining the practical parallel to theoretical self-conceit.

3

According to Tolley, if we view the understanding and pure practical reason each in isolation, we can analogize the laws that respectively govern them.[78] Just as general logical laws constitute understanding such that illogical thought is impossible absent interference from sensibility, the moral law constitutes pure practical reason such that immoral action is impossible absent interference from inclination.[79] Normative readings of Kant's general logic reject the first part of the analogy, viewing logical laws as rules that genuine thinking can violate.[80] Normative readings of Kant's ethics reject the second part of the analogy, viewing the moral law as a norm that pure practical reason is capable of violating.[81] By contrast, Tolley observes that pure practical reason can only fail to accord with the moral law when bound to other capacities: only then is this law a norm or ought. Where a rational being consists solely of practical reason, it essentially accords with the moral law, just as the understanding as such essentially accords with general logical laws.[82] As Kant says in *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, an "ought" is "out of place" for a holy will, which "is of itself necessarily in accord with the [moral] law". This law is an "imperative" only in relation to "the subjective imperfection of the will of this or that rational being, e.g., of the human will".[83] Viewing the understanding and pure practical reason as analogously constituted, rather than normatively guided, by their respective laws is thus a textually plausible strategy for resisting normative readings of both general logical laws and the moral law.

But even if there is no analogy between the moral law's normative bearing on practical reason in our case and general logical laws' constitution of the understanding as such, there is one to be drawn between the moral law's bearing in our case and transcendental logical laws' appropriation by reason, both of which serve as an ought. We can analogize the imperfection of our will to the imperfection of our reason because our will and our reason are equally beholden to norms of self-knowledge that we genuinely can violate. Support for this analogy lies in Kant's concept of self-conceit, whose theoretical and practical guises are, respectively, dogmatism and evil.

In Chapter III of the Analytic of the *Critique of Practical Reason*, Kant defines incentive as "the subjective determining ground of the will of a being whose reason does not by its nature necessarily conform with the objective [i.e., moral] law". When the moral law is an incentive for such a being, it plays the "negative" role of rejecting any inclination that opposes it.[84] Inclinations are grounded in feeling and constitute regard for oneself or "*self-love*", on which the moral law "*infringes*" where restricting inclination is necessary for the sake of duty. But if self-love becomes a "presumption" that "precede[s] accord with the moral law", i.e., if self-love "striv[es] antecedently" to make inclination valid and thereby "makes itself law-giving and the unconditional practical principle", it becomes

"*self-conceit*". The moral law accordingly "*strikes down*" self-conceit. In its "positive" role, the law "*humiliates*" self-conceit in order to foster our "*respect*" for it.[85]

Kant further describes self-love as "predominant *benevolence* toward oneself (*Philautia*)" and self-conceit as "*satisfaction with oneself* (*Arrogantia*)".[86] The former expresses our natural pursuit of well-being, while the latter expresses an unjustly vaunted self-opinion. These descriptions recur in notes on Kant's ethics lectures by G. L. Collins and J. F. Vigilantius: self-love consists in being content with one's moral perfections, being of good self-opinion, and regarding oneself as worthy of love; by contrast, self-conceit consists in unwarranted pretension to merit, claims to more perfections than one has, and regarding oneself as of higher worth than one possesses.[87] A striking double feature of practical self-conceit, then, is that it not only subordinates the moral law to self-love but, in doing so, also views its devotion to the satisfaction of inclination as proof of its moral perfection, as if virtue were effortless instead of a struggle.

In Chapter II of the Analytic, Kant says that the concepts of good and evil refer, not to objects, but to modes of free causality.[88] This suggests that whereas goodness involves respect for the moral law, evil involves the conceit of making the satisfaction of inclination the first principle of one's action. Indeed, in *Religion Within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, Kant identifies the highest of three degrees of evil, viz., the "*depravity*" of adopting evil maxims (as opposed to the "*frailty*" of moral weakness and the relatively worse "*impurity*" of adulterating one's moral incentives), with the "corrupt" subordination of moral incentives to those of self-love.[89] Thus, while dogmatism is self-conceit's theoretical guise, evil is its practical guise.

We saw dogmatism personified by an alien who takes herself to cognize by applying categories beyond sensibility to things in themselves, i.e., to cognize the wrong object domain using the wrong experiential laws. In evil, we find personified an alien who is misled by the "delusion" of "self-conceit", viz., that the determining ground of moral action is subjective inclination rather than objective law. Marking the double feature of self-conceit noted earlier, Kant says that "not only" does such an alien locate their incentive "*pathologically*" rather than "*morally*", but "they produce in this way a frivolous, high-flown, fantastic cast of mind, flattering themselves with a spontaneous goodness of heart that needs neither spur nor bridle and for which not even a command is necessary".[90] Hence, the moral alien takes virtue to consist in passively indulging her inclinations rather than actively obeying the moral law, i.e., in heteronomy rather than autonomy. By deferring unconditionally to the dictates of self-love, she assumes that her virtuousness is guaranteed, i.e., is perfect rather than progressive. She contradicts the moral law by adopting what Kate Moran calls the "comfortable and convincing" principle that her inclination effortlessly aligns with morality.[91] In Chapter III, Kant explains that human virtue is "moral disposition *in conflict*, and not *holiness* in the supposed *possession* of a complete *purity* of dispositions of the will".[92] Morally perfect inclination is impossible because inclination is "blind and servile" to antecedent causes that we cannot control. Since inclinations do not "of themselves" accord with morality, virtue must require progress.[93]

Moreover, since "*complete conformity*" with the moral law is "*holiness*, a perfection of which no rational being of the sensible world is capable", virtue requires our "*endless progress* toward that complete conformity", which refutes any "fancied moral perfections".[94] Just as the logical alien neglects the limitations that sensibility places on her capacity for cognition and thus disowns her form of experience, the moral alien neglects the limitations that inclination places on her capacity for virtue and thus disowns her form of morality.

Like dogmatism, evil is marked by hubris. As we saw, a dogmatist's error is not the interference of the understanding by factors like inattention, but the hubristic decree that nature is composed of things in themselves cognizable by mere concepts. Instead of simply misjudging an object, she takes herself to follow experiential laws that contradict ours. An evil agent's error is likewise not the interference of pure practical reason by factors like greed, but the hubristic decree that virtue is a willing whose first principle is self-love. Instead of simply failing to act from duty, she takes virtue to follow from contradicting our moral law. Hubris suffers the same fate in each case: the confusion of subjectivity and objectivity.[95] Dogmatism is given to the transcendental illusion that subjective conditions of experience are objective determinations of things in themselves, while evil is given to the moral illusion that "subjective determining grounds of choice" are the unconditionally "objective determining ground of the will in general".[96]

Kant describes dogmatism's transcendental illusion and evil's moral illusion with striking similarity. Transcendental illusion is a "natural propensity"[97] that is "unavoidable", "irremediably attaches to human reason" as a perspectival rather than empirical error, "can fool even the most rational", and is our original fall—our "first step in matters of pure reason". Moral illusion is a "*natural* propensity" that "cannot be eradicated"; "belongs to the human being" as an "intelligible" ground rather than an "empirical" phenomenon; is "subjectively necessary in every human being, even the best"; and is our "original sin"—an "invisible enemy that hides" within our reason.[98] Moreover, the understanding "may get along very well" despite dogmatically conflating sensible and intelligible worlds and the empirical and transcendental uses of concepts, but its "perversion of words" is an "evasion for escaping from a difficult question", viz., "whether beyond the empirical use of the understanding […] a transcendental one is also possible".[99] Similarly, evil, although it "can still be legally good", is a "*perversity*" that corrupts moral disposition "at its root".[100]

It is easy to identify with the moral alien, to see ourselves on her crooked path. She is us, insofar as we renounce our form of morality. She is us, insofar as we are alienated from ourselves, from our proper moral law. Unsurprisingly, self-conceit impedes practical self-knowledge just as it does theoretical self-knowledge. Moran observes that a conceited agent "has no interest in participating in the moral struggle and sacrifice associated with autonomous willing" and so "fails to recognize himself as the subject of moral striving".[101] If striving defines such a subject's moral nature, then disinterest in it leads to self-opacity. As Kant says in the Analytic, moral duty demands "humility

(i.e., self-knowledge)" to limit self-conceit and self-love, "both of which are ready to mistake their boundaries".[102] We saw that the logical alien's disinterest in evaluating her cognitive faculty leads to self-opacity and that a critique of pure reason corrects her misjudged boundaries by bringing her self-conceit back to "thorough self-knowledge". Interest in practical self-knowledge similarly aims to remove illusion about the law that is proper to our will, which accordingly demands a critique of practical reason.[103]

There may be no analogy between general logical laws insofar as they constitute the understanding as such and the moral law insofar as it is normative for the human will. But we can draw an analogy between transcendental logical laws and the moral law, for we can analogize theoretical and practical self-alienation. Both forms of self-alienation result from self-conceit and rely on critique as a norm of self-knowledge. Both, too, are evidence of "enthusiasm", which Kant defines in the second *Critique* as "an overstepping of the bounds of human reason undertaken on principles", an error whose practical instance places inclination above the moral law and whose theoretical instance posits cognition beyond sensible intuition.[104] Appropriating transcendental logical laws overcomes dogmatic habits in matters of pure reason, just as appropriating the moral law deprives "self-conceit of its illusion" and thereby lessens "the hindrance to pure practical reason".[105] In either case, critique is a normative condition of disillusionment.[106]

We saw that what makes us human is partly the logical alien in us, given the radicality of dogmatism. We now see that what makes us human is also partly the moral alien in us, given the radicality of evil.[107] While a Copernican revolution corrects our theoretical self-alienation, a spiritual revolution corrects our practical self-alienation, as Kant explains in the *Religion*:

> that a human being should become not merely *legally* good, but *morally* good […] cannot be effected through gradual *reform*, but must rather be effected through a *revolution* in the disposition of the human being (a transition to the maxim of holiness of disposition). And so a "new man" can come about only through a kind of rebirth, as it were a new creation.[108]

Since "to fight vices individually" may leave "their universal root undisturbed", a "change of heart" is necessary.[109] Reversing our original sin demands a comprehensive rather than piecemeal evaluation of character, just as reversing our original fall in metaphysics demands an evaluation, not of the "*facta* of reason", but of reason itself.

Like a critique of pure reason, a critique of practical reason is a norm, one that distinguishes evil from goodness such that an imperfect will may progress toward virtue. Humility enables the moral alien to grasp one's reason as the origin of the moral law, just as it enables the logical alien to grasp one's understanding as the origin of the categories.[110] In both cases, one strives endlessly to satisfy the demand for self-knowledge.

4

At the end of the A-Paralogisms, Kant calls rational psychology "an imagined science" that arises from hypostatizing the idea of "our thinking being". Critique liberates us from "imagined happiness" with such a theory by

> limit[ing] all our speculative claims merely to the field of possible experience, not by stale mockery at attempts that have so often failed, or by pious sighing over the limits of our reason, but by means of a complete determination of reason's boundaries according to secure principles, which with the greatest reliability fastens its *nihil ulterius* on those Pillars of Hercules that nature has erected.[111]

As a norm for reason's self-knowledge, critique empathizes with our propensity for self-conceit. It does not deride reason, for it is undertaken from the standpoint of reason's own natural illusion. As a norm for specifically human reason, critique accounts for the logical and aesthetic elements of our experiential laws. It does not bemoan their transcendental ideality, for it does not presume that we are blessed with a perception of transcendental reality.

Moreover, in critique, reason is said to secure its "*nihil ulterius*" or 'nothing more'. This recalls Kant's claim in the B-Deduction that there is no "further ground", i.e., no absolute ground, for why we have the forms of judgment, understanding, and sensibility that we do.[112] We might expect nothing more beyond the forms of judgment, without which there is no thinking. But when Kant compares their ultimate groundlessness with that of the categories and of space and time, which latter admit of thinkable alternatives,[113] he considers them in their roles as experiential laws. Such laws are necessary for our experience, but thinking their contradiction, as the transcendental logical alien shows, is possible. Their necessity, then, is restricted. Experiential laws are not absolutely necessary, like general logical laws, which is just to say that the form of experience is not the form of thinking. Thus, we can say that while there is *nihil ulterius* to the necessity of general logical laws in that suspending them is either mad or nonsensical, there is *nihil ulterius* to the necessity of transcendental logical laws in their role as experiential laws in that experiential laws have no absolute ground, but instead are supported by nothing more, but nothing less, than the peculiar standpoint of human reason.[114]

The idea that experiential laws have restricted necessity may invite a comparison. According to Conant, Descartes denies that logical laws are "necessarily necessary", for while they are "necessary in our world", their negations are possible because God could create a different world.[115] This yields the "Cartesian predicament" of conceiving that which violates the laws according to which thinking is possible, of allegedly apprehending what we cannot comprehend.[116] In other words, it yields the problem of the general logical alien. Kant also denies that the laws that are necessary for our experience are so necessarily, given the restriction of their necessity to our standpoint. We can identify two

senses of the relatively contingent necessity of our experiential laws. First, they are contingently necessary in that alternatives are thinkable (as with sensibility) and no absolute ground explains their necessity (as with sensibility and understanding).[117] Second, they are contingently necessary in that, since we do not naturally grasp them as properly ours, they do not automatically inform our self-knowledge (as with reason). But this is the problem of a different kind of alien. Whereas Descartes's alien arguably invites the mad or nonsensical attempt to think beyond an insuperable limit, Kant's alien demands a critical reckoning with a boundary that we naturally defy. Rather than apprehend the incomprehensible, Kant's alien thinks the uncognizable. If there is a Kantian predicament, then, it does not consist in an illusion of thought.[118] Instead, it confronts us with the bruteness of our experiential laws and of reason's critical appropriation of them, a bruteness whose source is neither theological nor psychological, but anthropic.

We might deny that the necessity of our experiential laws is restricted in either aforementioned sense by arguing, like Fichte, that they genetically derive from an absolutely "*first principle*"[119] or arguing, like Hegel, that they dialectically emerge from an absolutely "necessary and complete process".[120] If such laws govern cognition as opposed to mere thinking, their science is not general; however, if their ground is absolutely necessary rather than brutely anthropic, their science is not transcendental. For the German idealists, the Kantian predicament is thus partly a challenge to critique the very distinction between general and transcendental logic. In overcoming general logic's tolerance for anarchy in metaphysics, on the one hand, and transcendental logic's tolerance for relative contingency, on the other hand, the idealists pursue a logic that is systematic, one that genetically or dialectically deduces its own subject matter.[121] In converting transcendental logic into either a doctrine of science or a science of logic, reason stands to achieve true liberation from illusion and self-alienation.[122] On this particular post-Kantian picture, what truly makes us human is absolute self-knowledge.[123]

Notes

1 Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. and ed. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), A52/B76. General logic is also "pure" insofar as it abstracts from "all empirical conditions under which our understanding is exercised, e.g., from the influence of the senses, from the play of imagination, the laws of memory, the power of habit, inclination, etc." (A53/B77).
2 See James Conant, "The Search for Logically Alien Thought: Descartes, Kant, Frege, and the *Tractatus*," *Philosophical Topics* 20, no. 2 (1991); Clinton Tolley, "Kant on the Nature of Logical Laws," *Philosophical Topics* 34, no. 1/2 (2006); Tyke Nunez, "Logical Mistakes, Logical Aliens, and the Laws of Kant's Pure General Logic," *Mind* 128, no. 512 (2018); and Matthew Boyle, "Kant on Logic and the Laws of the Understanding," in *The Logical Alien: Conant and His Critics*, ed. Sofia Miguens (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2020).
3 Kant A62/B87.
4 See Tolley, "Kant".

5 Gottlob Frege, *The Basic Laws of Arithmetic: Exposition of the System*, trans. Montgomery Furth (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964), xv-vi.
6 Frege, *Laws*, xvii.
7 Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, trans. D. F. Pears and B. F. McGuinness (London: Routledge, 1974), 6.11.
8 Conant, "Search," 139; Kant A61/B86. Cf. Kant: "[logic] is not an organon, any more than universal grammar is" (AA 9:15).
9 Conant, "Search," 133.
10 For normative readings of Kant's general logic, see John MacFarlane, "Frege, Kant, and the Logic in Logicism," *Philosophical Review* 111, no. 1 (2002), Béatrice Longuenesse, *Kant on the Human Standpoint* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), Nicholas F. Stang, "Kant, Bolzano, and the Formality of Logic," in *The New Anti-Kant*, ed. Sandra Lapointe and Clinton Tolley (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), and Jessica Leech, "Logic and the Laws of Thought," *Philosopher's Imprint* 15 (2015).
11 Boyle, "Kant," 124–5.
12 Tolley, "Kant," 389.
13 See Nunez, "Logical".
14 Hilary Putnam, "Rethinking Mathematical Necessity," in *Words and Life*, ed. James Conant (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994), 247.
15 Kant AA 8:194–5.
16 While 'experiential alien' might seem more appropriate, 'logical alien' is preferable because she makes a claim about what logical form can do, viz., yield cognition without sensibility.
17 Kant A63/B87–8.
18 In the preface to his handbook on Kant's logic lectures, G. B. Jäsche marks the "enormous difference between logic proper (universal logic), as a merely formal science, the science of mere thought as thought, and transcendental philosophy, this sole material or real pure science of reason, the science of knowledge proper" (in Kant AA 9:9). Cf. Kant: "general, universal logic is distinct […] from *transcendental logic*, in which the object itself is represented as an object of the mere understanding; universal logic, on the contrary, deals with all objects in general" (9:15).
19 Kant A54/B78–9. Cf. A294/B350–1.
20 Kant A125.
21 Kant A126–7.
22 Kant A739/B767.
23 Kant A62/B87. Cf.: "[categories] are concepts of an object in general, by means of which its intuition is regarded as determined with regard to one of the logical functions for judgment" (B128).
24 See Dieter Henrich, "Kant's Notion of a Deduction and the Methodological Background of the First *Critique*," in *Kant's Transcendental Deductions*, ed. Eckart Förster (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989): "[t]o answer this question [*quid juris*], one has to focus exclusively upon those aspects of the acquisition of an allegedly rightful possession by virtue of which a right has been bestowed, such that the possession has become a property" (36).
25 Kant A84/B117. On usurpatory concepts, see Peter Thielke, "Fate and the Fortune of the Categories: Kant on the Usurpation and Schematization of Concepts," *Inquiry* 49, no. 5 (2006).
26 See Kant A679/B707.
27 Kant A470–1/B498–9. Cf. Kant's discussion of "lazy reason (*ignava ratio*)" (A689–90/B717–8).
28 Kant A54–7/B78–82, A246/B303.
29 Kant A62–3/B87.

30 Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe, P. M. S. Hacker, and Joachim Schulte (New York: Wiley, 2009), §374.
31 Kant A277–8/B333–4.
32 The complaint's topic must be intelligible in order for Kant to formulate the need to regulatively think the inner in things. Thus, when he says that the complaint tempts us to think of beings that "we cannot even say are possible", he must mean, not logical possibility—for such beings respect the principle of non-contradiction, which means that the dogmatist's error is not mere self-contradiction—but rather real possibility—for such beings transcend possible experience (see Bxxvi-n). Moreover, when Kant says that we cannot say how such beings are "constituted", he must mean the ground of their cognitive faculty, for while we can ascertain that they possess "original" rather than "derived" intuition (B72), this ground is no less a "mystery" than the ground of our own sensibility (A278/B334).
33 Kant A314/B370–1.
34 Kant Axiii.
35 See Conant, "Search," 133–4. As Conant explains, whereas Wittgenstein (after Frege) diagnoses an illusion that is "simply nonsense", Kant diagnoses an "*intelligible*" illusion insofar as it "furnish[es] us with thoughts about objects" (170n55).
36 Kant Avii, xii, A297/B353–4.
37 Kant A79/B105. Cf.: "general logic abstracts from all content of cognition, and expects that representations will be given to it from elsewhere, wherever this may be, in order for it to transform them into concepts analytically. Transcendental logic, on the contrary, has a manifold of sensibility that lies before it *a priori*, which the transcendental aesthetic has offered to it, in order to provide the pure concepts of the understanding with a matter, without which they would be without any content, thus completely empty" (A76–7/B102).
38 Cf. Kant AA 4:267.
39 Kant A67/B92, A70/B95. See Béatrice Longuenesse, "Kant on *A Priori* Concepts: The Metaphysical Deduction of the Categories," in *Cambridge Companion to Kant and Modern Philosophy*, ed. Paul Guyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
40 Kant A57/B81.
41 See Kant AA 18:267, A84/B116–7.
42 Kant A88/B121. Cf. Charles Taylor, "The Validity of Transcendental Arguments," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 79 (1978): "Perception […] is an inarticulate activity; it starts off entirely so, and remains largely so. And even when we learn to articulate what we see, we never (except when doing philosophy) try to articulate what it is to see. […T]ranscendental arguments are *arguments*, i.e., we need a lot of discourse to establish them, because unlike the queen-rule-in-chess case, we have to *articulate* the boundary conditions of awareness. In our normal course of life we are focused on the things we are observing and dealing with […]; we are unconcerned with what it is to perceive, to be aware. The exigencies of philosophical debate require that we *formulate* the limiting success conditions which we cannot but recognize once we grasp the formulation" (162–4).
43 Cf. Kant: "an unavoidable illusion arises from the application of this rational idea of the totality of conditions (and so of the unconditioned) to appearances as if they were things in themselves (for, in the absence of a warning critique they are always held to be such), an illusion which, however, would never be noticed as deceptive if it were not revealed by a *conflict* of reason with itself in the application to appearance of its basic principle of presupposing the unconditioned for everything conditioned. By this, however, reason is forced to investigate this illusion—whence it arises and how it can be removed—and this can be done only through a complete critical examination of the whole pure faculty of reason; thus the antinomy of pure reason, which becomes evident in its dialectic, is in fact the most beneficial error into which

human reason could ever have fallen, inasmuch as it finally drives us to search for the key to escape from this labyrinth" (AA 5:107).

44 Kant A61/B86.

45 Kant A761/B789.

46 Kant AA 8:226–7. Cf.: "if we were to allow that synthetic propositions, no matter how evident they might be, could claim unconditional acceptance without any deduction, merely on their own claim, then all critique of the understanding would be lost, and, since there is no lack of audacious pretensions that common belief does not refuse (which is, however, no credential), our understanding would therefore be open to every delusion, without being able to deny its approval to those claims that, though unjustifiable, demand to be admitted as actual axioms in the very same confident tone" (A233/B285–6). On skepticism's role in reason's maturation, see G. Anthony Bruno, "Skepticism, Deduction, and Reason's Maturation," in *Skepticism: Historical and Contemporary Issues*, ed. G. Anthony Bruno and A. C. Rutherford (London: Routledge, 2018).

47 Kant A295–8/B351–4, A703–4/B731–2. On natural illusion, see Peter Thielke, "Hume, Kant, and the Sea of Illusion," *Hume Studies* 29, no. 1 (2003).

48 Kant A3–4/B7–8.

49 Kant A298/B354–5.

50 Kant A407/B433–4.

51 According to Tolley, "Kant," a norm is (1) violable by a subject such that (2) she retains her identity as bound by that norm despite violating it while (3) the norm retains its validity despite her violation (375). Tolley argues that general logical laws are not norms, as this would mean that thought could violate laws without which it is impossible yet retain its standing as thought, i.e., that illogical thought is possible and hence that a general logical alien is intelligible. By contrast, critique is a norm, for reason can transgress the transcendental logical laws without which experience is impossible yet retain its standing as reason, i.e., dogmatic thought is possible and hence a transcendental logical alien is intelligible.

52 Kant A703/B731.

53 Kant AA 10:144; translation modified.

54 Kant Aix.

55 Kant's alien exemplifies, not what James Conant calls, in "Why Kant Is Not a Kantian," *Philosophical Topics* 44, no. 1 (2016), an "ordinary fiction", which is really possible yet happens not to be actual, but what he calls a "philosophical fiction", which is not even really possible, but only a "*seeming* possibility" (101–6). This alien's thinkability shows that it is merely logically possible.

56 Kant AA 18:82.

57 Kant A672/B700. Cf.: "[judgments] are either merely *explicative* and add nothing to the content of the cognition, or *ampliative* and augment the given cognition; the first may be called *analytic* judgments, the second *synthetic*. […O]ne can indeed show us many propositions that are apodictically certain and have never been disputed; but they are one and all analytic and pertain more to the materials and implements of metaphysics than to the expansion of knowledge, which after all ought to be our real aim for it" (AA 4:265, 271).

58 Kant AA 18:82. Cf.: "My author Baumgarten is an excellent man when it comes to judgments of clarification, but when he moves on to judgments of amplification he is without any foundation, even though these are the primary requirement in metaphysics" (18:99).

59 Insofar as reason's architectonic matters are addressed through the completion of transcendental logic's threefold critical task of determining the origin, domain, and validity of *a priori* cognition, we can regard the alien who fails to take up this task as logical rather than aesthetic.

60 Kant Axi. Cf.: "I have to do merely with reason itself and its pure thinking; to gain exhaustive acquaintance with them I need not seek far beyond myself, because it is in myself that I encounter them" (Axiv).
61 Kant A669/B697, A703/B731.
62 Kant A763/B791, A761/B789.
63 We are thereby blind to the world, whether, in the guise of material idealism, our inner awareness obscures external experience (B274) or, locked into an antinomy, we can represent neither nature as a totality of appearances nor efficacious freedom free of contradiction (B163, A543/B571).
64 Kant A57/B81–2, A238/B297.
65 There is some ambiguity about whether transcendental logical laws are expressed by the categories or by the principles of the understanding. The former is implied by W. H. Walsh's claim in *Kant's Criticism of Metaphysics* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997) that such laws condition our arrival at truth (36), where the categories supply such conditions; the latter is consistent with H. J. Paton's claim in "Formal and Transcendental Logic," *Kant-Studien* 49, no. 1–4 (1957), that the categories are concepts of and so somehow distinct from such laws (250) and MacFarlane's claim in "Frege" that such laws are norms for thinking of objects (48), where the categories are not norms in the way that the principles are.
66 Kant A757/B785.
67 Kant A735/B763.
68 Kant A238/B297.
69 Kant A486/B514; cf. A216–7/B263–4.
70 Kant AA 16:292.
71 Kant A481/B509.
72 Kant A424/B451.
73 Kant A424/B451, A481–2/B509–10.
74 Kant A408/B434.
75 See Tolley, "Kant," 392.
76 See Stanley Cavell, *The Claim of Reason: Wittgenstein, Skepticism, Morality, and Tragedy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979): "Nothing is more human than the wish to deny one's humanity[.] […] A fitting title for the history of philosophy would be: Philosophy and the Rejection of the Human" (109, 207). Cf. Stanley Cavell, "The Wittgensteinian Event," in *Reading Cavell*, ed. Alice Crary and Sanford Shieh (London: Routledge, 2006): "the human is the animal that is also unnatural (and not only in its epistemology), fated to chronic dissatisfaction with its lot, to torment, disappointment, exile, and the rest—unless you wish to say that the compulsion to escape the human lot, to overcome the human, risking monstrousness, is precisely what *is* natural to the human" (22).
77 See Tolley, "Kant," 374.
78 See Tolley, "Kant," 382.
79 See Kant: "[i]f we had a pure reason and pure understanding, we would never err; and if we had a pure will (without inclination), we would never sin" (AA 16:284; cf. 16:283).
80 See Kant: "in logic, the question is not about *contingent* but about *necessary* rules; not how we do think, but how we ought to think" (AA 9:14).
81 See Christine Korsgaard, "The Normativity of Instrumental Reason," in *Ethics and Practical Reason*, ed. Garrett Cullity and Berys Gaut (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997), 240n52 and Allen Wood, *Kant's Ethical Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 379n25.
82 See Tolley, "Kant," 378, 387.
83 Kant AA 4:414.
84 Kant AA 5:72.

85 Kant AA 5:72–4, 86.
86 Kant AA 5:73.
87 See Kant AA 27:357, 611, 620. Cf. *Metaphysics of Morals*, which describes self-conceit as conviction in the greatness of one's moral worth (6:435, 437).
88 Kant AA 5:65.
89 Kant AA 6:29–30, 36.
90 Kant AA 5:85.
91 Kate Moran, "Delusions of Virtue: Kant on Self-Conceit," *Kantian Review* 19, no. 3 (2014): 439.
92 Kant AA 5:84.
93 Kant AA 5:84, 118.
94 Kant AA 5:86, 122; cf. 6:48. This raises a question of what analogy holds between moral and theoretical progress. It seems that just as we strive to move from ever-possible evil toward impossible holiness, we strive to move from ever-possible dogmatism toward impossible maturity, i.e., the adult power of judgment liberated from transcendental illusion.
95 Cf. Owen Ware, "Kant on Moral Sensibility and Moral Motivation," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 52, no. 4 (2014): 736.
96 Kant AA 5:74.
97 Kant A642/B670.
98 Kant AA 6:29–32, 57.
99 Kant A238/B297, A257/B312–3, A692/B720.
100 Kant AA 6:30. Kant even situates dogmatism and evil each within a pair of rocks between which we must steer. In the theoretical case, dogmatic enthusiasm is the Scylla to the Charybdis of skeptical despair: "[Locke] opened the gates wide to enthusiasm, since reason, once it has authority on its side, will not be kept within limits by indeterminate recommendations of moderation[.] […Hume] gave way entirely to skepticism, since he believed himself to have discovered in what is generally held to be reason a deception of our faculty of cognition. We are now about to make an attempt to see whether we cannot successfully steer human reason between these two cliffs, assign its determinate boundaries, and still keep open the entire field of its purposive activity" (A95/B128). In the practical case, arrogant self-conceit is the Scylla to the Charybdis of craven timorousness: "Self-conceit and timorousness are the two rocks a man runs into, if he departs, in one direction or the other, from the moral law. On the one hand, a man must not despair, but believe he has the strength to follow the moral law, even if he fails to comply with it. On the other, however, he can fall into self-conceit, and build far too much on his own powers. Yet this self-conceit can be averted through the purity of the law; for if the law is presented in its full purity, nobody will be such a fool as to think he can fulfil it quite purely by his own efforts" (AA 27:350; cf. 610–1).
101 Moran, "Delusions," 425.
102 Kant AA 5:86.
103 Given the analogy between theoretical and practical self-conceit, we might expect a practical analogue to the structure of theoretical reason's maturation. We can discern one by examining Kant's conception of misology. In a letter to Herz, February 4, 1779, he attributes misology to one who initially "loves philosophy", but becomes "ungrateful, partly because one expected too much of [it], partly because one is too impatient in awaiting the reward for one's efforts" in it, and admits that he himself "know[s] this sullen mood" (AA 10:248). We can see in this description the first two stages of theoretical reason's maturation, in which one veers from excessive trust to excessive mistrust in reason when dogmatic hubris leads to skeptical doubt, a mood with which Kant naturally identifies, given his Humean crucible. In his 1775/76 lectures on anthropology, although he says that it

is "unusual", Kant claims that misology "arises out of reason's futile effort"—not "out of hatred for reason", for "indeed one values it", but rather "because it does one a disservice", viz., that it "cannot fulfil knowledge" (AA 25:553). Since reason is capable of fulfilling knowledge to some extent, which is why "one values it", its "futile effort" must pertain to knowledge to which we have no right. To charge its futility in this regard with "disservice" invites skeptical despair, the adolescent stage between dogmatic childhood and critical adulthood. How does misology appear in moral matters? John Callanan, "Kant on Misology and the Natural Dialectic," *Philosopher's Imprint* 19, no. 47 (2019), argues that misology exhibits what, in the *Groundwork*, Kant calls the "*natural dialectic*" whereby we "rationalize against" reason's moral law in order "to make [it] suited to our wishes and inclinations". This "predicament" is dialectical because it recognizes the moral law's authority yet despises it as arbitrary, viz., where it subordinates our happiness to virtue (AA 4:405). Hence Kant attributes misology to a "cultivated reason" that, while cognizant of the moral law, is preoccupied with the "enjoyment of life and with happiness" rather than with "true happiness", i.e., virtue, and consequently incurs only "more trouble" (AA 4:395). The natural dialectic in which practical reason conflicts with the demands of its own law yields misology in morality, stalling maturation. Analogously, the natural antithetic in which theoretical reason conflicts with its own laws yields misology in metaphysics, stalling maturation. As Kant says, practical reason's dialectic "constrains it to seek help in philosophy, just as happens in its theoretical use; and the first will, accordingly, find no more rest than the other except in a complete critique of our reason" (AA 4:405). Callanan sheds light on this practical analogue by examining Plato's *Phaedo*, in which misology is exposed as a fallacy in which "bullish confidence and trust in reason" leads to unjustified expectations that are inevitably "dashed", yielding the erroneous inference that "reason itself is generally unreliable". Socrates's correction of this error is to examine "one's rational capacities" and thereby avoid "confusing an operator error with a system error", i.e., confusing the frustration of one's unwarranted demands of reason with reason's weakness (12). We can hear Socrates's proposal as anticipating Kant's claim that dogmatism is to be corrected, not by censoring reason, but by critiquing reason's capacity for *a priori* cognition.

104 Kant AA 5:85–6; Axiii; AA 18: 437. Cf. Moran, "Delusions," 424n12.

105 Kant AA 5:75.

106 The analogy raises a question about the combination of activity and passivity in theoretical and practical self-conceit. A dogmatist actively constructs metaphysical theories through conceptual analysis yet, by failing to scrutinize her conceptual sources, passively perpetuates uncritical modes of thinking. An evil agent actively serves self-love as first principle yet passively obeys inclinations whose source is beyond her control and so fails to act from reason. The analogy raises another question about willful disobedience. Practically, self-conceit disobeys the moral law despite knowing better. Theoretically, through dogmatic hubris or skeptical despair, self-conceit disobeys the enlightenment ideal of determining experiential laws, not through another's direction, but through critical evaluation of our cognitive faculty.

107 See Kant: "the ground of this evil cannot (1) be placed, as is commonly done, in the sensuous nature of the human being, and in the natural inclinations originating from it. For not only do these bear no direct relation to evil […] we also cannot presume ourselves responsible for their existence[.] […] The ground of this evil can also not be placed (2) in a *corruption* of the morally legislative reason, as if reason could extirpate within itself the dignity of the law itself, for this is absolutely impossible. […] This evil is *radical*" (AA 6:34–5, 37).

108 Kant AA 6:47. Cf. 7:294.

109 Kant AA 6:47–8.
110 See Kant: "reason has previously escaped such a humiliation [as results from discipline] only because, given the pomp and the serious mien with which it appears, no one could easily come to suspect it of frivolously playing with fancies instead of concepts and words instead of things" (A710/B738). Cf. A795/B823, AA 5:74.
111 Kant A395.
112 Kant B145–6.
113 See Kant B72, B150.
114 When Kant says in the Remark on the Amphiboly that "the mystery of the origin of our sensibility" is one "too deeply hidden for us" (A278/B334), he does not attribute meaning to the absence of meaning, which would be nonsensical, but simply identifies a restriction on the necessity of our experiential laws.
115 Conant, "Search," 120. Contrast A. W. Moore, "What Descartes Ought to Have Thought About Modality," in *The Logical Alien: Conant and his Critics*, ed. Sofia Miguens (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2020).
116 Conant, "Search," 120–1.
117 See Kant A15/B29, A27/B43, A35/B51, B145, A268/B324, A278/B334; AA 23:22–3.
118 Conant, "Search," claims that an illusion of thought "involves an even more peculiar form of muddle" than a dogmatist's illusion of knowledge, since it suggests "the appearance of sense where no sense has been made" (133–4). He argues that this muddle ensnares Wittgenstein scholars who gloss the thought that illogical thought is impossible as deep nonsense, where we observe a sentential item in the wrong logical role, as opposed to mere nonsense, which offers insufficient syntactic structure to identify a sentential item in any logical role. Mere nonsense does not even attempt to follow general logical laws. Deep nonsense follows them to a point and, in breaking them, brings them "into open view". But, Conant argues, if such laws are absolutely necessary for thought, then the above gloss of Wittgenstein's thought imposes onto him the very Cartesian predicament that he aims to dissolve (153). Nevertheless, it is plausible that the dogmatist's error qualifies as deep nonsense at least insofar as her (our) defiance of our experiential laws brings into view the critical need for their exposition and deduction as our laws.
119 J. G. Fichte, *Introductions to the Wissenschaftslehre*, ed. and trans. Daniel Breazeale (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994), 31.
120 G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), ¶34.
121 See G. Anthony Bruno, "Genealogy and Jurisprudence in Fichte's Genetic Deduction of the Categories," *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 35, no. 1 (2018).
122 See Fichte, *Introductions*: "To know that one is deceived and yet to remain deceived: this is not a state of conviction and harmony with oneself[.] […] The deception in question here [viz., transcendental illusion], which is quite avoidable and which can be completely extirpated by true philosophy, is, therefore, one you have created all by yourself; and as soon as you obtain a clear understanding of your philosophy, this delusion will fall away—like scales from your eyes—never to recur again" (98–9); and Hegel, *Phenomenology*: "In pressing forward to its true existence, consciousness will arrive at a point at which it gets rid of its semblance of being burdened with something alien […] so that its exposition will coincide at just this point with the authentic science of spirit. And finally, when consciousness itself grasps this its own essence, it will signify the nature of absolute knowledge itself" (¶89).
123 Thanks to Nicholas Dunn, Max Edwards, Marin Geier, Edward Guetti, David James, Thomas Land, Colin McLear, Colin McQuillan, Tyke Nunez, Manish Oza, Julia Peters, Jens Pier, Karl Schafer, Ulrich Schlösser, Irina Schumski, Nick Stang, Martin Sticker, Brian Tracz, Owen Ware, Ariel Zylberman, and audiences at the Universities of Bonn, Cambridge, Tübingen, and Warwick for helpful comments on this chapter.

Bibliography

Boyle, Matthew. "Kant on Logic and the Laws of the Understanding." In *The Logical Alien: Conant and his Critics*, edited by Sofia Miguens, 117–44. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2020.

Bruno, G. Anthony. "Genealogy and Jurisprudence in Fichte's Genetic Deduction of the Categories." *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 35, no. 1 (2018a): 77–96.

———. "Skepticism, Deduction, and Reason's Maturation." In *Skepticism: Historical and Contemporary Inquiries*, edited by G. Anthony Bruno and A. C. Rutherford, 203–20. London: Routledge, 2018b.

Callanan, John. "Kant on Misology and the Natural Dialectic." *Philosophers' Imprint* 19, no. 47 (2019): 1–22.

Cavell, Stanley. *The Claim of Reason: Wittgenstein, Skepticism, Morality and Tragedy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979.

———. "The Wittgensteinian Event." In *Reading Cavell*, edited by Alice Crary and Sanford Shieh, 8–25. London: Routledge, 2006.

Conant, James. "The Search for Logically Alien Thought: Descartes, Kant, Frege, and the Tractatus." *Philosophical Topics* 20, no. 1 (1991): 115–80.

———. "Why Kant is Not a Kantian." *Philosophical Topics* 44, no. 1 (2016): 75–125.

Fichte, J.G. *Introductions to the Wissenschaftslehre*. Edited and translated by Daniel Breazeale. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994.

Frege, Gottlob. *The Basic Laws of Arithmetic: Exposition of the System*. Edited and translated by Montgomery Furth. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964.

Hegel, G.W.F. *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Translated by A. V. Miller. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977.

Henrich, Dieter. "Kant's Notion of a Deduction and the Methodological Background of the First Critique." In *Kant's Transcendental Deductions*, edited by Eckart Förster, 29–46. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989.

Kant, Immanuel. *Anthropology, History, and Education*. Edited by Günter Zöller and R. B. Louden. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

———. *Correspondence*. Edited by Arnulf Zweig. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999a.

———. *Critique of Pure Reason*. Translated and Edited by Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

———. *Kants gesammelte Schriften* [cited AA, except for *Critique of Pure Reason*, cited in A/B pagination of 1781/1787 editions]. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1900ff.

———. *Lectures on Anthropology*. Edited by Allen W. Wood and R. B. Louden. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

———. *Lectures on Ethics*. Edited by Peter Heath and J. B. Schneewind. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

———. *Lectures on Logic*. Edited by J. M. Young. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

———. *Notes and Fragments*. Edited by Paul Guyer. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

———. *Practical Philosophy*. Edited by M. J. Gregor. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999b.

———. *Religion and Rational Theology*. Edited by Allen W. Wood and George di Giovanni. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

———. *Theoretical Philosophy After 1781*. Edited by Henry Allison and Peter Heath. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Korsgaard, Christine. "The Normativity of Instrumental Reason." In *Ethics and Practical Reason*, edited by Garrett Cullity and Berys Gaut, 215–54. Oxford: Clarendon, 1997.

Leech, Jessica. "Logic and the Laws of Thought." *Philosophers' Imprint* 15, no. 12 (2015): 1–27.

Longuenesse, Béatrice. "Kant on *A Priori* Concepts: The Metaphysical Deduction of the Categories." In *Cambridge Companion to Kant and Modern Philosophy*, edited by Paul Guyer, 129–68. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

———. *Kant on the Human Standpoint*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

MacFarlane, John. "Frege, Kant, and the Logic in Logicism." *Philosophical Review* 111, no. 1 (2002): 25–65.

Moore, A. W. "What Descartes Ought to Have Thought About Modality." In *The Logical Alien: Conant and his Critics*, edited by Sofia Miguens, 101–16. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2020.

Moran, Kate. "Delusions of Virtue: Kant on Self–Conceit." *Kantian Review* 19, no. 3 (2014): 419–47.

Nunez, Tyke. "Logical Mistakes, Logical Aliens, and the Laws of Kant's Pure General Logic." *Mind* 128, no. 512 (2018): 1149–80.

Paton, H.J. "Formal and Transcendental Logic." *Kant-Studien* 49, no. 1–4 (1957): 245–63.

Putnam, Hilary. "Rethinking Mathematical Necessity." In *Words and Life*, edited by James Conant, 245–63. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994.

Stang, Nicholas F. "Kant, Bolzano, and the Formality of Logic." In *The New Anti-Kant*, edited by Sandra Lapointe and Clinton Tolley, 192–234. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

Taylor, Charles. "The Validity of Transcendental Arguments." *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 79 (1978): 151–65.

Thielke, Peter. "Fate and the Fortune of the Categories: Kant on the Usurpation and Schematization of Concepts." *Inquiry* 49, no. 5 (2006): 438–68.

———. "Hume, Kant, and the Sea of Illusion." *Hume Studies* 29, no. 1 (2003): 63–88.

Tolley, Clinton. "Kant on the Nature of Logical Laws." *Philosophical Topics* 34, no. 1/2 (2006): 371–407.

Walsh, W. H. *Kant's Criticism of Metaphysics*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997.

Ware, Owen. "Kant on Moral Sensibility and Moral Motivation." *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 52, no. 4 (2014): 727–46.

Wittgenstein, Ludwig. *Philosophical Investigations*. 4th ed. Translated by G. E. M. Anscombe, P. M. S. Hacker, and Joachim Schulte. New York: Wiley, 2009.

———. *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. Translated by D. F. Pears and B. F. McGuinness. London: Routledge, 1974.

Wood, Allen. *Kant's Ethical Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.