

# TRANSCENDENTAL ARGUMENTS FOR PERSONAL IDENTITY IN KANT'S TRANSCENDENTAL DEDUCTION

*Jacqueline Mariña*

**Abstract:** One of the principle aims of the B version of Kant's transcendental deduction is to show how it is possible that the same 'I think' can accompany all of my representations, which is a transcendental condition of the possibility of judgment. Contra interpreters such as A. Brook, I show that this 'I think' is an a priori (reflective) self-consciousness; contra P. Keller, I show that this a priori self-consciousness is first and foremost a consciousness of one's personal identity from a first person point of view.

Are there good transcendental arguments for the persistence of the self throughout changes in its representational states? Kant's transcendental deduction can be read as such an argument. This paper provides a reconstruction of the B-edition of Kant's Transcendental Deduction in terms of what Dieter Henrich has termed an "identity deduction,"<sup>1</sup> namely, an analysis of the conditions of the possibility for cognizing the "I think" necessary for both concept formation and judgment.

On this reading, a significant aim of the transcendental deduction (TD) is to show that only through an *a priori* transcendental employment of the categories can the "I think" be determined at all. Hence, such an a priori transcendental employment must be presupposed for even the most rudimentary empirical judgments to be possible. Such an analysis of the TD, as one whose fundamental problem is the establishment of the conditions of the possibility of self-consciousness, is consistent with viewing the B-edition version of the deduction as a single proof in two steps:<sup>2</sup> as such, it can be shown that the conclusion arrived at in §20, and that arrived at in §26, both pertain in crucial ways to the conditions of the possibility of self-consciousness.

---

*Jacqueline Mariña, Philosophy Department, Purdue University*

---

My own analysis diverges significantly from current interpretations (including that of Henrich) in that I show how the second part of the deduction (beginning with §21) is key to establishing how an *a priori* cognition of the I think is possible.<sup>3</sup> This *a priori* cognition of the I as the subject that cognizes *itself* is *more* than the requirement to posit the pure, logical I, since it has an *a priori content* dependent upon the action of the understanding on the pure forms of intuition, and is a result of the figurative synthesis.<sup>4</sup> I shall call this consciousness of self that of the *a priori reflected self*. It is to be distinguished from the merely logical I in that it contains a pure temporal manifold, and it should not be conflated with the original and immediate (non-reflective) awareness the self has of itself in its acts of thought, although it is dependent upon it, since it is generated through reflection on such acts of thought. Consciousness of this *a priori* reflected self conditions the very possibility of empirical self-consciousness and should not be confused with it. Finally, because this *a priori* reflected self is the product of self-affection, it is in no way to be confused with the self as noumenon.<sup>5</sup>

Kant's argument first establishes that if judgment is to be possible at all, we must be able to cognize an "I think" that accompanies all my representations. Cognizing such an I think, is, however, highly problematic. The Deduction then shows that cognition of the "I think" is only possible through a transcendental employment of the categories. Such a transcendental employment involves two elements, treated in each of the two steps of the TD. In the first, Kant discusses the *logical* function of the categories. In the second, the all-important role of space and time and the transcendental unity furnished to them by the categories is discussed as integral to generating the "I think" given in self-consciousness.

The first, and greater part of this paper (itself divided into numbered subsections) is devoted to an analysis of the TD in relation to problem of self-consciousness. In the second and much shorter part of the paper I discuss the significance of these results in relation to some of the arguments of the paralogisms, as well as in relation to the different understandings of the self in Kant's writings.

In §15, Kant tells us that a) the possibility of analysis presupposes a prior synthesis, for "where the understanding has not previously combined anything, neither can it dissolve anything" and b) all combination and synthesis presupposes a prior unity. At this point in the deduction, the nature of neither this synthesis nor the prior unity has been made explicit. Nevertheless, it introduces the key problem of the deduction, namely, the nature of the unity grounding all acts of judgment. §16 provides an examination of how this unity must *function* if combination is to be possible. Before Kant discusses how this unity must function, however, he makes an important distinction central to the problem of the deduction, namely that between original apperception and the representation "I think." He notes that original apperception *produces* the representation I think (B132). How original apperception produces the representation I think is a key feature of the deduction.<sup>6</sup>

## 1. THE FUNCTION OF THE I THINK IN JUDGMENT

Kant tells us that the unity of the I think is the “transcendental unity of *self-consciousness*.” Through the representation I think the self is conscious of itself, that is, becomes an object *for itself*. At the beginning of §16 Kant notes that “The I think must be able to accompany all my representations; for otherwise something would be represented in me that could not be thought at all, which is as much to say that the representation would either be impossible or at least would be nothing for me.”<sup>7</sup> If a representation is to function *as* a representation, I must be able to distinguish this representation from myself (as she who is *having* the representation);<sup>8</sup> moreover, I must be able to distinguish the representation from the object it represents. In order for it to be possible to make this distinction a) the self must become its own object, b) it must be possible to identify the self as different from the representation (and this means both self and representation must be able to become objects of consciousness) and c) it must be possible to identify the self as that which remains identical throughout changes in its representational states. Without the ability of self-consciousness to accompany such representations, one might very well be able to feel, but not to think. Hence a sea sponge might, for instance, feel the hotness of a current, but it would not be conscious of itself as different from this current, nor would it be conscious of the heat as a characteristic of the water surrounding it.

Kant next asks: under what conditions can such representations stand together in a universal self-consciousness? How are we to characterize this consciousness of self that must accompany each representation? Because this consciousness is *one and the same*, it cannot be accompanied by any further representations. As such, the empirical consciousness of the self that accompanies different representations, which “is itself dispersed and without relation to the identity of the subject” (B 133), will not do the trick. This empirical consciousness is the consciousness I have of myself as an embodied being *in the world*. I have such a consciousness of myself insofar as I can *sense* myself and make myself my own object: I see my hands, I recognize myself in the mirror, hear myself, and so forth. This consciousness of self depends on what is given to the senses. It must be distinguished from a transcendental consciousness of myself, which I have a priori. The representation of the empirical self is complex: it is a subject with many characteristics (the subject is “dispersed”). Moreover, the empirical self is constantly changing. Hence this representation lacks the simplicity and stable identity required for the I think that must accompany each of my representations. We are still, therefore, at a loss to understand how this I think is to be determined.

Kant next notes, “this thoroughgoing identity of the apperception of a manifold given in intuition contains a synthesis of representations, and is possible only through the consciousness of this synthesis.” There is much that is puzzling here. For one, in §15 Kant noted that we needed to seek “that which itself contains the ground of the unity of different concepts in judgments, and hence the possibility of the understanding, even in its logi-

cal use.” But here he seems to be claiming that the *identity* of apperception is itself only possible through consciousness of the synthesis of representations. As such, either Kant is confused, or the *identity* of apperception cannot be the ground of the unity of different concepts in judgments, since identity only *results* through consciousness of the synthesis of representations. The identity of apperception must therefore be distinguished from original apperception, which does ground the unity of different concepts in judgments. The *unity* of original apperception already implies a synthesis of the manifold, but it is only through consciousness of this synthesis that the identity of apperception is achieved. Hence the unity of original apperception grounds *both* the synthesis of the manifold and the *identity* of apperception. Only through the action of original apperception in generating the manifold can original apperception ground *both* the synthesis of the manifold and the identity of apperception. Kant notes that the identity of the subject “does not yet come about by my accompanying each representation with consciousness, but rather by my adding one representation to the other and being conscious of their synthesis” (B 133). The synthesis that is generated through the addition of one representation to another (a synthesis of the imagination) must be presupposed if identity of consciousness is to be achieved. This is what Kant means when he notes that “it is only because I can combine a manifold of given representations in one consciousness that it is possible for me to represent the identity of the consciousness in these representations itself, i.e., the analytical unity of apperception is only possible under some synthetic one” (B133). This combination is achieved through the blind power of the imagination; this is not a self-conscious synthesis.<sup>9</sup> The unity provided by the imagination in the generation of the manifold must be presupposed if analysis through the use of concepts can be achieved. In the important footnote to B 133, he notes that

The analytical unity of consciousness pertains to all common concepts as such, e.g., if I think of red in general, I thereby represent to myself a feature that (as a mark) can be encountered in anything, or that can be combined with other representations; therefore only by means of an antecedently conceived possible synthetic unity can I represent to myself the analytical unity. A representation that is to be thought of as common to several must be regarded as belonging to those that in addition to it also have something different in themselves; consequently they must antecedently be conceived in synthetic unity with other (even if only possible representations) before I can think of the analytical unity of consciousness in that it makes it into a *conceptus communis* (B133n).

A concept is a general representation: through it many representations can be thought under a common mark. But in order for the concept to function in such a way, I must be able to think of several *possible* representations, differentiated from one another but yet sharing a common mark, as standing under it. These representations must be held together if I am to think them under a concept (the common mark that they all share). This holding together of these representations is a synthesis; for these reasons “the syn-

thetic unity of apperception is the highest point to which one must affix all use of the understanding.” However, insofar as this synthesis remains one of the imagination only, it is a *necessary* but not a sufficient condition for the analytical unity of consciousness.

Now, this analytical unity must be presupposed if representations are to function as concepts: it is “the analytical unity of consciousness [in a general representation] that makes it into a *conceptus communis* (B 134n). In other words, if I am to think of a mark as common to several representations, I must be able to know that it is the same I that grasps each of these representations individually, reproduces and recognizes the mark common to them all (in fact the identity of the I is presupposed in each of these activities). The analytical unity of consciousness thus stands in the closest possible unity to the I think. In fact, it refers to the principle function of the I think in the use of concepts in judgments.<sup>10</sup> Discursive thought, through which many representations are brought under a common concept, presupposes the possibility of recognition of the identity of the I think, and thus self-consciousness. This simply expands upon what is said at the beginning of §16: “The I think must be able to accompany all my representations;” only in such a way can I call them *mine*. In order for the self to recognize representations as its own, it must be possible for it to become conscious of itself *as* the I that has multiple representations: “The thought that these representation given in intuition all together belong to me means, accordingly, the same as that I unite them in a *self-consciousness*, or at least can unite them therein. . . .” B134 (Italics mine).

The problem still remains: how, if self-consciousness is a condition of the possibility of thinking, is this self-consciousness to be cognized? We noted that *some* synthetic unity of consciousness is a necessary condition for the analytic unity. However, it is still not clear how such an analytic unity is possible: how are we to cognize the identity of the self in its acts of apprehending, reproducing, and recognizing representations? Such a cognition of the identity of the self throughout its having different representations is a necessary condition for self-consciousness. Understanding how this cognition is possible is made especially difficult by the fact that the identity of self-consciousness has no manifold of its own and therefore no content *through* which it can be cognized. Kant notes that “through the I, as a simple representation, nothing manifold is given; it [the manifold] can only be given in the intuition, which is distinct from it, and thought through combination in a consciousness.”<sup>11</sup> If the simple representation I has no content, then it contains no distinguishing marks through which it can be picked out and identified. As Henrich notes, here Kant cannot go the route of Leibniz, for whom the representational states are incorporated into the essence of the subject: for Kant these states are given in intuition and determined by something different from the subject, and hence are not part of the subject.<sup>12</sup> Kant contrasts the nature of a discursive understanding that can only *think* with one in which *through* self-consciousness the manifold would at the same time be given. It is this peculiar nature of our *discursive* understand-

ing that motivates the central problem of the B-deduction, namely, how self-consciousness is possible given that the representation I think has no content. Here we would do well also to recall Kant's earlier discussion that the I think should not be confused with an empirical representation of the self, which does not remain identical through time and does not accompany all my representations.

What, then is it about the simple representation I that allows it to be identified as the same through different acts of thought? Kant's solution is to argue that since the I itself has no manifold, the identity of the I can only be given in the *unity* of the representations of the self.

I am therefore conscious of the identical self in regard to the manifold of the representations that are given to me in an intuition because I call them all together my representations, which constitute one. But that is as much to say that I am conscious of their necessary synthesis, which is called the original unity of apperception, under which all representations given to me stand, but under which they must also be brought by means of a synthesis (B 135).

Synthetic unity is a sufficient condition for the identity of the *I think*. This unity, however, is not just the unity of a bundle of representations, à la Hume. That kind of unity will not help in determining the I and ensuring that I can become self-consciously aware of myself *as* the same I in my transition from one representation to the next. On this model the representation of the I remains just as empty and indeterminate as before, since it is just that which holds together the representations as a unity: it is still an empty placeholder. Given these constraints, the only way left to identify the I (and for the I to become conscious of itself) is through its *activity* in synthesizing the representations that are given to it.<sup>13</sup> But I can only become conscious of this activity through its results, namely the *synthesis* of representations. Hence if Kant is correct, he will have shown that this synthesis is a sufficient condition for determining the I think, and the problem of §16—how determination of the I think is possible—will be solved.

Much work remains to be done, however. Granted that identity of the self is achieved through the way in which the I relates the representations to one another, Kant still needs to show that only if the self relates these representations to one another in accordance with given rules (the categories) will it be possible for the self to become conscious of itself. In other words, he needs to show that only if there is a given blueprint for how representations are to be *related* to one another in the concept of the object is self-consciousness possible. This means: a necessary condition for consciousness of the identity of the self is the capacity for determining the relation of representations to one another (in the concept of the object) in accordance with given rules; only such rules can guarantee the unity of representations. This much stronger claim is of course what Kant needs if he is to show that the categories must be presupposed if thinking and judgment is to be possible at all. He needs to demonstrate: I can only become conscious of the identical *activity* of thought if this activity occurs in accordance with necessary rules for the synthesis of the manifold. This is what is behind the very

important passage at A 108:

For this unity of consciousness would be impossible if in the cognition of the manifold the mind could not become conscious of the identity of the function by means of which this manifold is synthetically combined into one cognition. Thus the original and necessary consciousness of the identity of oneself is at the same time a consciousness of an equally necessary unity of the synthesis of all appearances in accordance with concepts, i.e., in accordance with rules that not only make them necessarily reproducible, but also thereby determine an object for their intuition, i.e., the concept of something in which they are necessarily connected; for the mind could not possibly think of the identity of itself in the manifoldness of its representations, and indeed think this *a priori*, if it did not have before its eyes the identity of its action, which subjects all synthesis of apprehension (which is empirical) to a transcendental unity, and first makes possible their connection in accordance with *a priori* rules (A 108).

If the self is to become conscious of itself as identical through a consciousness of its activity, then this activity must be recognizable through the *rules* of its operation. Two points are important here. First, how self-consciousness operates can only be known through what it produces, namely the specification of the *relation* of representations to one another (the synthesis of the manifold). Second, these rules specifying the necessary relation of representations to one another supply a map, so to speak, from any given representation to another representation. The rules guarantee the availability of a representation on the condition that another is given; *only* thereby can such a representation stand under the unity given through the synthesis.<sup>14</sup> As such, only given necessary *rules for the synthesis of representations* (the categories) is it possible to guarantee that representations stand under the unity of the I think. The gist of the argument can be simplified in the following way: how can you identify a number representations as belonging to the same set (the set of *my* representations) if there is no straightforward way of identifying the common mark under which they can be subsumed, namely, that they belong to the same *I* that thinks them? Recall that the bare representation I contains no manifold. Under such conditions, their belonging to the same set (the set of *my* representations) can only be determined by an activity of consciousness in accordance with necessary rules. Such rules guarantee the availability of a representation on the condition that another is given; only if a representation is available in this way does it stand under the *unity* of consciousness. Such rules thereby function to bring the representations to a unity; this synthetic unity is what guarantees that I can call them all together *my* representations. The unity of consciousness is thereby cognized through its activity and its result, which is the form (the set of relations) of a set of representations.

Given what has been argued thus far, in §17 Kant brings in the notion of an object: an object is “that in the concept of which the manifold of a given intuition is united.” The concept of the object supplies the rule through which to relate representations to one another. A similar idea is put forward in an important passage in the A-Deduction, where Kant notes:

But these appearances are not things in themselves; they are only representations, which in turn have their object—an object which cannot itself be intuited by us, and which may, therefore, be named the non-empirical, that is, transcendental object = X.

The pure concept of this transcendental object, which in reality throughout all our knowledge is one and the same, is what can alone confer upon all our empirical concepts in general relation to an object, that is, objective reality. This concept cannot contain any determinate intuition, and therefore refers only to that unity which must be met with in any manifold of cognition [*Erkenntnis*] which stands in relation to an object. This relation is nothing but the necessary unity of consciousness, and therefore also of the synthesis of the manifold, through a common function of the mind, which combines it in one representation (A 109).

Not only does the concept of the object supply the rule through which to relate representations to one another, the object is that *to which* representations refer. As such, the transcendental object is never given in any particular representation, since no single representation can be adequate to it. Rather, different apprehensions or representations can be representations *of* the same object, each representation revealing a different aspect or characteristic of the object. This transcendental object, to which all representations having objective validity must be referred, has a given structure. Representations referring to it must hook up with other representations referring to it in specific ways. Only if representations are structured in accordance with a certain rule is cognition of the object possible. Hence the necessary *form* or structure supplied by the understanding to a manifold of representations is given with the concept of the transcendental object.<sup>15</sup> Insofar as the transcendental object specifies the *relation* of parts of the manifold of appearance to one another, it is not itself intuited; it is only given through the function of the understanding that relates the parts of the manifold to one another and *refers* such representations *to* the transcendental object.<sup>16</sup> The pure concept of the transcendental object functions in two ways: a) it is that to which representations are referred and b) it supplies the rule specifying the way that representations must be related to one another if judgment about an object is to be possible.

Rules specifying the way that representations are to be related to one another stem from a common function of the mind, namely the necessary unity of consciousness. This is what Kant means when he tells us that “the unity of consciousness is that which alone constitutes the relation of representations to an object, thus their objective validity” (B 137). The rules generated by this common and original function of the mind are the rules for the synthesis of the manifold that must be presupposed if judgment is to be possible at all.<sup>17</sup> That these operations of synthesis are a necessary condition for the unification of representations under one consciousness is, according to Kant, an analytic proposition. If an intuition is to be an object for me, it must stand under rules of synthesis: “The synthetic unity of consciousness . . . is rather something under which every intuition must stand in order to become an object for me, since in any other way, and without this synthesis,



the object would not be united in one consciousness" (B 138).

Given that the whole TD is about the nature of a *discursive*, and not an intuitive intellect, it goes without saying that the representations thus related are *given* to understanding in intuition. Nevertheless, the synthesis Kant has in mind at §17 is a purely logical one; it specifies the relation between representations (and thereby generates the logical object). Here the original synthesis is being considered in abstraction from the *forms* of intuition through which intuitions are given.<sup>18</sup> Hence the original synthetic unity of apperception producing the logical object characterizes *all* discursive intellects, including discursive intellects whose forms of intuition are different from our own. This is what Kant means when he says that the "synthetic unity of consciousness is therefore an objective condition of all cognition, not merely something I myself need in order to cognize an object" (B 138). The synthetic unity of consciousness pertains analytically to all *discursive* intellects, that is, contained in the concept of a discursive intellect is the principle that I can only become conscious that a representation is mine if that representation is subject to certain logical rules. As Kant notes at the end of §17, this principle does not hold for all possible understandings:

But only for one through whose pure apperception in the representation I am nothing manifold is given at all. That understanding through whose self-consciousness the manifold of intuition would at the same time be given, an understanding through whose representations the objects of this representation would at the same time exist, would not require a special act of the synthesis of the manifold for the unity of consciousness, which the human understanding, which merely thinks, but does not intuit, does require (B 139).

The analytic principle that unity among representations can only be achieved through their synthesis holds *only* for a discursive intellect that does not *produce* its own manifold, but operates on one given to it from a source outside itself. Given that the I think has no manifold of its own, consciousness of the identical self can be achieved only through the unity of representations that I can all together call my representations.

## 2. EMPIRICAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE SUBJECTIVE UNITY OF APPERCEPTION

In §18 Kant takes up the problem of what he calls the subjective unity. This is the unity assumed by Hume in his association of ideas: according to Hume, we make judgments, such as the judgment "x causes y" because we have found x and y to be constantly conjoined in our consciousness. This constant conjunction leads us to associate the representation x with the representation y, and to expect the occurrence of y once x is given. The notion of constant conjunction presupposes, however, that we have direct access to the order of representations as they appear in consciousness, and that it is *this* order that can ground the kinds of associations between representations necessary for judgments. Three main points are made here, all important for the way that Kant contrasts the empirical self with the identity of apperception. First, the

subjective unity of apperception, namely, the *order* of representations as they are given to consciousness and associated with one another will not guarantee the unity of representations necessary to determine the *I think*. Second, and closely related to the first point: since the *I think* is a precondition for the subordination of concepts that occurs in any act of judgment, judgment is impossible through a subjective unity alone. Third, in any case, determination of the order of representations as they are given to consciousness in the subjective unity *presupposes* the objective unity of consciousness.

Kant defines the subjective unity of consciousness as a “determination of inner sense, through which that manifold of intuition is empirically given for such a combination” (B 139). The *order* in which I initially apprehend representations contains no necessity. It can be conditioned by many factors. For instance, I may associate one representation with another due to unconscious forces, hence my having one representation may lead me to have another. Or the particular order in which I apprehend parts of a manifold may be affected by how attentive or inattentive I am to my surroundings at a particular moment. Hence this order of apprehension is only given empirically, that is, it is not determinable *a priori* but only after the representations have in fact appeared in inner sense. Since this empirical unity is not governed by a priori rules, there is no necessity to it: “One person combines the representation of a certain word with one thing, another with something else; and the unity of consciousness in that which is empirical is not, with regard to that which is given, necessarily and universally valid” (B140). However, not only are there differences to how distinct individuals will associate representations, (hence how those representations will appear in inner sense), but there are differences in how a single individual associates representations across different swaths of time. Hence at one moment I may associate blue with the summer sky, and at another time I may associate it with jazz. Mere association, therefore, does not prescribe a given order to representations, and hence does not provide me with a way of accessing any given representation on the condition that another has been given. Without such a given order, I am not in a position to grasp a representation as mine, and hence to arrive at a unity of experience. But without such a unity of experience, determination of the identity of the *I think* is impossible. This means, further, that if all we had were a mere subjective unity, judgment would be impossible.

However, as Kant is quick to point out, we are never conscious of only a subjective unity, for such consciousness of subjective unity *presupposes* and is grounded in an objective unity. Kant notes that the “empirical unity of apperception . . . is also derived only from the former [the pure synthesis of the understanding], which is “alone objectively valid;” hence the pure synthesis of the understanding “grounds *a priori* the empirical synthesis (B140).” He argues for the claim very briefly, noting that in order for me to apprehend an intuition, it must be given through some form of intuition (in our case, time). However, as a form of intuition, time can only stand under the original unity of consciousness through its relation to the one *I think*,

and hence through the pure synthesis of the understanding. Time itself must therefore stand under an a priori synthesis, and only *given* this transcendental synthesis is an empirical synthesis even possible at all. This is by far the most important point in §18, and it corresponds, in part, to the points Kant makes in his A-deduction analysis of the threefold synthesis. Given that in the first part of the B-deduction Kant attempts to abstract from the conditions of *our* sensibility, this discussion in A already anticipates some of the conclusions that would only be fully established in the latter part of the B-deduction. Nevertheless, Kant's point in §18 cannot be fully grasped without understanding where the argument leads, and this is illuminated by the discussion of the threefold synthesis in A.

There Kant also argued, albeit in much more detail, that the empirical synthesis of reproduction through which we apprehend and associate empirically given elements of the manifold *presupposes* a pure synthesis of the manifold (in the case of our own cognition a synthesis of time as the form of our intuition). In an often misunderstood passages of the A-deduction, Kant notes that

If cinnabar were now red, now black, now light, now heavy, if a human being were now changed into this animal shape, now into that one, if on the longest day the land were covered with fruits, now with ice and snow, then my empirical imagination would never even get to think of heavy cinnabar on the occasion of the representation of the color red; or if a certain word were attributed now to this thing, now to that, or if one and the same thing were sometimes called this, sometimes that, without the governance of a certain rule to which the appearances are already subjected in themselves, then no empirical synthesis of reproduction could take place (A 101).

The discussion that follows is an examination of the conditions *necessary* for me to be able to reproduce representations; nowhere does Kant claim his discussion of the threefold synthesis examines the conditions *sufficient* for the reproducibility of empirical representations. The upshot of this discussion is that were the mind to be unaware of the identity of its act in thinking different representations, it could not identify a representation *as the same one that it thought a moment before*. In such a case the utmost confusion would result, and my concept of cinnabar *would* at one moment be associated with red, then with black, and so forth, for I would have no way of recalling what it was I had thought a moment before. This is because I would have no determination of an "*I think*" to which I could even link past representations. As I will make clear, Kant's point here is that a figurative synthesis is a necessary condition for the ability to identify what I think now with what I thought a moment before.

While the problem Kant draws attention to regarding the reproducibility of representations occurs in his discussion of part two of the threefold synthesis, the three kinds of synthesis are really distinct moments of the act of recognition in a concept. In order to apprehend I must reproduce, and in order for the act of reproduction to have any point I must be able to rec-

ognize what I reproduced in a concept. Only if such a threefold synthesis is presupposed can there be any way for me to identify that the representation I have now is the same one that I had a moment before, and only if I can re-identify representations will it be possible for me to successfully become conscious of their association.

Key to Kant's whole discussion is the way that elements of a manifold are apprehended: a manifold would "not be represented as such if the mind did not distinguish the time in the succession of impressions on one another; for as contained in one *moment* no representation can ever be anything than absolute unity" (A99). The manifold, as manifold, contains many elements that must be run through and held together. How can this happen? Only if in running them through I can also *reproduce* them, for without such reproduction of what has been apprehended before, I could never hold all the elements together. But what is it that *makes possible* the empirical reproduction of representations? This is the key question. Empirical reproduction presupposes "a combination of the manifold that makes possible a thoroughgoing synthesis of reproduction." This is a *pure* transcendental synthesis of the imagination, and what is combined in this pure synthesis is *time* as the formal condition of inner sense, which is that in which all representations "must all be ordered, connected, and brought into relations" (A99). Now the only way a representation could be *reproduced* a priori is if I knew ahead of time what it is that must be reproduced, and I can only do that if what is being reproduced is always the same. Given that the parts of space and time are homogenous, their units can be reproduced ahead of time through their production by the imagination. Hence their reproduction is really a *productive* synthesis of the imagination: the imagination can both produce the form of what has been given before and anticipate the form of what is yet to be given through the mere addition of the homogeneous units, namely space and time. This is a figurative synthesis, and this is why the example that Kant brings up at A102 has to do with precisely such a synthesis:

Now it is obvious that if I draw a line in thought, or think of the time from one noon to the next, or even want to represent a certain number to myself, I must necessarily first grasp one of these manifold representations after another in my thoughts. But if I were always to lose the preceding representations (the first part of the line, the preceding parts of time, or the successively represented units) from my thoughts and not reproduce them when I proceed to the following ones, then no whole representation and none of the previously mentioned thoughts, not even the purest and most fundamental representations of space and time, could ever arise. The synthesis of apprehension is therefore inseparably connected with the synthesis of reproduction (A102).

Kant's point is that this production of the units of space and time by the imagination (which is an apriori act of the understanding upon the form of intuition) is a necessary condition for me to have a whole representation of a given manifold, without which any kind of cognition would be impossible at all. In order to have such a whole representation, I must be able to retain a preced-

ing representation in mind and reproduce it when necessary: if I cannot do that, no synthesis, and therefore no complete representation, is possible at all. Indeed, all I would have is a consciousness of the representation that is immediately before my mind, and that is all (Hume's "red here now"). Now it is true that the figurative synthesis alone is not *sufficient* to determine the *content* of what is empirically given, and hence, what specific representation is to be reproduced (for that, something must be presented to the senses), but it is a *necessary* condition for such reproduction, since it anticipates the form *in which* empirical content must be given. It is Kant's insight that if the understanding can anticipate the *form* in which intuitions are to be given and work on that, it has a way of determining, a priori, the *relations* of the empirically given representations that must be given *through* such forms.

It is no accident that all of Kant's examples in his discussion of the threefold synthesis in the A-deduction are mathematical and geometrical ones. For such examples underscore the action of the understanding on the pure forms of intuition, space and time. Only through such action do I have an a priori combination of the manifold. And only through the generation of the figurative synthesis, through my addition of one homogenous unit to another, can I become conscious of the identity of the act through which the manifold is synthetically combined a priori. (The figure in space allows me to apprehend in one and the same act what I constructed successively.) Now, consciousness of the *identity* of distinct acts of apprehension just is the function of the concept. Only through such a consciousness (of the identity of the act) can I become self-consciously aware of *myself* as having representations. Such awareness of *myself* as having representations is necessary if I am also to be conscious of how intuitions are given to me empirically for combination. This is the upshot of Kant's point at §18 that both consciousness of how we apprehend representations, as well as consciousness of our associations, *presupposes* an objective unity, for only through such an objective unity can we reproduce and recognize representations in a concept.

This means that for beings such as ourselves, a figurative synthesis is a necessary condition for our arriving at an awareness of both ourselves *and* of an object that is distinct from us. For other possible beings with a discursive understanding but not our forms of intuition, some such a priori synthesis of *their* forms of intuition would be necessary as well, for only through what it produces a priori can the understanding grasp the identity of its action. Kant attempts to underscore this point at §18, abstracting from our forms of intuition.

In bringing in the A-deduction discussion of why the subjective unity presupposes the objective unity, I have anticipated many arguments that would only be fleshed out in the second part of the B-deduction, in particular those having to do with the action of the understanding on the forms of intuition. These arguments are however, already introduced in §18, where Kant not only mentions the dependence of the subjective unity on the objective unity, but also notes that the form of intuition in time stands under the original unity of consciousness.

### 3. JUDGMENT

In paragraph 19 the distinction between the subjective and the objective unity is completed. Two important points are made here. First, the copula “is” in a judgment is that which distinguishes the objective unity from the subjective unity (B 142). It indicates that a representation is not a determination of the mind, but of an *object*.<sup>19</sup> In the judgment the representation is referred to an object distinct from both the mind and the representation itself; the representation can agree or fail to agree with the object, and the intended object of judgment always contains more than any *possible* representation of it. Hence in a judgment I distinguish the order of representations as they occur in my mind (when I pick up the stone I feel that it is heavy) from the connection of attributes as they are given in the object (the stone is heavy).

Second, through judgment given cognitions are brought to the “objective unity of apperception” (B 141). This means that in the final analysis the object of judgment is structured through the transcendental object discussed earlier in our analysis of the passage at A. Cognitions are brought to an objective unity in the concept of the object about which I make judgments. Any object about which I make judgments must have the structure of a transcendental object, for it must be possible in principle for me to relate that object to the whole of possible experience. This means the intentional object *about* which I judge is an infinite object, relatable in principle to the whole of possible experience. Any intentional object about which I make judgments can therefore serve as a focal point, so to speak, *to* which I must be able to relate all other possible experiences through judgments. Only insofar as the object embodies this transcendental structure, such that all possible experiences can be referred to it, does the whole of apperception acquire objective unity. It is in virtue of the object of judgment that all representations can belong to a single apperception, that is, these representations can belong together in virtue of the structure indicated by the transcendental object determining the synthesis of representations.

What does this analysis tell us about the possibility of self-consciousness? Given that the cognitions of possible experience belong together objectively in virtue of the structure of the object about which I make judgments, it is this necessary structure of the object (the transcendental object) that allows me to call them all mine. For given that I am only conscious of a limited number of representations at a given time, I can only reproduce and recognize representations as parts of my possible experience (and hook them up with the representation that I currently have before my mind) insofar as they conform to the structuring of representations that I anticipate insofar as I refer them to the transcendental structure of the object about which I am making judgments. As Baum notes, this means that any representation given a posteriori can only be related to an object of representation insofar as representations have *already* been connected in the original synthetic unity of apperception, also called the *objective* unity of self-consciousness.<sup>20</sup>

Judgment presupposes a transcendental object, an object distinct from my representations, *to* which my representations are referred. Reference to such an object presupposes the objective ordering of representations, and in judgment I make explicit that a representation has been brought to the objective unity. As such, “the categories are nothing other than these very functions for judging, insofar as the manifold of a given intuition is determined with regard to them” (B143). In other words, judgment presupposes the categories, which determine the object in such a way that judgments of quantity, quality, relation, and modality can have objective validity. The categories make an objective order of representations possible, and are thus transcendently necessary.

As is well known however, Kant's transcendental B-deduction does not, as one might expect, end here. In §21 he emphasizes that all that he has achieved thus far is a specification of the action of the pure understanding “whose entire capacity consists in thinking,” that is, in synthesizing and unifying material given to it from elsewhere. Once again Kant brings to the fore issues peculiar to a pure discursive understanding whose only function is an active synthesis, and which does not itself produce the matter of its synthesis. Hence the understanding “cognizes nothing at all by itself, but only combines and orders the material for cognition, the intuition, which must be given through the object” (B145). In other words, without the matter of intuition, nothing determinate is known. Kant distinguishes between the *thinking* of an object and the *cognition* of an object (B146). In the mere *thought* of an object, all that is given is its mere logical form, e.g., the logical forms for judging that must be presupposed if an object is to be cognized at all. Here the material that is to be organized through these logical principles has been completely abstracted. Kant notes that “if an intuition corresponding to the concept could not be given at all, then it would be a thought as far as its form is concerned, but without any object, and by its means no cognition of anything would be possible, since, as far as I would know, nothing would be given or could be given to which my thought could be applied” (B146). The problem introduced in §22 is whether, and how, an intuition corresponding to the concept can be given. How is it possible that a material given to a faculty distinct from the understanding, namely sensibility, is at all amenable to the understanding's activity of synthesis? Unless it can be shown how intuitions corresponding to concepts can be given, the activity of the understanding would be pointless, yielding no knowledge whatsoever. Kant stresses that “our sensible and empirical intuition alone can provide them [the categories] with sense and significance” (B149).

Corresponding to the problem that the categories are mere forms of thought and provide no cognition on their own is the problem that the activity of the understanding *alone* is not sufficient to determine the I think (as that which must be able to accompany all my representations), which is a necessary condition of the possibility of judgment. According to my reading, one problem driving both parts of the transcendental deduction (the first part concluding in §20, and the second part concluding in §25) is how

an a priori determination of the I think is possible. As such, while at the end of §20 Kant concludes that the categories are “nothing other than these very functions for judging,” this does not conclude the deduction, since two key issues remain outstanding. The second half of the deduction will answer both a) how it is that intuitions corresponding to the categories can be given and b) how the manner of the givenness of these intuitions guarantees that an a priori determination of the I think is possible, a precondition for both the formation of concepts and for judgment.

What then, is involved in the determination of pure intuition, and how might the way that it is determined allow us to solve the problem of how an intuition corresponding to the concept can be given? Key to an answer to this question is the figurative synthesis, that is, the transcendental synthesis of the imagination. Imagination, Kant tells us, “is the faculty for representing an object even without its presence in intuition” (B151). Now, on the one hand, imagination belongs to sensibility insofar as the original material of the imagination are the forms of intuition (and in us intuition is always sensible), namely space and time. On the other hand, imagination is allied with understanding because through the action of the understanding on space and time, [“an effect of the understanding on sensibility and its first application” (B152)], the imagination is spontaneous, namely *productive*, in that through its capacity for representing an object without its presence, it *projects* the infinite homogenous space and time in which all empirical intuitions will be given. In a very significant passage Kant notes that

We cannot think of a line without drawing it in thought, we cannot think of a circle without describing it, we cannot represent the three dimensions of space at all without placing three lines perpendicular to each other at the same point, and we cannot even represent time without, in drawing a straight line (which is to be the external figurative representation of time), attending merely to the action of the synthesis of the manifold through which we successively determine the inner sense, and thereby attending to the succession of this determination in inner sense. Motion, as action of the subject (not as determination of an object), consequently the synthesis of the manifold in space, if we abstract from this manifold in space and attend solely to the action in accordance with which we determine the form of inner sense, first produces the concept of succession at all. The understanding therefore does not find some sort of combination of the manifold already in inner sense, but produces it, by affecting inner sense (B154-5).

Here we find the answer to the question posed above: how is it possible that empirical intuition is amenable to the synthesis of the understanding? In answering this question Kant notes that the manifold is not combinable because combination is already found in it, it is, rather, combinable because in producing the homogeneous bits of space and time *in* which all empirical intuitions must be given, the imagination has *already* produced a combination of the manifold by affecting both inner and outer sense. Inner and outer sense, considered by themselves, contain the mere form of intuition, but without combination of the manifold in it.<sup>21</sup> This combination occurs through the action of the understanding on the homogeneous units of



space and time, for example, in the case of inner sense, “the action of the synthesis of the manifold through which we successively determine inner sense,” and in the case of outer sense, the drawing of the line. As Kant notes, it is through the very activity or motion of the subject that the concept of succession is produced at all, and it is in and through the running through, reproducing, and recognizing of the succeeding parts of the line/the succeeding parts of time that these are combined (through the action of the subject) and are therefore relatable to one another. Importantly, as Kant notes at B160, the action of the understanding in determining both inner and outer sense give us the formal intuitions of space and time, *in* which the unity of representation is given.

Now, it is because all empirical intuitions must be given through the forms of space and time, which themselves have already undergone an *a priori* synthesis, that such intuitions can (and indeed must) correspond to the categories. Whatever material is given through the forms of space and time (and all empirical intuitions must be) will stand under this same synthesis to which space and time have already been subjected. Hence at §26 Kant notes that

But space and time are represented *a priori* not as mere forms of sensible intuition, but also as intuitions themselves (which contain a manifold) and thus with the determination of the unity of this manifold in them. . . . Thus even unity of the synthesis of the manifold, outside or within us, hence also a combination with which everything is to be determined in space and time must agree, is already given *a priori*, along with (not in) these intuitions, as a condition of the synthesis of all apprehension (B160/161).

In other words, only given the prior unity of the forms of intuition (given through the action of the understanding on the forms of intuition) is empirical apprehension even possible at all. As noted earlier, apprehension (where the manifold is run through and held together) presupposes the reproduction and unification of the reproduced with that which was grasped a moment before. Without the capacity to reproduce and unify *a priori*, just as I would always be dropping out the preceding parts of a line, so also I would be dropping out the preceding parts of space and time in which empirical intuitions are given, and as such, I could never apprehend at all.

Corresponding to the problem that all that has been accomplished up until §20 is the determination of the necessary synthesis of the understanding “whose entire capacity consists in thinking” and which “cognizes nothing at all” by itself, is the fact that the first part of the deduction still has not shown us how determination of the “I think” is possible. As Kant notes at §24, the synthesis of the understanding “considered in itself alone, is nothing other than the unity of the action of which it is conscious as such even without sensibility” (B153). The character of this consciousness is discussed at §25, where Kant notes that

In the transcendental synthesis of the manifold of representations in general, on the contrary, hence in the synthetic original unity of apperception, I am conscious of myself not as I appear to myself, nor as I am in myself, but

only that I am. This representation is a thinking, not an intuiting (B157).

Now, the consciousness *that I am* is a function of the *activity* of the understanding alone, namely of the synthetic original unity of apperception in abstraction from its action on our determinate forms of sensibility. Through it the self is *immediately* aware of its activity, and as such of its existence, but through it alone it cannot become *conscious of itself* or make itself its own object, that is, achieve a reflected self consciousness. Without a determinate sort of intuition, no determinate cognition, and as such, no determinate cognition of the self as the “I think” that endures through time (and hence as the self that is *determined as the same I throughout all changes in its representational states*) is even possible at all. In other words, without such a capacity for an a priori reflected consciousness of self, it would be impossible for me to re-identify the I that thinks a given representation now with the I that thought the same representation a moment before. But without this capacity for the I to accompany all my representations (and hence a capacity for a priori self-consciousness) all thinking and judgment would be impossible, for I would not be able to distinguish myself from my representations, let alone attribute a determination to an object distinct from me.

How then, is such a determinate cognition of the self possible *a priori*? Key to the answer to this question is the passage quoted above from B154, where Kant notes that “We cannot think of a line without drawing it in thought . . . and we cannot even represent time without, in drawing a straight line (which is to be the external figurative representation of time), attending merely to the action of the synthesis of the manifold through which we successively determine inner sense, and thereby attending to this succession in inner sense.” The capacity to think the I as identical *throughout* the changes in its representational states is necessary for self-consciousness. Now, in order to think this identity of the I, the synthetic unity produced by the pure understanding alone is necessary but not sufficient. It is this synthetic unity that has been arrived at in §20. The pure understanding produces rules determining the necessary relations of representations to one another (valid for any understanding whatsoever), thereby yielding a unity of objective experience. But while this may guarantee a unity of experience, this is not a cognition of an x that remains identical throughout the changes in its representational states. In order for the self to represent itself as that which remains the same throughout the action of its synthesis of the manifold, it must be possible for it to represent itself as *producing the synthesis* while at the same time being conscious of the *successive syntheses produced thus far as the result of its own action*. It can grasp itself as that which remains identical throughout its syntheses in its representation of its own activity of drawing the line: here the identity of consciousness is represented by the arrow that remains the same as it traverses distinct points on the line:

As Kant notes at the very important passage at B 292:

Now how it is possible that from a given state an opposed state of the same thing should follow not only cannot be made comprehensible by reason without an example, but cannot even be made understandable without intuition, and this intuition is the motion of a point in space, the existence of which in different places (as a sequence of opposed determinations) first makes alteration intuitable to us; for in order subsequently to make even inner alterations thinkable, we must be able to grasp time, as the form of inner sense, figuratively through a line, and grasp the inner alteration through the drawing of this line (motion), and *thus grasp the successive existence of oneself in different states through outer intuition*; the real ground of which is that all alteration presupposes some thing that persists in intuition, even in order merely to be perceived as alteration, but there is no persistent intuition to be found in inner sense (italics mine).

For this a priori cognition of the self, both space and time are necessary, for only through the action of the understanding on the a priori forms of intuition is the self able to represent itself and the results of its activity to itself. As Kant clearly recognizes, this means that for the self to be able to represent to itself the successive syntheses produced thus far as the result of its own action, inner sense is not sufficient:

. . . time, although it is not itself an object of outer intuition at all, cannot be made representable to us except under the image of a line, insofar as we draw it, without which sort of presentation we could not know the unity of its measure at all, or likewise from the fact that we must always derive the determination of the length of time or also of the positions in time for all inner perceptions from that which presents external things as alterable; hence we must order the determinations of inner sense as appearances in time in just the same way as we order those of outer sense in space . . . (B 156).

In other words, I can only represent the *unity* of the successive acts of syntheses insofar as I can apprehend and recognize them all together *simultaneously* in one manifold, but in order for this simultaneous representation to be possible, I must represent them altogether in *space* as the points of a line. The I that remains identical throughout both its distinct acts of syntheses and the changes in its representational states is represented as the forward arrow of the line (representing the motion of the point) that remains continually in motion. Moreover, through the representation of its activity of drawing the line, the self *projects* itself into the future.

This a priori determination of the I think, possible through the figurative synthesis (namely the a priori action of the pure understanding in generating the line), must be distinguished from both the *empirical self* and the *self of original apperception*. The empirical self is given only through experience; as noted at the beginning of this paper, it is dispersed and continually changing. It will not supply the unity and identity required for us to be able to represent the *I think* to ourselves. On the other hand, as Kant notes, while I can become *immediately* aware of the I of original apperception, this I of original apperception cannot be an *object* of my awareness. Just as the eye cannot see its own seeing, the I cannot apperceive its own action of apper-

ception. This is what Kant means when he notes that “The subject of the categories cannot by thinking the categories [i.e., applying them to objects] acquire a concept of itself as an object of the categories. For in order to think them, its pure self-consciousness, which is what was to be explained, must be pre-supposed” (B422). The subject, however, can apperceive the unity of its past acts of synthesis and apperception, and given the pure temporal synthesis, it can project its action into the future. But in order to cognize this unity, it must set past and possible future synthesis in relation to one another; this is an action that the understanding performs on all of its possible syntheses. In fact, it is through the action of synthesizing (unifying) its possible syntheses that the understanding generates its temporal horizon.<sup>22</sup> In such a way the subject is enabled to grasp its past and project itself into the future. As such, the self that can become its own object a priori is the product of self-affection, and it must be strictly distinguished from the I of original apperception. This is what Kant means when he notes that “This presents even ourselves to consciousness only as we appear to ourselves, not as we are in ourselves, since we intuit ourselves only as we are internally affected, which seems to be contradictory” (B153). Such an intuition of ourselves is the product of self affection since the understanding must unify (and therefore act) upon its representations of all its possible acts of the understanding.

How does this account of the a priori reflected consciousness of self bear on the question of personal identity? Contra Keller’s analysis, it is important to note that this a priori reflected self-consciousness cannot be an impersonal one. It is true, of course, that the I of original apperception has no manifold of its own. What is reflected in a priori reflected self consciousness is simply all possible acts of the understanding taken as a unity. In an oft cited passage dealing with the transcendental subject of thought Kant notes that

Through this I or he or it (the thing) which thinks, nothing further is represented than a transcendental subject of the thought = x. It is known only through the thoughts that are its predicates, and of it, apart from them, we cannot have any concept whatsoever, but can only revolve in an perceptual circle, since any judgment upon it has always already made use of its representation (B346-B404).

Kant further notes that in designating the subject transcendentially, we note in it no “quality whatsoever” and that we don’t know anything of it “either by direct awareness or reasoning” (A355).

Does this then mean that this subject is an impersonal one? By no means. In original apperception I am not only immediately aware of an act of apperception by doing it, I am also immediately aware that it is mine.<sup>23</sup> Andrew Brook correctly notes that this immediate awareness of the self is *nonascriptive*, and that more importantly, my ability to attribute any characteristic to myself *presupposes* it. Without this immediate awareness, it is would impossible to know that a particular description applies to *me*. As Shoemaker put it: “No matter how detailed a token-reflexive free description of a person is . . . it cannot possibly entail I am that person.”<sup>24</sup> Such knowledge, that *I* am the subject that feels, perceives, or judges, is given to me immedi-

ately, and only on the basis of this first person identification of myself are descriptions attributable to myself. This is the “perceptual circle” mentioned by Kant: “any judgment upon it [the self] has always already made use of its representation” (B346-B404).

Now the a priori reflexive self-consciousness which must be presupposed for an act of judgment to be possible results from the bringing together in a unity distinct acts of self awareness and the capacity to take them (so unified) as the *intentional object* of my awareness. Only if I do that can I have “before [my] eyes” the “unity of its [the mind’s] action” that Kant mentions at A108. Since, however, what I unify here are *my* acts of synthesis, the unity of the temporal horizon of self-consciousness is always unmistakably *mine*. It is therefore *not* an impersonal self-consciousness. What is given first is *my* subjectivity, and I only can arrive at the concept of a subject in general through abstraction. Were we to begin with an *impersonal* self-consciousness, and *then* tried to individuate it through detailed description, through such description I would never be able to arrive at the knowledge that it is mine.

It is important not to confuse this a priori self-consciousness with empirical self-consciousness. For it is not only actual past acts of synthesis that are unified in this temporal horizon of self-consciousness, but the possibility of future ones as well. In regard to past acts of synthesis, what is important is *not* their content, but the action of synthesis itself. Because it is *my acts of synthesis* itself that are at issue, even future acts of synthesis that have not yet occurred (and of which I cannot possibly know their contents) are already included in the single temporal manifold that I project forward into the future. Important here is that even the very possibility of empirical knowledge of the self as it is given to itself in inner sense presupposes this a priori reflected self-consciousness that I recognize as mine. Without it I would not be able to think of my past mental states as mine, or to grasp what it means for me to be the subject that engages in future actions. Not only is judgment impossible without it, but the whole discipline of ethics, concerned with what I should do both now and in the future, would not even be able to get off the ground.

#### 4. LOCATING THE I OF THE TRANSCENDENTAL DEDUCTION

It must be possible for us to become self-consciously aware of the I think. This self-conscious awareness of the I think—as that which remains the same throughout changes in the subject’s representational states—is distinct from the *synthetic original unity of apperception*. As Kant notes, “in the synthetic original unity of apperception I am conscious of myself not as I appear to myself, nor as I am in myself, but only *that* I am. This representation is a *thinking*, not an intuiting” (B 157). In the synthetic original unity of apperception I am *directly* aware of myself as thinking. Here the self is not yet an *object for itself*. However, as I have argued above, the capacity of the self to make itself its own object is a condition of the possibility of all objective judgments, for I must be able to distinguish myself from objects if it is to be possible for me to

attribute determinations to them. This capacity for self-awareness—an awareness of the identity of the I think throughout changes in representational states—is therefore a transcendental requirement of all cognition. As Kant notes in his discussion of the paralogsms: “For inner experience in general and its possibility, or perception in general and its relation to another perception, without any particular distinction or empirical determination being given in it, cannot be regarded as empirical cognition, but must be regarded as cognition of the empirical in general, and belongs to the investigation of the possibility of every experience, which is of course transcendental” (B401/A343). However, that such a possibility of self-consciousness is transcendental and therefore determinable *a priori* does not imply anything about the nature of the noumenal or metaphysical self.

In the sections on the paralogsms, Kant argues that we cannot make *any* inferences from the transcendental requirement of the unity of self-consciousness to the *independent* substantiality, simplicity, and unity of the metaphysical subject. In fact, this transcendental requirement implies nothing concerning the nature of the noumenal self.<sup>25</sup> While an in depth discussion of the intricacies of Kant’s paralogsms is beyond the scope of this paper, I want to briefly discuss two common invalid inferences ruled out by the paralogsms. The first is the inference that because the I must be distinguished from objects of experience, the self can be thought of as an independently existing substance. As Kant notes:

“[[That] I distinguish my own existence, that of a thinking being, from other things outside me (to which my body also belongs)—this is equally an analytic proposition; for other things are those that I think of as distinguished from me. But I do not thereby know at all whether this consciousness of myself would even be possible without things outside me through which representations are given to me, and thus whether I could exist merely as a thinking being (without being a human being)” (B409).

As my previous discussion has shown, transcendental self-consciousness depends upon the attribution of past and future acts of synthesis to the same I that immediately apprehends itself as the source of the present activity of thinking. However, we do not know whether a discursive intellect such as ours can exist *independently* of the stuff of syntheses given to us from through the senses. As such, we cannot infer that the I is an independently existing substance.

The second invalid inference is really the inverse of the first. It is the claim put forward by Fichte that the subject is nothing *but* its activity of synthesis in the apprehension of objects. According to Fichte, the I posits itself absolutely *through* its activity of synthesis. As such, he makes an ontological claim concerning the nature of the subject on the basis of his reading of the TD opposite to the one discussed above. Instead of claiming that the subject is a *substance*, he claims that the self posits itself *through* its activity of synthesis, and cannot posit itself except through this activity.

My own reading of the TD is not a Fichtean one. Fichtean interpretations of apperception are committed to what Karl Ameriks has dubbed the

Strong Apperception Thesis.<sup>26</sup> Ameriks first rightly points out that there is a difference between the following two statements:

(E) I think x, I think y, I think z.....

(T) I think that (I think that x, I think that y, I think that z....)

If one ascribes the Strong Apperception Thesis to Kant, then one takes him as affirming that “for any of our thoughts contained in sets such as (E), there are corresponding thoughts such as (T)”<sup>27</sup> In other words, on SAT, it is impossible for an individual to have a representation without her also being conscious *that* she is having such a representation, that is, on SAT “all one’s empirical apperception requires transcendental apperception.”<sup>28</sup> The thesis denies the possibility that there can be representations that are “nothing for me.” Such representations might be, for instance, the stuff of dreams, or the fleeting thoughts making up the everyday detritus of consciousness to which one never attends again. Here there is no meaningful sense in which one can speak of a self having representations to which it does not have conscious access. My reading does not view Kant as committed to SAT: Kant is *not* saying that there can be no instances of empirical apperception without transcendental apperception. What he *is* saying is that if one has a representation without it being at all *possible* for the self to become aware that it has had such a representation, that representation can neither be a) brought to the unity of experience nor b) ascribed to the self (as a representation the self has) in such a way that it can signify something to the self from the first person point of view. In other words, such a thought cannot *function as* a representation, that is, it cannot re-present what occurs to the mind, since what occurs to the mind cannot even be fixed so as to be re-identifiable.

What rides on SAT? SAT is implied by the strong Fichtean thesis that there is no such thing as a self existing *independently* of the consciousness of its activity of synthesis. For Fichte, “the I posits itself absolutely,” and “The self exists only insofar as it is conscious of itself.”<sup>29</sup> If the self *only* exists insofar as it is active and conscious of itself, we cannot coherently speak of a self existing independently of the consciousness of its own activity, and of *its* having representational states inaccessible to self-reflection. Hence the Fichtean thesis clearly implies SAT. The Fichtean thesis is an *ontological* claim about the self moving far beyond the modest epistemological claims worked out in the TD concerning the identity of the subject as a *necessary* condition for the possibility of judgment. It cannot be derived from the results of the TD itself. To think that it can is to confuse epistemic conditions with ontological ones. It is one thing to claim that only on the condition of it being possible for me to be conscious *that* I think x, will it be possible for me to bring x to the unity of experience. It is quite another to say that it is impossible for the self to have a representation without it also being conscious of it. The first claim is one concerning the conditions of the possibility of judgment; the latter is an ontological (and dogmatic) claim about the nature of the self. Kant does not make any such claims in the TD; in fact, he

can leave it an entirely open question whether such unconscious representations are possible.

In sum, the I that must be able to become conscious of itself if judgment is to be possible is the I that is aware of itself as active throughout time from the first person point of view. From a phenomenological, first person perspective, much rides on this discussion of inner experience and its possibility. It is, for instance, the fact that I can project inner experience (and activity) forward into the future that makes it possible and significant for me to form practical maxims having to do with my future behavior. Nevertheless, from this transcendental self consciousness no inferences are warranted as to the noumenal character of the self.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to Sally Sedgwick, Allen Wood, Rachel Zuckert, Cristina Lafont, Chris Yeomans, Kevin Thompson and Dilek Huseyinzadegan for helpful comments.

## NOTES

1. Dieter Henrich, "Identity and Objectivity," in *The Unity of Reason: Essays on Kant's Philosophy*, ed. R. L. Velkley (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994), pp. 123–210, especially section III of "Identity and Objectivity."

2. Dieter Henrich's important article "The Proof Structure of Kant's Transcendental Deduction" details a significant problem commentators have noted with the deduction, namely that the conclusion of §20: "Consequently, the manifold in a given intuition is necessarily subject to the categories" (B145) does not seem to differ significantly from the result of §26: "the categories . . . are valid . . . a priori for all objects of experience" (B161). Against older commentaries such as those by Paton, Adickes, Erdmann, and de Vleeshauer, who read the text as two distinct and complete proofs for the TD, I am in agreement with Henrich's proposal taking Kant at his word that §20 and §26 offer two arguments with differing results constituting a single proof of the TD. My own interpretation relates the results of §20 and §26 to an analysis of the conditions of the possibility of self-consciousness. Dieter Henrich, "The Proof Structure of Kant's Transcendental Deduction," in *Kant on Pure Reason*, ed. R. C. Walker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 66–81.

3. Henrich, for instance, does not discuss the significance of the second part of the B-edition TD for Kant's understanding of the identity of the subject in "Identity and Objectivity." Allison's discussion of the second part of the *Critique* does not provide an analysis of the role of the *synthesis speciosa* for the possibility of self-consciousness. On this point see Henry Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism: An Interpretation and Defense*, (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2004), p. 185 and following. And the account I offer here is radically different from that of Guyer, who argues that Kant makes an inference "from a *a priori* knowledge of identity of the self in its diverse representations to the existence of an *a priori* synthesis of all possible manifolds of representation," in his *Kant and the Claims of Knowledge* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 136. Contrary to Guyer's interpretation, we do not *begin* with the assumption that we have a priori knowledge of the identity of the self and from there argue to the existence of an a priori synthesis of all possible manifolds. Rather, the problem of the deduction is that *if* judgment is to be possible at all, then we must be able to form an a priori representation of the I think that can accompany all of my representations, that is, self-consciousness must be possible. How such a priori self consciousness is possible at all given that the I think has no manifold of its own is then one of the main problems the deduction is intended to solve.



4. Two somewhat recent interpretations missing the significance of this figurative synthesis for Kant's understanding of personal identity are those of Andrew Brook in *Kant and the Mind* (1994) and Pierre Keller's *Kant and the Demands of Self-Consciousness* (1998). Among other things, Brook provides an insightful analysis of what he calls apperceptive self-awareness (APA), the immediate awareness I have of myself in the very act of thinking itself; *Kant and the Mind* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 70–94. However, he misses altogether Kant's analysis of a priori self-consciousness, contrasting apperceptive self-awareness only with what he calls empirical self-awareness (EPA). While Pierre Keller grasps the significance of this a priori self-consciousness, he mistakenly takes it as a mere *impersonal* self-consciousness. Keller does not view Kant as in any way broaching the problem of personal identity in the deduction; he views the self-identity at issue in the deduction as the identity “of any subject in general.” Moreover, Keller claims that “it is on the basis of that general representation of self-identity that we are then able to represent our individual self-identity” in *Kant and the Demands of Self-Consciousness* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 72. Keller's mistake is that he ignores the all important role of the immediate awareness I have of myself as a thinking being, running it together with transcendental self-consciousness. Because he ignores it, he mistakenly views transcendental self-consciousness as impersonal. Contra Keller, I argue that since transcendental self-consciousness is the result of a-priori self-reflection through the figurative synthesis, it is as such intrinsically hooked up with the immediate awareness of myself *qua myself* that I have in all my acts of synthesis. As such, the transcendental self-consciousness that must be presupposed in judgment is one that I first and foremost must immediately grasp *as my own*. In other words, I do not *first* have an “impersonal” self-consciousness, and from there try to derive my own personal identity. Rather I am immediately conscious of myself in original apperception, and it is the action of original apperception on the forms of intuition (space and time) that *then* generates the a priori reflected self, the *I think* that I can grasp as the subject of all my representations. Grasp of such an a priori reflected self just is a grasp of the “identity of its [the self's] action” that Kant speaks of at A108. This a priori reflected self makes possible empirical self-awareness. In sum, both Brook and Keller fall short in different ways: Brook fails to see that Kant has an understanding of an a priori *reflected* consciousness of self, and Keller fails to grasp the role played by the *immediate* consciousness of myself and how this immediacy is then reflected in a priori self-consciousness.

5. For a concise discussion of different understandings of the I in Kant, see Karl Ameriks, *Kant and the Historical Turn* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 61ff, especially the chapter entitled “Kantian Apperception.” The understanding of the I developed in this paper falls under what Ameriks calls the epistemic subject, which is a condition of the possibility of all inner and outer experience. However, this subject, as I understand it, is not the pure logical I. Moreover, it must also be distinguished from the subject as generative with respect to the rules by which self-reflection is possible.

6. One of the most significant problems with Keller's analysis is that he does not distinguish original apperception from the “I think,” (the a priori reflected consciousness of self) but conflates the two. He claims that the “original character of self-consciousness” is an “impersonal consciousness of self” (Keller, *Kant and the Demands of Self-Consciousness*, p. 23). On my view, original apperception is that act *from* which all thinking originates, and given along with it is the immediate awareness that the acts of thinking that originate from it are *my* acts of thought. Were we not to have such an immediate awareness of our own acts of thought, that is, were we to have to *begin* from Keller's *impersonal self-consciousness*, it would be impossible to derive personal self-consciousness from it. For if I am not immediately aware that my current acts of thought are mine, and that, at the very least, my immediately past acts of thought are mine, there is no way for me to identify them as mine. For barring this immediate access, how am I to know that a given perspective *is* my perspective?

7. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. and ed. by Paul Guyer and Allen Wood (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997) p. 246 (B132). All references to Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* are to the standard A and B pagination of the first and second editions, respectively. These are indicated by A/B in the body of the article. All

other references to Kant are to the volume and page of *Kants gesammelte Schriften* (KGS), herausgegeben von der Deutschen (formerly Königlichen Preussischen) Akademie der Wissenschaften, 29 vols. (Berlin, 1902).

8. As both Allison and Longuenesse have correctly noted, Kant is not here denying that one cannot have mental states of which one cannot be conscious. However, in order for such states to function cognitively as *representations*, the self must be able to be conscious of them as *being representations*, which is to say it must represent itself as having them. See Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism*, pp. 163–164, and Beatrice Longuenesse, *Kant and the Capacity to Judge* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998) pp. 65–66.

9. On this point I stand in agreement with Longuenesse, who distinguishes between a sensible synthesis and a synthesis of concepts. The sensible synthesis is a necessary condition for the synthesis of concepts. Commenting on B135–136, she notes, “If it is hard to see how representations, on the one hand, *stand under* a ‘necessary a priori synthesis,’ and on the other hand also have to be *brought under* this synthesis, consider that synthesis is, on the one hand, synthesis of the manifold ‘as’ sensible manifold and, on the other hand, a discursive synthesis by which this manifold is reflected under concepts. The latter is possible only under the condition of the former, and conversely, the former is oriented toward achieving the latter” Longuenesse, *Kant and the Capacity to Judge*, p. 68.

10. Allison notes that the “identical *I think*, that is, ‘the bare representation I,” can be seen as the form or prototype of the analytic unity that pertains to all general concepts. In fact, it *just is* this analytic unity considered in abstraction from all content. Consequently, the *I think* is itself the thought of what is common to all conceptualization, which is what makes it ‘in all consciousness one and the same’ (B132).” Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism* (2004), p. 172. Allison is too quick to identify the *I think* with the analytic unity. While it is certainly the case that the analytic unity of the concept is made possible by the identity of the *I think*, the *I think* is not fully determinable by its function of making possible the analytic unity of a concept. Certainly the ability to range distinct concepts under a more general one *presupposes* the identity of the *I think*, but it does not, by itself allow us determine the identity of the *I think* throughout different acts of conceptualization. For this something more is required, and this is the subject matter of the second part of the TD.

11. In the famous chapter on personal identity in his *Treatise*, David Hume had already noted that we do not have “any idea of self.” He asks, “For from what impression could this idea be derived? . . . It must be some one impression that gives rise to every real idea. But self or person is not any one impression, but that to which our several impressions and ideas are supposed to have a reference. If any impression gives rise to the idea of self, that impression must continue invariably the same throughout the whole course of our lives, since self is supposed to exist after that manner. But there is no impression constant and invariable. Pain and pleasure, grief and joy, passions and sensations succeed each other and never all exist at the same time. It cannot, therefore, be from any of these impressions or from any other that the idea of self is derived, and consequently, there is no such idea. . . . For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call myself, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never can catch myself at any time without a perception and can never observe anything but the perception. . . .” Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), pp. 251–252. That Kant was well aware of Hume's theory of personal identity is shown by R. P. Wolff in “Kant's Debt to Hume via Beattie,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 21 (1960) 117–123.

12. Henrich, “Identity and Objectivity,” p. 181.

13. Patricia Kitcher, both in her article “Kant on Self-Identity,” *Philosophical Review* 91 (1982), pp. 41–72, and in her book *Kant's Transcendental Psychology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), correctly notes that Kant's transcendental deduction should be taken as a reply to Hume's problem concerning the unity and identity of the self. She is wrong, however, to identify the unity of the self that Kant argues for as a mere causal unity among states of the self (for Kitcher, there is unity among states of the self when prior mental states cause future ones). This way of understanding Kant reduces his understanding of the unity of the self to one that can be arrived at only from the third person point of view. Here the self is grasped as an object in the world subject to causal

laws. But this ignores Kant's point that in order to even *think* an object as subject to causal laws, there must be an a priori transcendental unity that makes synthesis possible in the first place.

14. Henrich puts forward a similar idea: "Something is the representational state, and thus likewise the representational content, of *one* subject only when it is known as that to which advancement can be made starting from *every* representational content. . . . Modes and rules must already be in place by virtue of which each representational content can be the content of a representational state in a way that permits a transition to be made from it to every other content while it maintains its own determinateness" Henrich, "Identity and Objectivity," p. 190.

15. In Reflexion 6350, Kant writes: "What is an object? That which is represented through a totality of several predicates which pertain to it. The plate is round, warm, tin, etc. 'Warm', 'round', 'tin', etc., are not objects, but the warmth, the tin, etc. are. An object is that in the representation of which other representations can be thought as synthetically connected. Every judgment has a subject and predicate. The subject of the judgment, insofar as it contains different possible predicates, is the object" (Ak. XVIII, 676; compare Longuenesse, *Kant and the Capacity to Judge*, p. 55, Henrich, "Identity and Objectivity," p. 152, Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism* (1983), pp. 146–147. Here a similar, although not identical thought to the passage at A109, is expressed. The idea of the object is that in which a synthesis of representations in accordance with a rule can be thought. As such, insofar as a representation stands for an object, it can function as the subject of a judgment, which can then stand under many possible predicates.

16. Longuenesse notes that the transcendental object "is *not itself a representation any more*" (*Kant and the Capacity to Judge*, p. 54). Such a characterization can be misleading, since it does not capture the essential function of the transcendental object. The transcendental object is not intuitible, because it is that in the concept of which representations can be united in such a way that judgment is possible. While the transcendental object is itself not intuitible, it is represented whenever a representation stands for an object directly. At least that is what is suggested by Reflexion 6350, cited above, where Kant notes that "the subject of the judgment, insofar as it contains different possible predicates, is the object." Here we have a representation that functions as the subject of a judgment through indicating the transcendental object.

17. Longuenesse has rightly stressed the importance of Kant's assertion that "the same function that gives unity to different representations in a judgment also gives unity to the mere synthesis of different representations in an intuition" (A79/B104–5). She shows, convincingly, to my mind, that Kant's table of logical forms "can only have emerged from Kant's painstaking reflections about the relation between the forms according to which we relate concepts to other concepts, and thus to objects . . . and forms according to which we may combine manifolds in intuition *so that* they may fall under concepts. . ." Beatrice Longuenesse, "Kant on *A Priori* Concepts: The Metaphysical Deduction of the Categories," in *The Cambridge Companion to Kant and Modern Philosophy*, ed. Paul Guyer (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006) p. 146.

18. This is what Kant means when he notes that the "first pure cognition of the understanding, therefore, on which the whole of the rest of its use is grounded, and that is at the same time also entirely independent from all conditions of sensible intuition, is the principle of the original synthetic unity of apperception" B137). On this point see Longuenesse, *Kant and the Capacity to Judge*, p. 69 and following, and Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism*, p. 173–185.

19. Baum makes the important point that it is through the understanding's function of bringing representations to an objective unity that the mind is capable of taking its representations *as* representations of the determinations of an object. As such, it is only through the objective unity that the mind is capable of distinguishing between its having a representation, and its attribution of such a representation to an object (in a judgment): "Die Vereinigung alles Manigfaltigen der unmittelbar gegebenen Vorstellungen erzeugt den bestimmten Begriff eines Objekts und macht zugleich die im Begriff vereinigten Vorstellungen als Bestimmungen des Objekts überhaupt auf dieses beziehbar. Der Form der Verbindung nach beruht also der bestimmte Begriff auf der Vereinigungstätigkeit des Verstandes, wodurch es allererst möglich wird, Vorstellungen, die doch Bestim-

mungen meines Gemüts sind, als Bestimmungen (Prädikate) von gegenüber meinen sinnlichen Vorstellungsvermögen unabhängigen Objecten zu denken.” Manfred Baum, *Deduktion und Beweis in Kants Transzendentalphilosophie: Untersuchungen zur Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Königstein, Germany: Hain Verlag bei Athenäum, 1986) p. 119.

20. Baum, *Deduktion und Beweis*, p. 124.

21. See R. 6354 where Kant claims “Der innere Sinn is noch nicht Erkenntnis meiner selbst, sondern zuerst müssen wir Erscheinungen durch ihn haben, nacher allererst durch Reflexion über dieselben uns einen Begriff von uns selbst machen, der alsdann empirisches Erkenntnis meiner selbst, d.i. innere Erfahrung, zur Folge hat” (AA XVII 680). As stressed by both Ameriks and Mohr, Kant makes a sharp distinction between inner sense and apperception: “A complete act of apperception is thus meant to contrast sharply with any mere stream of ‘sense data’. Such data . . . lack cognitive standing . . . and it is a ‘Myth of the Given’ (as Wilfrid Sellars stressed) to suppose they are already cognitions, already in the space of reason, justification, putative truth, or falsity.” Ameriks, *Kant and the Historical Turn*, p. 54; see also G. Mohr *Das sinnliche Ich* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1991).

22. So Kant, “I generate time itself in the apprehension of the intuition” (A143).

23. Brook correctly notes that “Even if I note no quality of myself, in ASA (Apperceptive Self-Awareness) I do know that it is me of which I am aware; indeed, as we will see a bit later, Kant argued that it is something I must presuppose to know that anything is true of myself” Brook, *Kant and the Mind*, 72.

24. Sydney Shoemaker, “Self-Reference and Self-Awareness,” *Journal of Philosophy* 65 (1968), p. 560; cited by Brook in *Kant and the Mind*, p. 74.

25. For an in-depth discussion of the paralogsms, see Karl Ameriks, *Kant's Theory of Mind: An Analysis of the Paralogsms of Pure Reason* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), Michelle Grier, *Kant's Doctrine of Transcendental Illusion* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001), and H. Klemme, *Kants Philosophie des Subjekts* (Hamburg, Germany: Meiner, 1996).

26. Here I follow Ameriks' discussion in *Kant and the Fate of Autonomy* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 238 and following.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 240.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 241.

29. From Fichte, *Sämtliche Werke* I, p. 97, cited in Frederick Neuheuser's excellent reconstruction of Fichte's thought, *Fichte's Theory of Subjectivity* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 46. The significance of the claim is nicely encapsulated by Allen Wood: for Fichte, “the self of which we are aware is nothing different from the awareness we have of it. In this way, self-awareness is also unique in that it is a kind of knowledge whose object is immediately identical with the subject of that same knowledge” (“The ‘I’ as Principle of Practical Philosophy,” in *The Reception of Kant's Critical Philosophy: Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel*, ed. S. Sedwick (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999) p. 95.