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On Some Presumed Gaps in Kant's Refutation of Idealism¹

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Two key premises stand at the heart of Kant's Refutation of Idealism in the B-edition of the first *Critique*. The first is Kant's claim, developed in the first analogy, that time determination requires us to posit the existence of a substance that endures. The second premise is that nothing *in* the self can perform this function, and neither can the empirical self itself. Hence, Kant concludes, time determination and consequently the determination of the self in time requires us to posit the existence of a thing outside us. The refutation is therefore directed at dogmatic and problematic types of idealism, both of which admit that we have inner experience, that is, consciousness of our representations, but either deny the possibility of spatial objects (Berkeley) or claim that we can *only* be certain of the mind and its contents (Descartes). Kant's aim is to show that the temporal determination of inner experience presupposes outer experience. Commentators have rightly noted the extraordinarily compressed character of Kant's argument, and numerous gaps in the argument have been pointed out. In this paper I focus on two of these gaps and provide a reconstruction of Kant's argument that closes them.

The first gap concerns the argument of the first analogy itself, and involves three interrelated problems. In it, Kant tells us that "time itself cannot be perceived", and that consequently "there must be found in the objects of perception, that is, in the appearances, the substratum which represents time in general".² Moreover, Kant claims that all change must be perceived as taking place *in* this substratum. In his book *Problems from Kant*, James van Cleve describes these three interrelated problems with Kant's first analogy argument. First, and most importantly, van Cleve notes that

Kant rejects time itself as the backdrop on the ground that it is not perceivable, but his own best candidate for substance is not perceivable either. We do not perceive the matter that undergoes transformation from wood to ashes or from caterpillar to butterfly; we only conceive of it.³

¹ Several years ago, I had many lengthy and intense conversations with Manfred Baum on the topic of Kant's refutation of idealism, which no doubt have influenced my thinking on the matter.

² Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, translated and edited by Paul Guyer and Allen Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), B 275. All future references to the *Critique* will be to this translation; the A and B edition pagination will be indicated at the end of the citation.

³ James Van Cleve, *Problems from Kant*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 107-108.

If both are imperceptible, why do we need substance to represent time? Are we not reduplicating entities unnecessarily? Second, van Cleve notes, even granting that substance is needed to represent time, why must we represent substance as permanent? And thirdly, why must we understand alterations as taking place *within* it? Contrary to most interpreters who find the spring of Kant's argument to be his claim that time cannot be perceived, I argue that the key to Kant's argument is his claim that time cannot change. This is a sophisticated argument regarding the nature of time: strictly speaking, time cannot pass, that is it cannot change. To talk about the passage of time implies that we must be able to determine the rate of the passage of time, but such talk is incoherent. As Kant notes, "If one were to ascribe such a succession to time itself, one would have to think yet another time in which this succession would be possible" (A 183/ B 226). Because time cannot pass, what we are really referring to when we speak of the passage of time is of substances that endure throughout their changes.

The second major gap has been pointed out by Jonathan Vogel and concerns Kant's second premise that the substance we must posit in order to determine our existence in time cannot be the self or any of its determinations. Note that this premise refers first and foremost to the empirical self, since Kant claims that "my own *existence in time* can first be determined only through this persistent thing". Vogel asks: "If Kant holds that the empirical self is knowable through inner sense, why does self knowledge then fail to provide whatever is required for time-determination?"⁴ Moreover, here a problem similar to the one noted regarding the first analogy crops up. Henry Allison is surely right when he notes that Kant adopted Hume's arguments⁵ regarding why we have no knowledge of a persisting self: we have no impression of the self that endures through the self's changing determinations (namely its representations).⁶ But as Hume noted, the same can be said about outer objects: what we have is a host of differing impressions that we take to be differing determinations of an object, but we do not perceive the substratum through an impression that endures through the object's changing determinations.⁷ If we do not have a persisting impression of the self, or a

⁴ Jonathan Vogel, *The Problem of Self-Knowledge in Kant's 'Refutation of Idealism': Two Recent Views, Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, Vol. LIII, No. 4, 1993.

⁵ As Hume famously notes, "But self or person is not any one impression, but that to which our several impressions and ideas are suppos'd to have a reference. If any impression gives rise to the idea of self, that impression must continue invariably the same, thro' the whole course of our lives; since self is suppos'd 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 deriv'd; and consequently there is no such idea." David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, text and revised notes by P. H. Niddich, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), I. iv. 6; 251-252.

⁶ Henry Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 299.

⁷ Hume notes, "Philosophers deny our resembling perceptions to be identically the same, and uninterrupted; and yet have so great a propensity to believe them such, that they arbitrarily

persisting representation of an object, it is hard to see why the representation of an object outside the self is a better candidate for time determination than the self and its inner determinations. Building on the arguments developed in section one of the paper, I will address these questions in the second part of the paper by showing that the representation of two objects existing simultaneously (and hence existing in space) is necessary for time determination. The results of this investigation will show why the empirical self must be an embodied self.

The First Analogy

Commentators have provided numerous and divergent analyses of Kant's argument in the first analogy. Guyer, for instance, finds three separate arguments in the first analogy section, while Allison finds one argument in seven steps with a progressive structure.⁸ Like Allison, I find one principle argument, although I differ with him on its progression. I reconstruct the argument in the following way:

1. All appearances are in time, in which, as substratum (as persistent form of inner intuition), both simultaneity as well as succession can alone be represented.
2. The time, therefore, in which all change of appearances is to be thought, lasts and does not change; since it is that in which succession or simultaneity can be represented only as determinations of it.
3. Now time cannot be perceived by itself.
4. Consequently it is in the objects of perception, i.e., the appearances, that the substratum must be encountered that represents time in general and in which all change or simultaneity can be perceived.
5. However, our apprehension of the manifold is always successive and changing. But if all you have is succession, existence is always disappearing and beginning and never has the least magnitude.
6. Yet, only through that which persists does existence in different parts of the temporal series acquire a magnitude, which one calls duration.
7. Change does not affect time itself.

invent a new set of perceptions, to which they attribute these qualities. I say, a new set of perceptions: For we may well suppose in general, but 'tis impossible for us distinctly to conceive, objects to be in their nature any thing but exactly the same with perceptions. What then can we look for from this confusion of groundless and extraordinary opinions but error and falsehood? And how can we justify to ourselves any belief we repose in them?" David Hume, *op. cit.*, I. iv. 2; 218.

⁸ Allison, *op. cit.*, 137.

8. Since change does not affect time itself, that which persists is the object itself, that is, the substance.
9. Everything that changes or that can change belongs only to the way in which this substance or substances exist, thus to their determinations. (Substance is therefore the substratum of everything real.) As the substratum of all change, substance always remains the same.
10. And as it is thus unchangeable in its existence, its quantity in nature can be neither increased nor diminished.

My own reconstruction follows that of Allison up through step four, and after that there are significant divergences between his reconstruction and my own. The reconstruction I provide takes into account the significance of the claims made in the paragraph directly following Kant's initial presentation of the argument. This paragraph contains crucial material justifying Kant's claims that a) substance persists and b) substance is the substratum of everything real and everything that exists can be thought of only as its determinations.

The first premise tells us that all appearances are either in succession (before or after) or simultaneous with one another. Commentators such as Caird and Robert Paul Wolff have found problems with Kant's second premise that time lasts; just as it is a category mistake to say that time changes, it is equally a mistake to say that it endures.⁹ However, on this point Allison is surely right: Kant's point is that there is one time that is continuously identifiable throughout all change. Only thus can all events be arranged as before, after, or simultaneous with one another.

The third premise is very important to Kant's argument: it is because time cannot itself be perceived that we must look to the appearances in order to grasp the passage of time. What does Kant mean by this claim, and why does he make it? According to Allison, the claim that time cannot be perceived is derived from "the doctrine that time is a form or mode of representing objects rather than itself an object that is represented".¹⁰ This is true, but it still does not get to the heart of why time is imperceptible. Guyer on the other hand thinks Kant means by this that we are given "merely successive moments of time, not a *duration* of any magnitude, let alone a duration as long as that of permanent time itself".¹¹ He justifies this interpretation through Kant's point that "in mere sequence alone existence is forever disappearing and beginning, and never has the least magnitude" (A 183/ B 226). The problem with Guyer's interpretation is that Kant is not referring to the successive moments

⁹ Both are mentioned by Allison (Ibid. 202). The original references are to Edward Caird, *The Critical Philosophy of Kant*, (Glasgow: J. Maclehose, 1909), and to Robert Paul Wolff, *Kant's Theory of Mental Activity*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963), 251.

¹⁰ Ibid. 202.

¹¹ Paul Guyer, *Kant and the Claims of Knowledge*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 217.

of time in this statement. Rather the succession Kant refers to is our successive apprehension of the manifold of perception, mentioned earlier in the first analogy argument. As Kant notes in a crucial passage of the deduction, "Motion, as action of the subject, . . . consequently the synthesis of the manifold in space, . . . 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" (B 154 f.). Hence I only become aware of the passage of time through self-affection, that is, through my awareness of my own successive apprehension of the manifold.¹² This point will play a key role in the refutation of idealism later on.

Hence, what Kant means when he tells us that time cannot be perceived is rather the following. If one abstracts the content of perception that fills time, there is nothing left to distinguish one moment of time from another. As such, the moments of time cannot be apprehended independently of our perceptions. The only succession we are aware of is that of our successive apprehension of the manifold of perception. This succession is a necessary, although not a sufficient condition of our awareness that time has elapsed. If all there were was empty time, we should not know what it means for time to elapse. For suppose there were such a thing as empty time. If so, the moments in such a time would be indistinguishable from one another. How could I then identify the present moment, and know that it is no longer present once it has passed, if the present moment that succeeds it is indistinguishable from it? How can I mark the so called "passage of time"?

But perhaps, it might be objected, the flow of time can be perceived independently of the objects of perception that fill time. Each moment of time first has the property of being in the future, it then has the property of being in the present, and then has the property of being in the past. As such, each moment of time undergoes change, and it is through its undergoing change that I become aware of the passage of time.¹³ There are, however, at

¹² The relation between the nature of time and the doctrine of self-affection has been put forward quite clearly by Manfred Baum (*Kant on Cosmological Apperception, International Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. XXIX, No. 3, September 1989, 281-289) and is worth quoting at length. He notes, "Time must be a form of sensibility just because it conditions *a priori* the way in which we become aware of our own activity, through which we apprehend within ourselves, combine and separate, and bring to concepts the given but still unconscious matter of outer representations. By this act of apprehension we are *affected* by ourselves because we become aware of this activity of the understanding (or imagination) as something that occurs successively. Positing representations into inner sense, thus making them conscious, means: positing them into time, and this, at the same time, means having a temporally conditioned consciousness of this activity of positing. The self is affected by this activity in two senses: materially by the contents of the outer senses and formally by the act of apprehension of which we are conscious only as occurring successively (cf. B 67 f.)", 283.

¹³ In the Anglo-American literature on time, J. M. E. McTaggart was the first to draw attention to the fact that the positions of pastness, presentness, and futurity are not permanent, but changing determinations. An event which is now present was future and will be past. He calls this the A-series. J. M. E. McTaggart, *The Nature of Existence*, Vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1927), 10-11.

least two problems with this scenario. The first concerns a problem already mentioned above: by what means do we mark off one moment from the other such that the two are distinct? We need to mark the moments off from one another in order to distinguish between the present moment and the one that has just passed. Notice that on Kant's view, where a necessary condition (but not a sufficient one) of the recognition of the passage of time is the successive character of our apprehensions, this problem does not arise. On Kant's view, the moments of time can be distinguished from one another in virtue of the difference of the contents of our apprehensions themselves. But when time is considered independently of the content that fills it, there is no such way to differentiate the moments of time from one another.

The second problem has to do with the very idea that time passes. To say that "time passes", or "time flows", such that a particular moment will first have the property of being in the future, then the property of being in the present, and then of being in the past, is to open oneself up to a host of objections. If each moment has each of these properties in turn, then presentness crawls up the time line, first privileging one moment and then the next. However, if the present crawls up the time line, and if time passes, the question naturally arises: How fast does the present crawl up the time line? How fast does time pass? To attempt to answer these questions involves one in a fundamental incoherence. For how are we to go about answering this question? Since all movement is movement at a particular rate, presentness must have its rate of movement. But we can't determine the rate of movement of the present if we know only the temporal distance it has covered, just as we cannot determine the rate of spatial movement if we know only the spatial distance covered. Hence, the question of the rate of movement of the present would require us to introduce a hyper-time. Since rate is distance over time, if we wanted to clock the present's rate of movement from one point on the temporal continuum to a later point, we must know *when* in hyper-time it is at the first point and when in hyper-time it is at the second.¹⁴ Note that Kant refers to this problem when he notes that "If one were to ascribe such a succession to time itself, one would have to think yet another time in which this succession would be possible" (A 183/ B 226). While I have introduced these matters in relation to the claim that time cannot be perceived, these considerations will play an important role at a later stage in Kant's argument in their own right; they are in fact, the spring of Kant's argument.

Since the passage of time cannot be perceived, it is in the appearances that the substratum must be found representing time in general. This is the fourth step in Kant's argument. However, as Kant notes in his fifth step, our apprehension of what appears is always successive. There are two important

¹⁴ The problems that crop up when time is thought of as something that passes or flows have been the subject of discussion in recent Anglo-American literature. J. J. C. Smart points to problems very much like these in his famous article *The River of Time*, in: Flew, Antony (ed.), *Essays in Conceptual Analysis* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1966), 213-227.

points that follow from this. First is a point relevant to Kant's second analogy as well: the fact that my apprehension of B has followed my apprehension of A does not mean that A and B follow each other in the object. A and B may be different parts of an object, e. g., a house, that exist simultaneously with one another. In order to think that the representations succeed one another in the object I must posit a substratum of which A and B are changing determinations: they are opposite states of the same thing. Second, the successive character of my apprehension of A, B, and C etc., is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for the determination of time. It is necessary insofar as the distinct content of what is apprehended marks the different moments of time. However, it is not sufficient for time determination because insofar as what is apprehended is merely successive, it has no duration. As Kant notes, "In mere sequence alone existence is always disappearing and beginning, and never has the least magnitude" (A 183/ B 226). Hence in step six Kant concludes, something must serve as the substratum, i.e., as that which endures through these changing determinations. Kant will further conclude (in step 8) that this thing must be substance.

At this point it is important to bring up Van Cleve's objection. We only conceive of substance, we do not perceive it. Kant seems to reject time itself as the "backdrop" because it is not perceivable. But substance is not perceived either, so what makes substance a better candidate for the backdrop than time itself? Why can't time itself be that which persists? Guyer asks a similar question when he notes that

By stating that even representations of matter are themselves transitory, in spite of the permanence which we ascribe to matter, Kant implies that the permanence of matter itself – that is, permanence in empirical objects, rather than of time itself – must be inferred rather than directly perceived. But if that is so, then it is less than obvious why the detour through the permanence of matter or substance is needed to infer the permanence of time itself. If permanence can be inferred in one case, why cannot it be inferred equally directly, without further justification, in the other case, the case of time itself?

Kant in fact does provide the answer to this question, and he does so in the seventh step of his argument. There he notes that change does not affect time itself. Contra Guyer, it is this premise, and not the mere assertion that time cannot be perceived, that is the spring of Kant's argument.¹⁵ Now suppose that time itself were the substratum, i.e., that which endures through these changing determinations. If it were, then time itself would be the changing thing: presentness would be continuously identifiable as it surged through the time line of events. As such, it would be that which endures through the changes in time's passing. But just after Kant notes that "that which

¹⁵ Paul Guyer, *op. cit.*, 219. In fact, Guyer does not even register Kant's premise that time cannot change. Allison also mentions the essential character of the premise that time cannot be perceived, but like most other commentators does not note the essential role of Kant's claim that time does not change. Allison, *op. cit.*, 202 ff.

persists is the substratum of the empirical representation of time itself", he tells us that "change does not affect time itself", and that "we cannot ascribe such a succession to time itself" (A 183/ B 226). The reasons for this have been touched on above: there is a fundamental incoherence to the idea that time passes, because if time passes we must be able to answer the question concerning the rate at which time passes, and this would require us to posit a hyper-time. As Kant notes, "If one were to ascribe such a succession to time itself, one would have to think yet another time in which succession would be possible" (A 183/ B 226). If time itself cannot be the changing thing, some other thing, namely substance, must be posited as that which is continuously identifiably and endures throughout the states of its change. Thus far, we have discussed the progression of Kant's argument through step eight.

At this point, it might be useful to consider Van Cleve's two other objections, since answering them will help clarify Kant's argument as a whole. It is important to note that characterizing this argument as the "backdrop" argument is somewhat misleading. The word appears nowhere in Kant's argument; he is, rather trying to prove the much stronger claim that we must posit a substratum that underlies the succession of appearances if time determination is to be possible. In other words, all change and simultaneity must be thought of as just so many ways "in which that which persists exists" (A 182/ B 226). Already the second premise of Kant's argument contains this idea; there he tells us that "succession or simultaneity can be represented only as determinations of it [time]" (B 225). And, Kant seems to reason, since succession or simultaneity can be represented only as determinations of time, but time cannot be the changing thing, succession and simultaneity must be represented as determinations of substance. As such, all change must be alteration. This thesis has been questioned by Van Cleve who notes:

Even granting the need for a permanent backdrop, why would changes have to be alterations *in it*? This is a lacuna in Kant's argument that has gone largely unnoticed. What the argument proves at most is that every change takes place *against* the backdrop of something permanent, but it does not prove that any change is an alteration *in* that permanent something, or even that it is an alteration of anything at all.

Let the sun be hung up as permanent backdrop in the sky: things under the sun are still free to pop into and out of existence as they please, violating the maxims *gigni de nihilo nihil* and *in nihilum nil posse reverti*.¹⁶

Unless Kant can show why all changes must be alterations *of* a substratum, his argument does not go through. If we cannot show why the succession of appearances must be thought of as determinations of the way in which the substratum exists (whatever that substratum may be), we do not have to posit any *thing* that persists *through* its changing determinations.

It seems all we would need is something that persists (i.e., the sun) to serve as a backdrop, that is, as that which endures; other things, different

from this one persisting thing, may go in and out of existence. But is time determination truly possible under this scenario? How would we relate the time through which the sun endures to the moments at which things pop in and out of existence? The two can only be related to one another if the establishment of a single time has already been presupposed. But this is precisely what is at issue: the ability to relate the appearances to one another through a single time.

On Kant's view, only if the succession of appearances are determinations of a substratum that endures through its changes can they be related to one another as occurring in a single time. This is the upshot of Kant's argument in the following passage:

... it is this very thing that persists that makes possible the representation of the transition from one state into another, and from non-being into being, which can therefore be empirically cognized only as changing determinations of that which lasts. If you assume that something simply began to be, then you would have to have a point in time in which it did not exist. But what would you attach this to, if not to that which already exists? For an empty time that would precede is not an object of perception; but if you connect this origination to things that existed antecedently and which endure until that which arises, then the latter would only be a determination of the former, as that which persists. (A 188/ B 231)

Since the appearances are all given successively, but do not themselves have any magnitude, they must be thought of as alterations of that which endures if they are to be thought as occurring *within* a magnitude at all. Since time itself is not what undergoes change (and hence is not what endures throughout the states of change), what endures must be the changing *thing*. As such the changing appearances mark the states of a change, but it is the changing *thing* that has duration. It is through the states of the changing thing, and the endurance of the thing throughout its changing states, that we are able to mark that an interval of time has elapsed. However, if something absolutely began to be, the first state of its existence could not be said to have occurred *within* the duration of anything at all. Hence it cannot be known to have occurred in time, since time cannot be known independently of the duration of things.

This reconstruction of Kant's argument also answers an objection of Van Cleve's closely related to his earlier question of why changes must be understood as alterations *of* the substratum. Van Cleve reconstructs Kant's argument in the following way:

- (1) Suppose we know by perception that a thing *x* has come into being (or gone out of being, in which case a parallel argument could be given).
- (2) This requires us to perceive that *x* exists at some time *t*₂ and also to have perceived that *x* did not exist at an earlier time *t*₁.
- (3) Since we cannot perceive an empty time, there must be something else, *y*, that existed at *t*₁.
- (4) *x* must be a "determination" of *y* (a property of *y* or something

¹⁶ Van Cleve, *op. cit.*, 108.

whose existence consists in *y*'s having some property). Therefore, (5) *x*'s coming into being is an alteration in *y*.¹⁷

Van Cleve sees a *non-sequitur* in Kant's move from step 3 to step 4. He asks, "Why must *x* be a 'determination' at all, and why in any case of *y* or anything existing at *t*₁?"¹⁸ First, it must be noted that according to Kant what we perceive are always determinations of the substratum, not the substratum itself. Hence, given that we do not perceive an empty time, what must be perceived at *t*₁ is not the substratum itself, but some determination of it. Van Cleve's reconstruction of Kant's argument is thereby flawed in this regard: Kant is not saying that *x* must be a determination of *y*, but rather that both *x* and *y* must be determinations of an underlying substrate, that is, they are both states of a changing thing. That said, if we keep in mind that time cannot be that which endures through change (time is not that which undergoes alteration; it is not the changing thing) the only candidate for what endures is substance. If appearances are to be *in* time, they must be *in* something that endures. But to think them as *in* something that endures is just to think them as the states of a changing thing. Hence all succession of appearances must be thought of as states of a changing thing, and all change must be alteration. It is for this reason that *x* must be a determination of an underlying substrate.

This argument also shows why we must represent substance as permanent, and answers the last of Van Cleve's questions. Since there can be no absolute coming into existence or perishing, the substrate cannot itself come into being or perish. It is permanent and can only undergo alteration. This is merely another way of putting step nine of Kant's argument: "Everything that changes or that can change belongs only to the way in which this substance or substances exist, thus to their determinations. (Substance is therefore the substratum of everything real.) As the substratum of all change, substance always remains the same." It also follows from the fact that there can be no absolute coming into being or perishing that the quantity of substance must always remain the same. In order for the quantity of substance to increase there must be an absolute beginning of some of it, and in order for it to decrease there must be an absolute ceasing to be of some of it. Since this is impossible, the quantity of substance must remain the same (step 10).

Substance, Space, and the Refutation of Idealism

Before the reconstruction of Kant's argument against idealism proceeds, another crucial point needs to be discussed. This point concerns the character of substance. As we have noted above, the substrate of change cannot be time itself, because time cannot change. For anything that changes, we must

¹⁷ Ibid. 111.

¹⁸ Ibid. 111.

be able to answer questions regarding the rate of its change. Since rate is distance over time, the candidate for the substrate that undergoes change must be something that can be represented as covering a distance in a particular amount of time. Hence the crucial characteristic of substance distinguishing it from time is that substance must be spatial. This is implied in the following key passage, worth quoting at length:

In order to exhibit alteration as the intuition corresponding to the concept of causality, we must take motion, as alteration in space, as our example, indeed only by that means can we make alterations, the possibility of which cannot be comprehended by any pure understanding, intuitable. Alteration is the combination of contradictorily opposed determinations in the existence of one and the same thing. 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 example, but cannot even be made understandable without intuition, and this intuition is the intuition 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 ourself in different states through outer intuition; the real ground of which is that all alteration presupposes something that persists in intuition, even in order merely to be perceived as alteration, but there is no persistent intuition in inner sense. (B 291-292)

This passage contains several important arguments. The first is that the intuition of time depends upon our intuition of space. This is an *a priori* argument having to do with the character of the two forms of intuition. Kant defines space as the form of intuition by which two or more coexistent objects may be presented (A 23/ B 38). In the first analogy Kant showed that time determination requires some *thing* that endures throughout its changes. But in order to represent the changing *thing*, I must represent two things simultaneously: first the thing that endures, and second its changing determinations. If I am only conscious of a particular state of the thing, I am not conscious of the movement from one state of the change to the other, and hence of the change. It is, however, only through space that I can represent both at once, namely that which endures through its changes, as well as the states of its change. Hence it is "the intuition of a point in space, the existence of which in different places (as a sequence of opposed determinations) first makes alteration intuitable to us". The point in space represents that which endures through its changes, and the different points on the line its changing determinations. Both must be apprehended simultaneously in order to know that a change has taken place, and hence the intuition of space is necessary if the intuition of time is to be possible.¹⁹

There is another extremely important consequence of this as well, of which Kant is very much aware. As noted above, the moments of time are

¹⁹ Cf. Reflexion 6314, AA 18:616.

given to us through our successive apprehension of the manifold: "Motion, as action of the subject, . . . first produces the concept of succession" (B 154 f.). But it is only through the synthesis of the succession that the moments are brought together, and through which we become conscious of duration and hence time. This is what Kant means when he tells us that "the understanding does not *find* some sort of combination in the manifold already in inner sense, but *produces* it, by affecting inner sense" (B 155). Moreover, it is because time is given first and foremost through the action of the subject in the successive character of its apprehension that the self can only know itself as it affects itself.

A second important argument contained in the passage has consequences for how we must think of the empirical self. Kant tells us that, "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 ourself in different states through outer intuition" (Cf. B 156). This means that in order to even think of *myself* as the subject of these alterations, I must think of myself as that which endures through the change of my representations, hence as spatial and embodied. For it is only as in space that I can represent something different from my changing representations that co-exists throughout their changes. For me to become my own object, that is, in order to intuit myself, I can only intuit myself as both in time and space and hence I can only make myself my own object insofar as what I know is the empirical, embodied self.²⁰

This discussion prepares us to understand what is going on in the second of Kant's premises for his refutation of idealism: "This persisting thing, however, cannot be something in me, since my own existence in time can first be determined only through this persistent thing." (B 275) The persisting thing cannot be a mere representation in me, for my representations are fleeting and successive. In order to represent something permanent, I must represent it as in space, that is, as existing simultaneously with my changing representations and existing throughout their change. As shown above, this means that I can only know myself as the subject of my changing determinations if I think of myself in space, and therefore as having a body.

However, to think of myself as an embodied subject of my changing representations is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition of time determination. This is what Kant means when he notes that "my own existence in time can *first* be determined only through this persisting thing" (B 275). Since we can-

²⁰ This point has also been made by Manfred Baum. He notes: "Since there is nothing permanent in inner intuition, there is also no substance, no *constans et perdurable rerum* (B 186), which can be directly measured as to the length of its duration. . . . The duration of the soul's existence and the measurement of this duration presupposes, therefore, the soul's connection with a body which is enlivened by it and which is simultaneous with other bodies. For it is only the body that can be known to be simultaneous with something in the world, i.e., in space." (*Kant on Cosmological Apperception, op. cit.*, 285).

not determine the absolute passage of time, in order to measure the duration of lengths of time, we must measure one change by another. In the second note to the Refutation Kant notes that "we can perceive all time determination only through the change in outer relations (motion) relative to that which exists in space (e.g. the motion of the sun with regard to the objects on earth)" (B 277 f.). In the B deduction he makes the related claim "we must always derive the determination of lengths of time or of also the positions in time for all inner perceptions from that which presents external things to us as alterable" (B 156). What this means is the following. Suppose that I am traveling at a constant rate, and I need to find out what this rate is. How do I find out? I first check my position by noting that I have passed a certain mile marker and immediately check the clock; when I pass the next mile marker I do the same thing. Let us suppose I then discover I am traveling a mile per minute, that is, sixty miles an hour. But the clock does not have any significance in its own right; its significance lies in the fact that the clock represents the sun's movement in the sky, which changes at the rate of fifteen degrees per hour. So in finding out my rate of travel, what I have really done is to compare the rate of one physical change to that of another.

Two things are significant in this regard. First, in order to measure one change by another, I must think of them as occurring simultaneously with one another, but in order to represent them as such, I require the intuition of space in which the two changing substances co-exist.²¹ Second, if time determination requires two or more substances in order to measure one change by the other, then my own existence as subject of my changing determinations (the empirical self) is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for the determination of lengths of time, or for determining the position in time of inner perceptions. For this I require a change or changes different from the changes of my own state that occur simultaneously with my own, and therefore a change of something outside me. It is for this reason that Kant tells us, in the second premise of the refutation, that "my own existence in time can first be determined only through this persisting thing" (B 275). This answers Vogel's question, posed at the beginning of the paper, regarding why the empirical self alone is not sufficient for time determination.

This reconstruction also answers our last question noted in the introduction: if we do not have a persisting impression of the self, or a persisting representation of an object, why then is an object *outside* the self a better candidate for time determination than the self and its inner determinations?

²¹ This is the subject of Reflexion 6313, AA 18:614: "The simultaneity of A and B cannot even be represented without something that endures, for all apprehension is really successive. But insofar as the succession can take place not only forward from A to B but also (as often as I want) backward from B to A, it is necessary that A endure [*fortdaure*]. The sense-representations A and B must therefore have a ground other than in inner sense, but yet in some sense, therefore in outer sense; therefore there must be objects of outer sense (and as far as dreaming is concerned, this object, which causes the illusion of the presence of several outer objects, is the body itself)."

The answer lies in the fact that the empirical self is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition of time determination. For this something else is required, i.e., we need to be able to measure changes by one another. But this requires that I refer my perceptions to a body that exists simultaneously with other things in the world, that is, that exists in space.

Auf dem Wege zum Kategorischen Imperativ

Joachim Hruschka, Erlangen

I. Problemstellung

Gegenstand der folgenden Interpretation ist eine Passage in den handschriftlichen *Bemerkungen*, die Kant in seinem Handexemplar der *Beobachtungen über das Gefühl des Schönen und Erhabenen* von 1764 angebracht hat.¹ Die *Bemerkungen* sind wahrscheinlich in den Jahren 1764 und 1765 geschrieben worden.² Sie stammen damit aus einer der frühesten Phasen, in denen sich Kant mit moralphilosophischen Fragen befaßt hat. Die Passage ist nicht zuletzt deswegen interessant, weil das in ihr verwendete Beispiel eines Fruchtediebstahls in der Literatur der Gegenwart als eine frühe Anwendung des Kategorischen Imperativs aufgefaßt wird.³ Die Stelle lautet:

(AA 20, 161) Voluntas est vel propria hominis vel communis hominum. . . . Actio spectata secundum voluntatem hominum communem si sibi met ipsi contradicat est externe moraliter impossibilis (illibitum). Fac me alterius frumentum occupatum ire tum si specto hominem neminem sub ea conditione ut sibi ipsi eripiat quod acquisivit acquirere velle quod alterius est idem secundum privatum volo et secundum publicum aversor. Quatenus enim aliquid a voluntate alicujus plenarie pendet eatenus impossibile est ut sibi ipsi contradicat (objective). Contradiceret autem voluntas divina sibi met ipsi si vellet homines esse quorum voluntas opposita esset voluntati ipsius. Contradiceret hominum voluntas sibi met ipsi si vellent quod ex voluntate communi abhorrent. Est autem voluntas communis in statu collisionis praegnantior propria.⁴

Der Wille ist entweder der eigene eines Menschen oder der gemeinsame Wille der Menschen. . . . Eine unter dem Gesichtspunkt des gemeinsamen Willens der Men-

¹ *Kant's gesammelte Schriften*, Akademie-Ausgabe (= AA) 20, S. 1 - 192. – Der Text wird (in einer teilweise anderen Fassung) auch wiedergegeben in: Immanuel Kant, *Bemerkungen in den „Beobachtungen über das Gefühl des Schönen und Erhabenen“*, neu herausgegeben und kommentiert von Marie Rischmüller, 1991; Verweise auf dieses Werk hier unter dem Namen der Herausgeberin. – Aus den *Bemerkungen* werden im folgenden verschiedene Abschnitte wiedergegeben, die zur Unterscheidung voneinander nach den Seitenzahlen von Bd. 20 der Akademie-Ausgabe zitiert werden. Auch sonst wird im folgenden auf die Bandzahlen der Akademie-Ausgabe verwiesen. – Bei den Übersetzungen stütze ich mich im wesentlichen auf die Übersetzungen von Rischmüller, die ich jedoch gelegentlich modifiziere.

² Vgl. Gerhard Lehmann in der „Einleitung“, AA 20, S. 472; Rischmüller in der „Einleitung“, S. XVI f.

³ Vgl. Christian Schnoor, *Kants Kategorischer Imperativ als Kriterium der Richtigkeit des Handelns*, 1989, S. 182 ff. mit weiteren Nachweisen.

⁴ AA 20, S. 161 Z. 2 und 5 - 17; Rischmüller, S. 119 f. Rischmüller: statt „tum“: „tam“, statt: „acquisivit“: „acquisit“. Übersetzung Rischmüller, S. 266.