

Varieties of Reflection in Kant's Logic

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1. *Introduction*

It is uncontroversial that philosophical inquiry typically involves a kind of ‘stepping back’ from the immediacy of our commitments to inquire into — and critically assess — their sources and underlying principles. And this, in colloquial terms, makes it a certain kind of *reflection*. Surely ‘reflection’ in this sense is not far removed from the sort of reflection that an ordinary person might engage in when, again stepping back from the immediacy of some default view of how things are or what to do, she considers whether she has good reason to judge or act in the relevant way. Something here must *govern* the reflective person’s acceptance or rejection of the given view in question: and that, presumably, must be some (at least tacit) commitment to general or overarching principles about what to accept as reasons for belief or for action. And here we find a plausible connection to a conception of philosophical inquiry as itself a kind of reflection — at least to the extent that we allow that philosophy properly makes it its business to codify, and perhaps even render systematic, what these general governing principles are or ought to be.

Kant draws on these commonplace ideas about reflection in philosophy and ordinary life. But this has been obscured both by the complexity of his textual record on reflection, and by the selective eye with which scholars have reported on it. The complexity of the record can be partly attributed to the fact that Kant deploys the term ‘reflection’ (*Überlegung*, *Reflexion*).¹ and cognates in both non-technical and technical ways. Kant, moreover, invokes a variety of technical senses of reflection in a range of contexts, and never sets out to explain how one sense or variety of reflection is related to another. On the technical front, Kant occasionally speaks of reflection as (a) the activity of thinking quite generally,² and sometimes (b) as the self-consciousness that is internal to the activity of thinking or makes it ‘possible’. Sometimes he suggests that reflection is (c) some mental operation by which concepts, or general representations, are possible. He also repeatedly claims that (d) all judgments require reflection. In the ethical works, reflection figures mostly in cognates, where it suggests (e) a considered

¹ Kant consistently glosses the German *Überlegung* (and cognates) either with the Latin *reflexio* or the Latinate *Reflexion*: see, e.g., A260/B316, LJ 9:94, Anth 7:139 and 141, RA-650 (15:287).

² See RA-425 (15:171), and implicitly Prol (4:288). This usage is rare.

endorsement of practical principles and ends.³ Finally, there are (f) the special ‘reflective’ judgments at issue in the *Critique of Judgment*.

I cannot give a full account of this tapestry here. I will focus on just those senses of reflection that come to light in Kant’s account of logic — chiefly (b) through (d), with a word or two about (a).⁴ This is roughly where recent scholarship on Kant’s conception of reflection begins as well; but it labours under a blindspot. The received view treats as foundational a passage in the *Logik Jäsche* that appears to attribute to Kant the view that reflection is a mental operation involved in the generation of concepts from non-conceptual materials. This passage has played a prominent role in important and influential interpretive projects;⁵ and as a result the received view is that reflection, for Kant, *just is* this concept-generating operation. But there are good reasons to doubt the received view, which takes no notice of applied logic.⁶ Drawing attention to Kant’s division between ‘pure’ and ‘applied’ general logic, I identify senses of reflection proper to each, and show that none is obviously to be construed as a mental operation involved in the generation of concepts from non-conceptual materials.

The chief aim, then, of this paper is to identify distinct senses of reflection proper to pure and applied logic respectively (§§2-5). The secondary aim is to deploy those results to cast Kant’s discussion of ‘transcendental reflection’ in a fresh light (§6). Now, it is in the context of applied logic that Kant points to a normative requirement to reflect: the reflection at issue there is required to make *good use* of one’s cognitive capacities in judgment. And Kant clearly alludes to the context of applied logic in his difficult discussion of reflection in the ‘Amphiboly of the Concepts of Reflection’, the Appendix to the Transcendental Analytic of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Overlooking this allusion, I argue, leaves us hard pressed to make sense of the ‘transcendental reflection’ that Kant suddenly introduces there, and heralds as a ‘duty [*Pflicht*] that

³ This usage is obscured in standard English translations, which for understandable reasons have Kant speaking of ‘considered’ (rather than ‘reflected’ or ‘reflected upon’) maxims and principles (*überlegte Maximen*, KpV 5:118; *überlegte Grundsätze*, MS 6:383-4), and taking moral virtue to rest on a ‘considered’ resolution (*überlegter Vorsatz*, MS 6:380; *überlegte Entschließung*, MS 6:409).

⁴ (e) and (f) are set entirely to one side for the purposes of this paper.

⁵ It figures, e.g., in the attempt to make sense of Kant’s claim that the categories are not innate but ‘originally acquired’ (Longuenesse 1998), as well as the attempt to make good on some of Kant’s hints about the epistemological significance of the judgment of taste (Ginsborg 1997 and 2006). It is not my aim to challenge these interpretive projects here — at least not directly. But I will challenge some claims in Ginsborg (2006) that bear directly on the significance of the relevant passage from *Logik Jäsche*.

⁶ It has been neglected particularly by Anglophone commentators. Heßbrüggen-Walter (2004) rightly notes that the discussion of prejudice in 18th-century logic provides essential background to the discussion of reflection in the first *Critique*; but he fails to connect it with Kant’s notion of applied logic, and even claims that the concern about prejudice is only implicit in the *Critique*, overlooking A53/B77. See also Zinkstok (2001) and Pozzo (2005) on Kant’s conception of applied logic and its historical sources.

no one can renounce if he wants to judge something about things a priori' (A263/B319). Kant's conception of transcendental reflection, I conclude, belongs to applied logic.

2. *Mapping Kant's conception of logic*

To outline my agenda more precisely, I will need to show first how Kant maps logical inquiry along two distinct axes. My proposal is to peg the varieties of reflection at issue in this paper to distinct modes of logical inquiry, working on the basis of the map to be drawn in this section.

Kant mentions various modes of logical inquiry in the context of introducing his distinct notion of a 'transcendental logic' in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. If logic as such is concerned with the necessary rules of thought, it can be distinguished depending on whether it is concerned with 'the general, or the special, employment of the understanding' (A52/B76). The first is concerned with the necessary rules of thought generally, and so it abstracts entirely from any consideration of what our thought might be about (A52/B76-7; cf. G 4:387). The second does not make this abstraction: 'The logic of the special employment of the understanding contains the rules for thinking correctly about a certain kind of objects' (A52/B76). Thus Kant distinguishes between general and special logic, or what I will refer to as domain-independent and domain-relative modes of logical inquiry. Kant points this out in order to distinguish transcendental logic from general logic. Pure general logic is concerned with the necessary rules of thought *full stop*, whereas transcendental logic is concerned with the necessary rules of thought *about phenomenal objects*.⁷ One axis of Kant's mapping, then, distinguishes domain-independent from domain-relative logical inquiry.

Return now to an overarching idea of logic as concerned with the necessary rules of thought. In what sense 'necessary'? That is the question that needs to be answered in order to draw the second axis, which distinguishes pure and applied logic. Kant says that pure general logic is concerned with those rules of thought 'without which no employment of the understanding could take place at all' (A52/B76). Kant says this in the context of distinguishing general from special logic; but in point of fact this claim concerns just *pure* general logic. So it

⁷ This simply rephrases a familiar idea in perhaps unfamiliar terms. The familiar idea is this: the *Critique's* transcendental logic establishes a set of synthetic a priori principles as conditions of the possibility of experience, and thus constitutively required for thought about objects in the domain of nature. The recasting involves recognising that this transcendental logic is (a) a mode of pure logic, and thus is in the business of identifying principles *constitutive* of any such thought; and at the same time (b) a domain-relative logic, inasmuch as it identifies principles constitutive of any thought about *phenomenal objects in the domain of nature*. For (b) Kant notes that transcendental logic does not abstract entirely from the content of thought, as any general logic does (A54-57/B79-82).

stands to tell us something about what *pure* logic is and how it differs from *applied* logic. They differ, Kant says, in that pure logic abstracts entirely

from all empirical conditions under which our understanding is exercised, e.g., from the influence of the senses, the play of imagination, the force of habit and inclination, etc., and so from all sources of prejudice. (A53/B77)

Applied logic does not abstract from the empirical conditions under which understanding is exercised. Now, we exercise understanding by judging by means of concepts (A68/B93). So pure general logic abstracts in some regard from the empirical conditions of judgment, and applied logic does not. But how are we to understand this? For the most part, the empirical conditions to which Kant points concern normal facts about human psychology that make it such that we are liable not to think as we ought to think. Applied logic is a ‘cathartic of common understanding’ (A53/78), and so an account of how common understanding is exercised well in light of the ‘accidental subjective conditions which may hinder or help its employment’ (A54/B78). Applied logic figures as a ‘cathartic’ because it is largely concerned with how human understanding can be purged of congenital tendencies towards misuse. I will have more to say about this in the next section.

For now we can focus just on the idea that applied general logic is concerned with the *problem* of how to judge well about things — a problem we face owing to our imperfection. Such a concern is not on the radar of pure general logic. Kant likens the distinction between pure and applied logic to the distinction between pure ethics and a doctrine of virtue. Pure ethics provides an account of the principles constitutive of any determination of the good, whereas a doctrine of virtue ‘considers these laws under the hindrances of the feelings, inclinations, and passions to which human beings are more or less subject’ (A55/B79). A doctrine of virtue recognises that while these principles may be constitutive of such determinations, we are liable to judge otherwise. With this in mind let’s gloss the distinction between pure and applied logic. Pure general logic is concerned with *constitutive* requirements on thought: that without which there could be no employment of the understanding — no thinking — at all.⁸ Applied logic is concerned with *normative* requirements on thought: i.e., with what is necessary in order to make good use of our cognitive capacities.⁹

⁸ Just as Kant says at A52/B76.

⁹ I am following through here on a suggestion from Tolley (2006), who argues against the prevailing view that Kant takes logic to be a ‘normative’ science. Tolley points out that the prevailing view rests almost entirely on LJ 9:13-16 (a text, I would stress, not penned by Kant himself), and is moreover at odds with a range of Kant’s other views. On Tolley’s terms, for a rule to be normative, then whatever being is properly governed by the rule ‘must both be able to succeed *and to be able to fail* to act (or be) in

Someone might resist this account of the distinction between pure and applied logic, perhaps by pointing out that Kant sometimes speaks of logic as a ‘canon’ for the ‘correct use’ of cognitive capacities.¹⁰ If we grant that Kant has *pure* general logic in mind there — as indeed appears to be the case — why shouldn’t it count as a normative enterprise? But this talk about a canon for correct use makes no problem for my account. Consider an analogy. There are rules for making permissible moves in chess: the queen can move like this, a rook like that, and so on. When these rules are linked to some statement of the ‘object’ of the game — i.e., what counts as winning — what we get is something like a canon for correct moves in chess. Someone who makes a canon-violating move in a game of chess has, in effect, suspended play: he is doing *something else* with the pieces. Likewise, someone who violates a rule in the canon of pure general logic — commits a logical fallacy — is not, in that instance, inferring (say) at all.¹¹ This allows us to appreciate that a canon, so conceived, regulates practice (and thus is in some sense normative): but it does so by ruling things out of bounds, as non-thought and non-chess.

Now, I have been suggesting that Kant’s conception of logical inquiry can be mapped along two distinct axes. One axis distinguishes domain-independent from domain-relative modes of logical inquiry; the other axis distinguishes pure and applied logic. My proposal is to employ this map as a guide to the senses of reflection that I have identified as being at issue in this paper. Recall from §1 that Kant speaks of reflection as:

- (a) the activity of thinking quite generally
- (b) the self-consciousness that is internal to the activity of thinking
- (c) some mental operation by which concepts are possible;

and finally, there seems to be a distinct a notion of reflection involved in his claim that

- (d) all judgments require reflection.

In §3, I will show that applied logic has (d) in its sights. In §§4-5, I will argue that pure general logic principally has (b) in its sights; and that this sense of reflection can be connected to (a) and to a certain interpretation of (c). As I make this case, I will challenge the received view that reflection *just is* a certain mental operation involved in the generation of concepts from non-conceptual materials. The remaining question of the paper will then be to situate, within this mapping, Kant’s claims about ‘transcendental reflection’ from the Amphiboly chapter. Existing accounts of transcendental reflection fail to make good sense of Kant’s presentation of it as a ‘duty’ for metaphysicians; I will suggest that we can make sense of this if we recognise that Kant

accordance with the law’ (2006, 375). What I add to this is that such a possibility only comes into view with *applied* logic, which does not abstract from normal epistemic hindrances of the human condition.

¹⁰ A796/B824; RL-1571 [early to middle 1750s] (16:8); RL-1579 [1760s] (16:18); RL-2173 [late 1770s], (16:258); cf. A132/B171.

¹¹ See also Tolley (2006).

takes his cue there from applied rather than pure logic (§6). The following table compiles the mapping of Kant’s conception of logic with the varieties of reflection that I aim to argue are chiefly at issue in each:

	PURE outlines constitutive requirements on thought	APPLIED outlines normative requirements on judgment
GENERAL (DOMAIN- INDEPENDENT)	<p>Pure general logic: presents constitutive requirements on thought as such.</p> <p>Reflection = pure apperception, the (typically tacit) consciousness of ‘the “I” as <i>subject</i> of thinking (in logic)’ (Anth 7:134n).</p>	<p>Applied general logic: concerned with what is required to make good use of one’s cognitive capacities.</p> <p>Reflection figures in the maxim that ‘we cannot and may not judge without reflecting’ (LJ 9:76). Reflection is the antidote to prejudice.</p>
SPECIAL (DOMAIN -RELATIVE)	<p>Transcendental logic presents constitutive requirements on all thought about <i>phenomenal objects</i>.</p> <p>Reflection in this context figures as a constitutive requirement on any thought about phenomenal objects, and so is the <i>synthetic</i> unity of apperception.</p>	<p>Applied, domain-relative logic might deal with normative requirements on judgment in (e.g.) speculative metaphysics.</p> <p>Its reflection is the ‘transcendental’ variety that Kant claims is a ‘duty’ for those who engage in speculative metaphysics.</p>

3. Reflection in the context of applied general logic

Although Kant explicitly distinguishes between pure and applied general logic in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, there is scarce record of the distinction being explicitly drawn in the extant sets of student notes from Kant’s logic lectures; and it is only mentioned in passing in *Logik Jäsche* (9:18). We should not assume from this, however, that the logic lectures are concerned only with pure general logic: great stretches of the lectures are devoted to topics proper to applied logic, such as human susceptibility to prejudice (and what to do about it). There is simply no record of his announcing, in the context of any of these lectures, that he is now taking up inquiry in the one or the other mode of general logic. That means that we need to be clear about the business of applied general logic in order to identify any sense of reflection that naturally falls within its ambit: this is the task for this section. In the next section, we will do the same for pure general logic.

Applied logic deals with the problem of how to make good use of our cognitive capacities in light of normal human liability to do otherwise — chiefly due to susceptibility to prejudice. In this context, reflection is presented as a normative requirement on judgment. In *Logik Jäsche*, we find the claim that ‘we cannot and may not judge about anything without reflecting [*überlegen*]’ (9:76). This pronouncement is corroborated not only by Nachlass material,¹² but also in the *Critique*’s Amphiboly chapter: ‘all judgments [...] require reflection [*Überlegung*]’ (A261/B317).

Taken out of context, we might read these remarks as pointing to a *constitutive* requirement of judging: perhaps all Kant means to say here is that one cannot judge without at least tacit awareness of oneself as the source of the judgment. For that, surely, is a view that Kant holds. And presumably whatever is constitutive of making use of one’s cognitive capacities at all must also be in play if one is to use them *well*. However, the context of these remarks makes clear that Kant has something other than any such constitutive requirement in mind. The remark in *Jäsche* figures in an extended discussion of prejudice (LJ 9:75-80), and the Amphiboly remark alludes to the topic of prejudice. In the Amphiboly, just prior to claiming that all judgments require reflection, Kant says:

Many a judgment is accepted out of custom, or connected through inclination; but since no reflection [*Überlegung*] precedes it, or at least critically follows it, it is taken as one that has its source in the understanding [*so gilt es für ein solches, das im Verstande seinen Ursprung erhalten hat*]. (A260-1/B316)

Kant consistently takes there to be three main sources of prejudice, two of which are named in this passage: inclination, custom, and imitation.¹³ Prejudice belongs squarely within the epistemic liabilities of the human condition, and hence falls within the purview of applied logic to address. The *sources* of prejudice are simply mechanical facts about how our minds associate and connect representations: patterns of pleasure and pain naturally work themselves up into inclinations to pursue and avoid (inclination), just as patterns of prior representations naturally work themselves up into anticipatory dispositions (custom), and so on. There is no fault in this: the association of representations according to inclination and custom is not itself prejudice. But there is a fault in prejudice. In the passage just quoted, we find Kant indicating in very general

¹² Reflection is ‘necessary for any judgment’ (LB 24:161). This claim complements a general conception of prejudice as ‘judgment without reflection’ that appears throughout the Nachlass: see LB (24:168 [twice]; also 165, 167); LPh (24:547); WL (24:863); RL-2519 [1760s] where prejudice in general is ‘to judge something without reflection [*ohne Überlegung*]’ (16:403); RL-2536 [c.1776-8] where prejudice is judgment that ‘precedes reflection’ (16:408).

¹³ See, e.g., LJ (9:76); RL-2519 (16:403); LB (24:165-7); LPh (24:425); WL (24:865ff.); LPö (24:547-8); LD-W (24:737).

terms what that fault is. It is the presumption that any default view that one has about how things are ‘has its source in the understanding’.

That is prejudice writ large: in effect it is the presumption that one *understands*, when one may be in no such position at all.¹⁴ Reflection, in applied logic, is the antidote to prejudice. What is given — what one *reflects upon* — is some view about how things are. To reflect is to consider the source of the view. The alternatives are typically laid out as ‘sensibility’ or ‘understanding’,¹⁵ where these labels serve to distinguish two different ways in which one can arrive at a view about how things are: namely, owing to contingencies in how one is, and has been, affected by things (sensibility), or else by some active exercise of one’s capacity to determine how things are (understanding). This interpretation is nicely corroborated by a record of logic lectures from the critical period: ‘A prejudice is a *principium* for judging based on subjective causes that are regarded as objective. Subjective causes all lie in sensibility. Objective grounds lie in the understanding’ (WL 24:863).

In the previous section, I glossed the distinction between pure and applied logic in terms of constitutive and normative requirements on thought. In this section, I have shown that the maxim that *all judgments require reflection* belongs to applied logic, and that it accordingly identifies a normative requirement to reflect. For Kant, as I have explained, is not claiming that the person who takes things to be a certain way on the basis of prejudice fails to judge altogether. He simply does not do so well. In the next section, I will turn my attention to pure general logic, to see if reflection, in some other sense, figures as a constitutive requirement on thought.

4. *Reflection in the context of pure general logic*

To identify the sense of reflection that properly figures in pure general logic, we need to take up the idea that such logic deals with constitutively necessary principles and sources of thought, while completely abstracting from whatever thought might be about. What is thought? Kant says that some animals can compare and associate representations, but they do not think.¹⁶ Kant generally speaks of thinking as the activity of the intellect or understanding (broadly construed); and he takes this activity to involve general representations — concepts, fundamentally.¹⁷ If so,

¹⁴ See also LB (24:187): ‘a prejudice is indeed nothing other than the mere desire to want to judge, but without the proper acuity or reflection.’

¹⁵ See A260-1/B316-7; LJ (9:76); LPö (24:547); WL (24:862-3). Other logic lectures present reflection as comparing a cognition or judgment with ‘laws of understanding’ (LD-W [24:737]; LBU [24:641]) or ‘laws of understanding and of reason’ (LB [24:161 and 165]; LPh [24:424]).

¹⁶ LJ (9:64-5); LD-W (24:702); MMrong (29:888).

¹⁷ An exception might be the aesthetic judgment of reflection, a non-cognitive mode of judgment that nevertheless exercises cognitive capacities; but I’ve bracketed this for the purposes of this paper.

then we think whenever we conceive a general representation (a concept), and in turn whenever we employ a concept as the determination of some other representation (i.e., judge), and finally whenever we consider the entailment and exclusion relations among given judgments (i.e., infer).¹⁸ So all thinking, it seems, depends on concepts.

Is there any claim in the offing that concepts depend on some activity or operation of the mind that could be called ‘reflection’? If so, then that would be a conception of reflection that naturally figures within the ambit of pure general logic. This is where we turn to the passage on which the received view also relies: *Logik Jäsche* sections 5 and 6 (LJ 9:93-95) — henceforth in shorthand, **LJ§§5-6**.¹⁹ There it is claimed that the source of concepts ‘as to their form’ — i.e., as to their mere generality, irrespective of content — consists in three ‘logical acts of understanding [*logische Verstandes-Actus*]’:

- 1) *comparison* [*Comparison*], i.e., the comparison [*Vergleichung*] of representations among one another in relation to the unity of consciousness;
- 2) *reflection* [*Reflexion*], i.e., the reflection as to how various representations can be conceived in one consciousness [*Überlegung, wie verschiedene Vorstellungen in Einem Bewußtsein begriffen sein können*]; and finally
- 3) *abstraction* [*Abstraction*] or the separation [*Absonderung*] of everything else in which the given representations differ (LJ 9:94).

LJ§§5-6 is headlined as an account of the ‘logical origin’ of concepts. Since this account belongs under the banner of *general* logic, it abstracts entirely from what thought might be about. There can be nothing left for such an account to concern except the mental activity in virtue of which it is possible to represent with the form of generality at all.²⁰ That is why the text indicates here that general logic can consider concepts ‘only *subjectively*’ (LJ 9:94): it claims that concepts are possible through a certain mental activity. These three mental operations, the text claims, ‘constitute [*ausmachen*] a concept’ (LJ 9:93).

We seem, then, to have identified a type of reflection that figures as a constitutive requirement on thinking. But what exactly is this requirement? The passage glosses reflection as the recognition of some basis for unifying mental contents into a single thought. This activity presupposes some comparison of representations, disregarding features in which they differ. To recognise both that the book is green and that the cup is as well is to represent them both

¹⁸ I follow here Kant’s three-fold division of the higher cognitive faculty as understanding (in the narrow sense, as the faculty of concepts), the faculty of judgment, and reason; this division also follows the standard division of 18th-century logic into concepts, judgments, and inferences (see, e.g., A130-1/B169).

¹⁹ The received view relies on more of this passage than I do; in §5a below, I explain why caution is needed in treating LJ§§5-6 in its entirety as an authoritative source for determining Kant’s views.

²⁰ Longuenesse (1998, 5-6) and Smit (1999, 209-10) both note that while we today tend to assume that talk of mental operations has no place in pure logic, early modern logicians did not.

through one and the same rule — even though, in their particularity, they might be quite different shades of green. To do this is to grasp a rule that can govern the determination of indefinitely many other representations. If the same thing is thought in all of these determinations, then there is a sense in which one and the same ‘consciousness’ unifies them. Representations, moreover, are unified only in thinking them; they are not unified, as it were, under their own steam. Therefore, the appreciation of how various representations can be grasped in one and the same consciousness (to ‘reflect’, as it is put here) entails, as part of this, the thinking subject’s at least tacit handle on himself as the source of this unity. This reflection, the recognition of a basis for unifying representations, must itself be the thinker’s grasp of his own contribution to the representation.

Let’s return now to the four senses of reflection at issue. In the previous section, I showed that there is a sense of reflection that figures as a normative requirement on sound judgment — item (d) on my original list. In this section, we saw that LJ§§5-6 points to reflection as some mental operation by which concepts, or general representations, are possible — item (c). The remaining two senses of reflection prove to be scarcely distinguishable from (c). Under (a) Kant claims that the intellect, viewed in distinction from sensibility, ‘only reflects’ (Prol 4:288). The activity of the intellect is conceived here in highly general terms required to distinguish it from sensibility. The intellect does not receive representations, but ‘only reflects’: that is, unifies representations to some determinate content, such as can figure in judgment. This is tantamount to how I have presented reflection as it figures under (c).

That leaves item (b), that reflection can refer to the self-consciousness that is internal to thinking. Reflection, in this sense, would be nothing other than pure apperception. The textual evidence for this claim comes from a footnote in the *Anthropology* (7:134n). Kant speaks there of an ‘inner activity’ by which ‘a concept (a thought) becomes possible’ and calls that ‘reflection’ — which straightforwardly accords with sense (c). Now, Kant’s explicit claim here is that pure apperception is the self-consciousness ‘of reflection [*der Reflexion*]’: this is the consciousness of ‘the “I” as *subject* of thinking (in logic)’ (7:134n). This remark does not unambiguously entail an identity between reflection and pure apperception: it arguably leaves open the possibility that Kant means to distinguish between the mental activity of reflection and the thinking subject’s (separate) consciousness of this mental activity — calling the latter ‘pure apperception’, and thereby distinguishing it from the former, which remains ‘reflection’. But this reading fails to recognise the implications of the account of reflection reported in LJ§§5-6, which is that the ‘reflection’ on how various representations can be unified in a single consciousness must always

involve the possibility of recognising that *one's own thinking* is the source of this unity.²¹

Therefore, Kant must either mean to identify reflection with pure apperception in this footnote, or at least to take the two to be so closely linked that only a notional distinction between them can be drawn.

At any rate, in the context of pure general logic, Kant points to reflection as a mental operation partly constitutive of representing with the form of generality at all — and so constitutively required for thinking. But if this mental activity is always implicitly the consciousness of ‘the “I” as *subject* of thinking (in logic)’, then the sense of reflection principally at issue in pure general logic must ultimately be nothing other than pure apperception itself.²²

5. *Challenging the received view*

I have just provided an account of the senses of reflection proper to pure general logic. Under sense (c), I recognise reflection as a mental operation partly constitutive of representing with the form of generality at all. Pure general logic is concerned with constitutive requirements of thinking, and so with what it is to *grasp* a concept. But the received view reads LJ§§5-6 differently. It takes LJ§§5-6 as the foundational text for determining what Kant takes reflection to be, and hopes to draw from it the conclusion that reflection is the mental operation chiefly involved in the *generation* of concepts from non-conceptual materials.

LJ§§5-6 is ambiguous about its own intentions. It presents its topic through two questions, claimed to be identical: ‘*Which acts of the understanding constitute a concept?* or what is the same, *Which are involved in the generation [Erzeugung] of a concept out of given representations?*’ (LJ 9:93). These questions hardly seem to me to say the same thing. Moreover, shortly thereafter the text *denies* that pure general logic can offer an account of ‘how concepts *arise* [entspringen] as representations’ (LJ 9:94).²³ As we will see, there is good reason to expect that *Logik Jäsche* should not be free of unsettling ambiguities such as this — and these concerns will partly inform my case against the received view. LJ§§5-6 provides no viable story about the generation of

²¹ These issues are elaborated in the *Critique's* Transcendental Deduction. It lies outside of the scope of this paper to enter into those details here.

²² A distinction should still be drawn between pure apperception (figuring in pure general logic as a constitutive requirement on thought) and pure apperception as a necessary synthetic unity (figuring in transcendental logic as a constitutive requirement on thought about phenomenal objects).

²³ A referee points out that some hylomorphic distinction appears to be at work in these remarks (LJ§5 Note 1, 9:94): pure general logic is not concerned with how the ‘matter’ of concepts arises (which I suppose would mean the coming to be of a determinate conceptual content), but only with their origin as to their ‘form’. But this offers no sure-fire support for the ‘genetic’ reading of LJ§§5-6, at least not if the sense of ‘form’ at issue is that which makes the representation *what it is* — namely, its generality. LJ§§5-6’s talk about the ‘origin’ of concepts ‘as to their form’ concerns the nature of general representation (its basis in certain mental activity), on my view.

concepts from non-conceptual materials; and I don't think we should expect to find one under the auspices of pure general logic, either.

(a) *Concerns about the textual basis of the received view*

Let's start with the textual status of *Logik Jäsche*, which contains the passage that is the basis of the received view. Towards the end of his life, Kant commissioned Gottlob Benjamin Jäsche to compile an official text of his logic lectures. He provided Jäsche with his own copy of the logic textbook from which he lectured over many decades, Georg Friedrich Meier's *Auszug aus der Vernunftlehre*. Kant had interleaved loose sheets of paper covered with his own handwritten notes into that text, and had also written notes in the margins and between the lines of the text itself. These notes were made over many decades and as a result are difficult to date; they appear among the volumes dedicated to the handwritten Nachlass as the *Reflexionen zur Logik* in volume 16 of the Academy edition. *Logik Jäsche*, by contrast, appears within the subset of volumes devoted to works published in Kant's lifetime (volumes 1-9); this placement may be partly responsible for the status it has tended to enjoy as an authoritative source for determining Kant's own views. But as Young (1992, xvi-xviii) and Naragon (2006) both point out, there is no evidence that Kant approved the text that Jäsche came up with. *Logik Jäsche* needs to be handled with the same caution that would be due to something in the unpublished Nachlass and student notes from Kant's lectures: an interpreter needs to consider the extent to which its claims are corroborated by other sources — and ideally by works Kant wrote himself and saw to publication.

So far, I have put on view only part of LJ§§5-6: just the part about the 'three mental acts' constitutive of representing with the form of generality at all. It also contains the following example in an appended note:

I see, e.g., a spruce, a willow, and a linden. By first comparing these objects with one another I note that they are different from one another in regard to the trunk, the branches, the leaves, etc.; but next I reflect on that which they have in common among themselves, trunk, branches, and leaves themselves, and I abstract from the quantity, the figure, etc., of these; thus I acquire a concept of a tree. (LJ 9:94-5)

This example is typically assumed to be Kant's own; and it is frequently invoked in supposing that LJ§§5-6 is meant to provide an account of concept formation, and particularly *empirical* concept formation.²⁴ But while the 'three mental acts' bit can be directly traced to the

²⁴ See, e.g., Longuenesse (1998, 115-122), Allison (2001, 22ff.), Ginsborg (2006, 38ff.); Zuckert (2007, 46ff.).

handwritten notes that Kant supplied to Jäsche,²⁵ this example cannot. In light of this, I propose that we draw a line, within LJ§§5-6, between the ‘three mental acts’ bit and this example.

What is above the line can be traced nearly verbatim to Kant’s own handwritten notes. That gives us good reason to think that the ‘three mental acts’ passage is indicative of Kant’s own view — but of what? I have argued that if the ‘three mental acts’ passage belongs to pure general logic, then it should identify a constitutive requirement on thought. Now, here we have to be careful, because the notes that Kant supplied to Jäsche were notes for lecturing on Meier’s text.²⁶ Unsurprisingly, then, we find Meier talking about reflection in connection with concepts. In his account, reflection is directed on given concepts that are different in some respects and identical in others, such as *unrational animal* and *rational animal* (Meier 1752, 71). Reflection is analysing (*zergliedern*) these concepts to determine their points of identity and difference. One abstracts from the differences — obscuring them (*verdunkele sie*), Meier says — so that the shared ‘marks’ emerge more clearly and can be grasped as the concept *animal*. There does not appear to be any aspiration in Meier to explain how concepts are generated as representations. Reflection is trained on concepts that are already in hand — and not obviously to create new ones, but rather to clarify existing concepts and their relation in an organised whole.²⁷ This notion of reflection surfaces again later in *Logik Jäsche*, when it is remarked that ‘systematic cognition’ is composed ‘according to rules on which one has reflected [*nach überlegten Regeln*]’ (9:139).

The mere fact that Meier evinces no aspiration to tell a story about how concepts are generated from non-conceptual materials does not, of course, entail that Kant couldn’t have meant to tell such a story. But as I will argue next, the idea that Kant meant to offer an account of concept formation in the context of pure general logic is implausible.

(b) *Philosophical concerns with the received view*

What appears below the line has no direct source in Kant’s handwritten notes. I have come across only one commentator who suggests that it may be a misguided interpolation of Jäsche’s.²⁸ There are good reasons to suppose that this commentator might be right. Above all, the example does not fit the directives of pure general logic, which, as we noted, ‘abstracts from

²⁵ See RL-2876 (16:555) [c. 1776-78 or c. 1778-83].

²⁶ LJ§§5-6 corresponds to §§259-60 of Meier’s *Auszug*.

²⁷ Heßbrüggen-Walter (2004, 164-5) notes that this conception of reflection comes from German Scholastic logic; see also Liedtke (1966).

²⁸ Liedtke (1966, 214). As Boswell (1988) points out (though not about this passage in particular), the source of some of Jäsche’s interpolations might have been the copies of notes from Kant’s logic lectures in general circulation among students in Königsberg. And with that in mind, the source of the spruce-willow-linden example might be, e.g., WL (24:905). Even if this could be determined, however, it would not by itself take us any closer to attributing the view to Kant himself.

all empirical conditions under which our understanding is exercised' (A52-3/B77). Previously we took those conditions to be certain psychological facts that make it such that we are liable not to judge as we ought to judge. However, it is possible to take a more inclusive — and more overtly positive — view of what some of these 'empirical conditions' might be. When we talk about putting our cognitive capacities to use, we introduce broadly practical considerations about how we ought to conduct ourselves in particular epistemic circumstances. The spruce-willow-linden example, as I will explain, presupposes such considerations: it makes no sense without them. That is why it is out of place, and confuses the account of reflection that LJ§§5-6 puts on offer.

The received view, as I have noted, relies on LJ§§5-6 in its entirety — and takes the spruce-willow-linden example as showing in some concrete case how the mental operations sketched above the line are deployed to generate a particular concept, such as *tree*. However, the spruce-willow-linden example presupposes that the three representations are appropriately comparable to one another, that they 'belong together' in the first place. If that is the case, then the task of reflection would be to bring out the rule that is already implicit in this recognition. But if *that* is the case, then we don't have an account of the generation of a concept; we at most have an account of the grasping or thinking a concept that is already in the subject's possession. The passage is plainly circular if it is read as an account of the generation of a concept.²⁹ Similar concerns would extend to Kant's remarks about reflection in the First Introduction to the *Critique of Judgment*: 'To reflect [*Reflectiren (überlegen)*] [...] is to compare and to hold together given representations either with others or with one's faculty of cognition, in relation to a concept thereby made possible' (EE 20:211). Here, too, we find talk of a comparison of various representations with one another.³⁰ But there can be no directive to compare two things without some standard or feature in virtue of which they are to be compared.³¹ Presumably that is why Kant here presents reflection as a matter of comparing given representations *in relation to a concept*:

²⁹ For discussion of the circularity of the spruce-willow-linden example, see Newton (2012). Longuenesse (1998, 116) acknowledges that it makes no sense to interpret the three mental acts as following upon one another sequentially; but her suggestion that the three operations all 'proceed simultaneously' does not obviously save the account from circularity.

³⁰ Kant seems to refer simultaneously to two conceptions of reflection in this passage: the first involves comparing representations *with one another*, the second comparing representations *with one's faculty of cognition*. Only the former bears directly on the notion of reflection at issue in LJ§§5-6; the latter is connected to the notion of reflection in applied logic, but I cannot elaborate on that here. Cf. Zuckert (2007, 65n2).

³¹ A referee suggests that children's workbooks often include directions to compare various items without specifying a rule or standard of comparison: they just say, e.g., 'circle the one that does not belong'. But what is presupposed here is exactly what is presupposed in the spruce-willow-linden example: namely that the items are appropriately comparable in the first place. Such workbooks might only enable children to more explicitly grasp concepts that are, in some sense, already in their possession.

the concept is the rule in virtue of which the representations are to be compared. But then this is followed up with the claim that this comparing in relation to a concept is also what *makes that concept possible*. The comparison requires the concept that it also makes possible. This is puzzling; and one response might be to wonder whether Kant means to make a point about the *generation* of concepts at all.

Ginsborg (2006) attempts to address the circularity problem by suggesting that there must be a limited range of natural sorting dispositions which make it such that, for example, a six-year-old will be able to see that a piece of chalk ‘belongs’ with a stone rather than with a balloon, even if she cannot give an account of the basis of this association. If Alma, who sorts in this way, sees Bruno putting the chalk with a balloon, then, Ginsborg suggests, she will either assume that he is going about it *incorrectly*, or else that he is not engaged in sorting at all. That is Alma’s attitude: what could possibly justify it? Ginsborg considers this worry and replies that ‘[f]or the most part, human beings naturally converge in the ways they are inclined to sort objects and, correspondingly, to associate representations: If they did not, we could never come to attach a common meaning to words like “tree” and “solid.” So disagreements like that between Alma and Bruno rarely arise, and, if they do, they tend to be quickly resolved’ (2006, 57). The idea is to save the spruce-willow-linden example (and its ilk) from circularity by appeal to primitive sorting dispositions. These dispositions are not themselves concepts. Rather, concepts are supposed to arise from the *recognition that* some particular engagement of a primitive sorting disposition is *appropriate*.

I doubt that an appeal to natural sorting dispositions could get us so far. The envisaged dispute between Alma and Bruno has to do with what sorting principle is *relevant* or *appropriate* in the given situation. But Bruno might have perfectly good reasons to sort the chalk with the balloon: perhaps he notices that they are both pink, or the same ovoid shape. What should make his doing so inappropriate, exactly? For Bruno and Alma, different features of things figure as salient, given some bare directive to sort. Considerations of salience answer to ends. They may have good reason to pay attention to different things if they care to understand different things.

My point here is really very simple. It is widely supposed that LJ§§5-6 tells a story about concept generation; and it is in turn widely supposed that this is what ‘logical reflection’ is, for Kant — namely some mental operation by which concepts are generated from non-conceptual materials. But the putative account of concept generation, as it figures in LJ§§5-6, is deeply flawed: so why treat it as *locus classicus* for working out what Kant takes reflection to be? This does not rule out the possibility that Kant might provide an account of concept generation in

another context; but I don't think that there is any one place where he does this.³² And if such an account could be reconstructed, it would need to draw widely — from sources well beyond the bounds of pure general logic. It could not set to one side the empirical conditions of judgment, where (as we noted in connection with applied logic) we face a broadly practical problem about how to put our cognitive capacities to use.³³ And it could not set to one side substantive requirements for thinking about objects in a given domain. LJ§§5-6 offers no viable account of concept generation; and if the passage belongs to pure general logic, we should not expect it to, either.

6. *Reflection in the Amphiboly*

My aim in this section is to show how the foregoing account of reflection helps to shed light on what is going on in the Amphiboly, where Kant mentions a 'logical' reflection and speaks for the first time about 'transcendental' reflection. Mostly, it is the influence of applied logic on this discussion that needs to be brought out more clearly.

The Amphiboly is a complex chapter, because it alludes (albeit without clear signals) to several different ideas about reflection from eighteenth-century logic. Kant opens with general remarks about reflection (A260-1/B316-7), before introducing the notion of transcendental reflection (A261/B317). He then contrasts logical and transcendental reflection: the latter Kant regards as a 'duty [*Pflicht*] that no one can renounce if he wants to judge something about things a priori' (A263/B319). The bulk of the Amphiboly is then given over to a polemic against Leibniz, who is charged with having reflected logically when he ought to have reflected transcendently (A263/B319ff). The central interpretive challenge is to explain what transcendental reflection is, as it contrasts with the notion of logical reflection at issue. I will also locate transcendental reflection in relation to the distinct notions of reflection that I have identified as corresponding to pure and applied logic. Here I will reject the interpretation of

³² Ginsborg supposes that the third *Critique* 'is explicitly concerned with the issue [of the formation of] empirical concepts' (1997, 66). But is it, really? Although Kant points out that the power of judgment is not merely a capacity to determine particulars under concepts that are already 'given' or available, 'but is also, conversely, one for finding the general for the particular' (EE 20:209-10), this basic acknowledgement of a 'reflecting' power of judgment seems to me a rather thin support for such a thesis. For in fact empirical concept formation is scarcely discussed in the main text of the third *Critique* at all, as Zuckert — who, like Ginsborg, offers some reconstruction of Kant's position on this issue — points out (2007, 45).

³³ To clarify: any Kantian reconstruction of the generation of concepts would need to draw on sources that *include* certain broadly practical considerations that should figure in any account of what it is to make good use of our cognitive capacities in judgment. Applied logic does not abstract from these considerations; but that does not commit me to the claim that concept generation is, or should be, treated under the aegis of applied logic. Further, I am not committing myself on the textual or philosophical viability of any such reconstruction.

Smit (1999), who takes transcendental reflection to be the reflection proper to transcendental logic. I argue instead that transcendental reflection falls under the scope of an *applied* logic.

Let's start with the question of how to understand the 'logical' reflection at issue in the Amphiboly. Commentators have generally taken this to refer to a notion of reflection proper to pure general logic — which they invariably consider on Kant's own terms, rather than on the terms of Kant's German rationalist predecessors. So they take logical reflection to refer either to pure apperception as a constitutive requirement of thought (Smit 1999) or, more typically, as a mental operation involved in the generation of concepts (e.g., Longuenesse 1998). On my view, the reference to logical reflection alludes to German rationalist logic; and indeed we have already seen (in §5a) the relevant notion of reflection surfacing in Meier's logic textbook from which Kant lectured over many years. For Meier, reflection is trained on concepts already at hand, considering their points of identity and difference in order to clarify their content through their articulation into a systematic whole. With that in mind, let us consider Kant's polemic against Leibniz in overview.

Kant is concerned to expose Leibniz's ambiguous employment of the 'concepts of reflection', which are listed in the following four pairs: (1) *identity* and *difference*; (2) *agreement* and *opposition*; (3) *inner* and *outer*; and (4) the *determinable* and the *determination* (or *matter* and *form*). Kant presents the concepts of reflection as rules for comparing concepts (A262/B318). He sets out to show how some of the central tenets of Leibniz's metaphysics arise from an 'amphiboly': i.e., an ambiguous discourse that does not distinguish whether its claims concern objects that can only be given as appearances (*phenomena* or *sensibilia*), or whether its claims concern objects of the intellect (*noumena* or *intelligibilia*). Although this will prove to be a familiar theme throughout the course of the ensuing Transcendental Dialectic, it should be noted that the Dialectic is particularly concerned to identify, in systematic fashion, the errors that arise from applying the *categories* beyond the bounds of possible experience. Thus the Dialectic relies directly on the results of the Transcendental Analytic, which restrict the legitimate employment of the categories to phenomenal objects. By contrast, Kant does not think that any such foundational argument about the limits of any legitimate employment of the 'concepts of reflection' is possible.

This is because they are the concepts guiding any 'logical' reflection, where logical reflection is understood in the terms we find in Meier: namely, as a comparison of concepts to determine their relation to one another in a system. The concepts of reflection are simply rules for the organisation of thought; they are not rules for thought about any particular kind of object, as the categories are rules governing any thought about phenomena. Consider what Kant has to say about the concepts of matter and form, which he presses into service throughout his

own *Critique*: ‘These are two concepts which underlie all other reflection [*Reflexion*], so inseparably are they bound up with any employment of the understanding’ (A266/B322). The establishment of any systematic or taxonomic order requires that one distinguish genera and the species that fall under them, where the species is the determination of the genus through some specific difference (A266/B322). We are reflecting ‘logically’ whenever we compare concepts or rules under the guidance of some such systematic orientation. There is nothing wrong with logical reflection; it simply provides no sufficient basis for *metaphysics*, or for any knowledge of objects.

Now, Kant charges Leibniz with having reflected merely ‘logically’ when he ought to have reflected ‘transcendentally’ — and thereby shirking what Kant presents as a ‘duty’ from which no metaphysician can rightfully claim an exemption (A263/319). Basically, Kant is saying that Leibniz failed to care about the substantive requirements on thinking relative to a certain domain, and instead cared only about the systematic coherence of his thought. For Kant’s charge is that Leibniz failed to consider whether any given claim concerns objects in a sensible or a merely intelligible world. A comparison of concepts in metaphysics requires that one be clear about the general nature of the object represented through the concepts in question: i.e., whether it is phenomenal or noumenal. Such comparison ‘requires in the first place a reflection [*Überlegung*], that is, a determination of the location to which the representations of the things that are being compared belong, whether pure understanding thinks them or sensibility gives them in appearance’ (A269/B325). This is transcendental reflection.

Here we need to consider carefully why we should not follow Smit in taking transcendental reflection to be the reflection that is proper to transcendental logic. Pure general logic and transcendental logic both fall in the left column of my table: both are ‘pure’, or identify *constitutive* requirements on thought. Transcendental logic differs in that it is not general: it is *domain-relative*. To get the notion of reflection proper to transcendental logic, we should start with the notion of reflection proper to pure general logic, and consider how it is inflected for thought about objects in the relevant domain. If the reflection that is proper to pure general logic is pure apperception, then the reflection proper to transcendental logic should be pure apperception as it makes possible the synthetic unity of representation that underlies any cognition of objects in the domain of nature.³⁴

³⁴ Smit (1999, 210-13) would seem to agree with how I have characterised the reflection proper to transcendental logic; but he takes this to be nothing other than *transcendental* reflection. I am arguing, by contrast, that transcendental reflection must fall under the scope of an applied, domain-relative logic. Later in the same paper, Smit claims that transcendental reflection is carried out in the *Critique* itself as an integral part of its method (see also Westphal [2004] for a similar idea). Smit does not clearly account for the relation between the two (seemingly quite different) claims about transcendental reflection; moreover,

If we follow Smit and take transcendental reflection to be the reflection that is proper to transcendental logic, then we cannot take seriously Kant's presentation of it as a *duty* — as something that one is obligated to do. By Smit's lights, transcendental reflection should be something that we are all already doing anyway, by sheer analytic default, simply in having thoughts about objects in the domain of nature at all. And if that is right, then Kant's polemic against Leibniz makes no sense. So let us follow through with the map of my interpretation. Pure general logic and transcendental logic are alike both concerned with constitutive requirements on thought; and both abstract from the problem of how to make good use of one's cognitive capacities. The Amphiboly that Kant appended to his transcendental logic³⁵ does not abstract from this problem. Perhaps that is why it appears in an *appendix*: i.e., to signal that we are now in the territory of applied logic. But we are not in the territory of applied *general* logic, but instead applied *domain-relative* logic: the Amphiboly is concerned with how to make good use of one's cognitive capacities in theoretical metaphysics. Accordingly, it is here that we are introduced to transcendental reflection as a *normative* requirement on anyone who wants to judge about things *a priori*.

Transcendental reflection figures as the reflection that is proper to a particular project of applied, domain-relative logic. In applied *general* logic, the requirement to reflect is to consider the source of one's taking things to be a certain way, to consider whether it is appropriately grounded to entitle one to make a cognitive claim. Transcendental reflection should only add to this a commitment to consider whether one's claims are appropriately grounded in the relevant substantive principles. A recent account of transcendental reflection focuses on this last point (de Boer, 2010): it is right to do so, but it neglects the background of applied logic. Without appreciating that background, Kant's provocative claim that transcendental reflection is a 'duty' remains mysterious. When we do recognise that transcendental reflection falls within the scope of an applied logic, we can then see that its most basic instruction is to stand guard against prejudice — specifically those that normally afflict speculative metaphysicians. We are then better poised to make sense of it as an epistemic duty.

Now, the upshot of Kant's polemic against Leibniz in the Amphiboly is that we can reflect logically without its being the case that our thought is true of anything. This belongs to a broader charge that Kant seems to want to lodge against dogmatic metaphysics as a particular

his second proposal goes unsubstantiated by any consideration of Kant's explicit remarks on philosophical method, including that of the *Critique*. (Cf. de Boer [2010, 62n18], on Paton.)

³⁵ Or the 'positive' part of it, at any rate — the part that establishes the relevant constitutive principles, in the Transcendental Analytic. The 'negative' part of transcendental logic follows; it draws on these results to adjudicate, systematically and comprehensively (in Kant's view), the errors of dogmatic metaphysics, in the Transcendental Dialectic.

failing of ‘cultivated’ understanding. Kant distinguishes common from ‘cultivated’ understanding (KU 5:293), or likewise from scientific or learned understanding (Anth 7:139-40; cf. LJ 9:19). Common understanding grasps concepts and principles *in concreto*, that is, in their application to particular cases. Scientific or learned understanding grasps concepts and principles *in abstracto* — and so as rules the content of which one appreciates through their relation to one another in a coherent system. The liability of learned understanding is to rest too much confidence in the systematic organisation of thought. It is striking that a philosopher as sanguine as Kant evidently was about the merits of systematic cognition would have issued the following warning to his logic students:

In almost all parts of learnedness, the prejudice of unity occurs.

A system is distinguished by nothing other than the fact that there is unity in it. The human understanding, however, is such that it approves everything in which a unity can be found, and from this arises the prejudice for unity, of course. (LB 24:189-90)

Although we should not make too much of stray remarks in the Nachlass, in fact this remark proves not to be much of a loner at all. The record of later logic lectures shows him returning to the prejudice of unity, classing it among the prejudices of ‘egoism [Eigenliebe]’ (WL 24:879; see also RL-2564 [addendum from 1790s], 16:418). We might consider this in light of Kant’s suggestion, in the *Critique*, that the speculative metaphysician falls into a special kind of ‘self-conceit’ (A735/B763). How are we to understand this? It helps to recognise that Kant consistently identifies two broad, and complementary, classes of prejudice. The more familiar variety are the prejudices of cognitive passivity, which are largely at issue, for example, in Kant’s popular essay, ‘What is Enlightenment?’. The less familiar variety are the prejudices of ‘logical egoism’, which are distinguished as a preference for whatever is ‘the product of one’s own understanding, e.g., one’s own system’ (LJ 9:80).³⁶ — regardless, that is, of whether or not it is *true*. Kant also consistently takes a defining mark of logical egoism to be an indifference to whether and how one’s judgments cohere with those of others. But what about logical egoism in the case of the speculative metaphysician, who makes claims about how things are that go beyond the bounds of possible experience? Such egoism can presumably be understood as an indifference to whether and how one’s claims cohere with what can be appreciated from the perspective of sound common human understanding, where principles are grasped *in concreto* as they are put to use in the determination of particulars.

³⁶ The division is marked, although not in these exact terms, at LJ 9:78-80; cf. Meier (1752, 46 [§170]). See also Kant’s remarks on logical egoism at Anth 7:128, as well as LPh 24:428, LBu 24:643, LD-W 24:740, RL-2563 (16:418) and RL-2564 (16:418).

The problem of how to make good use of our cognitive capacities, considered in regard to metaphysics, motivates the entire project of the *Critique*. This is made evident in the *Critique*'s opening paragraph. There Kant reckons that when we adopt cognitive aims 'without reflection [*ohne Überlegung*]' we are liable to set out on inquiries for which our capacities are constitutionally inadequate (Bvii). With this, Kant has in mind above all certain inquiries in traditional metaphysics. Thus he points to some variety of reflection that involves evaluative attention to the appropriateness of some particular cognitive aim — say, to find a proof for the existence of God — relative to our capacities. To adopt a cognitive aim *with reflection* is to consider whether it befits some larger whole, which is here the capacity of human understanding as such. But when we get into the details of the central arguments of the *Critique*, we find ourselves at some remove from the ground-level problems we all face about how to make good use of our cognitive capacities. Perhaps this is why commentators have generally failed to appreciate how the project of the *Critique* is motivated by the same concerns as applied logic. However, these concerns surface in the Amphiboly, where transcendental reflection is presented as an antidote to some of the special prejudices of the learned — at least those that normally afflict speculative metaphysicians.

7. Conclusion

My aim has been to reorient scholarly discussion of Kant's conception of reflection. I drew both upon the distinction between pure and applied logic, and the distinction between domain-independent and domain-relative logic, to identify distinct senses of reflection figuring in each. These results are summed up in the table presented in §2. The crucial distinction in my account is the one drawn on the horizontal axis, between pure and applied logic. For it enables us to distinguish reflection as constitutively required for thought, versus reflection as normatively required to make good use of one's cognitive capacities in judgment. I have busied myself here with distinguishing these two; how they might relate to one another is a story for another day.³⁷

³⁷ I wish to thank the following individuals: Hyong Sung Kim, Markos Valaris, and four anonymous referees for this journal for helpful comments on various versions of this paper; Katherine Dunlop, for discussion; Toshiro Osawa for research assistance; Andrea Kern and the participants of her philosophy seminar in Leipzig, who convinced me of the need to distinguish more clearly between normative and constitutive notions of reflection. Work on this paper was funded by a grant from the Australian Research Council (DP130100172).

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References to Kant's works, with the exception of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, follow volume and page of the German Academy of Sciences edition. References to the *Critique of Pure Reason* follow the pagination of the first and second editions, abbreviated A/B. Translations are my own, although I have consulted the translations in the Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant when available (and, in the case of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the Norman Kemp Smith translation as well). The following abbreviations are used:

Anth	<i>Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View</i> (Ak. 7)
EE	First Introduction to the <i>Critique of the Power of Judgment</i> (Ak. 20)
G	<i>Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals</i> (Ak. 4)
KpV	<i>Critique of Practical Reason</i> (Ak. 5)
KU	<i>Critique of the Power of Judgment</i> (Ak. 5)
LB	<i>Logik Blomberg</i> [early 1770s] (Ak. 24)
LBu	<i>Logik Busolt</i> [c.1789] (Ak. 24)
LD-W	<i>Logik Dohna-Wundlacken</i> [c.1792] (Ak. 24)
LJ	<i>Logik Jäsche</i> (Ak. 9)
LPh	<i>Logik Philippi</i> [1772] (Ak. 24)
LPö	<i>Logik Pölitz</i> [early 1780s] (Ak. 24)
MMrong	<i>Metaphysik Mrongovius</i> [early 1780s] (Ak. 29)
MS	<i>Metaphysics of Morals</i> (Ak. 6)
Prol	<i>Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics</i> (Ak. 4)
RA	<i>Reflexionen zur Anthropologie</i> (Ak. 15)
RL	<i>Reflexionen zur Logik</i> (Ak. 16)
WL	<i>Wiener Logik</i> [early 1780s] (Ak. 24)

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