

Kant's Refutations of Idealism

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Kant attempted to reply to a position he describes as “idealism” in a number of different phases of his writing including “pre-critical” pieces, the two editions of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, lecture courses on metaphysics and *Reflexionen* written after the publication of the second edition of the *Critique*. Whilst others have attempted to form a view about the relation between the different formulations of Kant’s refutations of the position he terms “idealism” the problem with these attempts consists in the types of contrast they describe between the positions Kant is attacking under this name and the one he defends under the heading of “transcendental” idealism. The nature of the contrast between these forms of idealism for most contemporary philosophers can be captured by stating that the “idealism” Kant is attacking is either sceptical or metaphysical whilst the one that he is defending is *epistemological*.¹ Whilst this view has long been standard it has also faced competition from those who instead view Kantian idealism as a metaphysical doctrine in its own right but in so viewing it regard it as a form of dogmatic position that much of Kant’s procedure and methods do not require with the result that it becomes possible for these interpreters to separate the “achievements” of Kant from his metaphysics.² Advocates of this latter approach have been particularly attracted to consideration of Kant’s repeated attempts to provide a “refutation” of idealism finding in such attempts a creditworthy endeavour to criticize metaphysics on the basis of epistemological grounds that can be separated from the metaphysical position of transcendental idealism. In general terms then the present consensus in Kantian scholarship can be summarized by stating that either

Kantian idealism is epistemological or the real achievements of Kantian approaches and methodologies are epistemological and that in neither case does one wish to see Kant as contributing to the nefarious enquiry that is “metaphysics”.³ In this paper however I will examine the nature of Kant’s consistent responses to “idealism” as part and parcel of his advocacy of an ontological position that he terms *transcendental* idealism and the primary thesis of which is summarized for me in the following statement from the *Metaphysik Dohna*: “A phenomenon is in itself no substance, with respect to our senses we call the appearance of substance itself substance. But this phenomenal substance <*substantia phenomenon*> must have a noumenon as substrate. This can be called transcendental idealism.” (Ak. 28: 682)

This conception of transcendental idealism as setting out the nature of phenomenal substances and deriving from the conditions of them an account of their substrate is an ontological one. To articulate this view requires an understanding of the views to which Kant is responding. Broadly speaking the views to which he is responding can be characterized as holding *either* that the phenomenon with which we are confronted is itself substantial and requires no further substrate *or* as stating that the true characteristics of substances can be captured through a description of internal determinations alone *or* as claiming that the appearance of things in experience is an illusion. These three claims are at the heart of one or the other of the doctrines that Kant dismisses with the claim that they are “idealism”. The suggestion that the phenomenon we are confronted with is itself substantial is equivalent to what Kant describes in the Fourth Paralogism as “transcendental realism”; a position there closely connected to “empirical idealism” which latter states that the existence of outer objects is uncertain (A368-70). Kant thus connects the transcendental realist identification of phenomena with substances to the sceptical position that the reality of our perceptions of external objects is doubtful.

The claim that the true characteristics of substances can be captured through internal principles alone can be seen to be a consequence of the view that the reality of our perceptions of external objects is doubtful and the Cartesian claim that only the *cogito* is certain is closely connected to this view. However, whilst this would suggest that the claimed knowledge of substances through internal principles alone was part of sceptical or problematic forms of idealism there are good grounds for rejection of this identification. Another ground for the view that only internal principles can capture the true characteristics of substances is found in Leibniz's arguments to the effect that the ground of connection between substances and the basis of change in any one substance can only be found within the internal grounds of the substance, a view that is at the foundation of his *Monadology*. Kant identifies this position as a form of "idealism" and replies to it as early as 1755 and is still engaging in a reply to it that involves the explicit claim that this position is "idealism" in the discussion of the Second Antinomy.

The claim that the appearance of things in space is an illusion is clearly a form of what Kant eventually terms "dogmatic" idealism and he associates this position with different thinkers at different times but first articulates an account of the relationship between space and substantial interaction as a reply to Leibniz in the *Physical Monadology* of 1756. The response to this view is still important in the treatment of the Inaugural Dissertation where Kant takes a central question to be the discernment of the principle on which the relation of substances which we intuitively term space to rest (Ak. 2: 407). The fact that this question is so central in the Dissertation suggests reasons for taking the response to it to still be important in the reply to idealism in the *Critique*.

Now that the position that Kant is attacking under the name of "idealism" has been articulated through the discernment of its central features it only remains to ask what unites the three positions in question so that Kant can

associate them with each other. The suggestion that phenomena are substances would lead to the conception that we are confronted with things that are constitutively independent of any cognitive conception of them and would prompt the problem that is stated as a sceptical thesis in the view generally termed by Kant “empirical idealism”. The conception that substances are known through internal predicates alone would lead to one of two forms of reductionism, namely that the true nature of composite things is found in simple parts or in the conception that the internal states of the knower must be the ground of external appearances to them. Finally the suggestion that spatial appearances are illusory is a special form of the claim to find true properties in internal predicates only. Put together the forms of idealism Kant has trouble with evince a difficulty with the nature of “matter” either in the form of finding internal problems with its very notion (which leads to the appeal to simples) or in finding no certainty in our apprehension of it (which leads to the appeal to the *cogito* as the only ground of certainty).

By contrast with such a “material” idealism Kant advances a position known as “transcendental” idealism which he connects with a claimed empirical realism. Against the claim that phenomena are substances he articulates a case for how we can view them as such whilst denying their constitutive independence from us, thus aiming to reply both to transcendental realism and empirical idealism; against the claim that substances can be known through internal principles alone he aims to demonstrate that internal properties can only be known through external ones; against the view that the appearance of things in space is an illusion and that space itself is an illusion he presents a set of arguments to the effect that without spatial determinations no presentation of anything to perception would be possible and thus that spatial conditions give us a criteria for actual reality in experience. The nature of these elements when put together requires definite theses concerning substances, phenomena, internal and external principles and the nature

of space. Briefly put they indicate the view that substances are twofold, existing both as the substrate of phenomena and also having a status within phenomena which latter is derivative of the former; that internal principles or states are generally held to be derivative of external principles or states and that temporal states are in some important sense derivative of spatial ones. These three general claims are constitutive of the doctrine of transcendental idealism, which thus emerges as a metaphysical view, not merely an epistemological one. The argument that I will now advance for this conclusion will consider the ways in which these arguments are given in different formulations of the “refutation” of “idealism” from the 1750’s to the 1790’s. I will take each of the three strategies that Kant uses against “idealism” and indicate some of the ways his use of them develops and, in the process, assess the prospects of each of them as a strategy for responding to material idealism.

Substance, Phenomena and Substrate

The first place that Kant sets out an argument that describes substance as the substrate of phenomena that still in some sense is reflected within the rules of the latter is in the Inaugural Dissertation. The argument to this effect is based on the way that Kant here describes the difference between the form and principles of two types of world, the phenomenal and the noumenal. Here Kant already describes the principles of phenomena as grounded on the “laws of *intuition*” (Ak. 2: 387) connecting these to the accounts of space and time. In the first element of the work Kant indicates also a rudimentary defence of Ideas of reason as concepts that do not come *under* the laws of intuitive cognition whilst also not *contradicting* these laws.

Just as Kant arrives at the understanding of intuition as the basis of sensitive cognition so he also already here rules out the possibility of intellectual intuition as for us it is required, to conceive of things as connected with each other, to relate them to a form of nature that contains in itself the

principle of such connection. This principle expresses for us the rule of sensible cognition which is a rule by which we are *affected* and hence is not something that we *produce*. That this is not intellectual for us is shown by the nature of concepts as abstract universals whilst the form of presentation of intuition is through singulars and this latter makes us receptive. It follows for Kant on this basis that what is given in concepts is an understanding of noumena and that hence sensibility does not show us “the internal and absolute quality of objects” but despite this being the case what is given through phenomena is, he states, true (Ak. 2: 397). The nature of the truth of phenomena at this stage of his thinking is based on the order of the phenomenal arising from the laws of intuition in a constant manner with the suggestion that such laws point to the appearance of substances whilst the substances in themselves however are arrived at and their relation deduced by a purely rational argument that effectively reprises the cosmological proof for the existence of God.⁴

The Dissertation thus argues for substance as a concept reflective of something within phenomena but as also being the substrate of the latter and as being cognised by means of principles that are different from those of sensitive cognition. The bringing together of the sensible and intelligible here does still rely on a traditional rationalist move even if it contains novel elements. The strategy of response to idealism is explicitly aimed both at the transcendental realist view of space and at its corollary, the empirical idealist view that connections within the world are ideal, not real. What ruins this attempt however is that the correlation between intelligible and sensible still relies on viewing the latter as intrinsically derivative of the former, a move that invites a reductive understanding of the supposed truth revealed within phenomenal connections.

When this strategy of argument against idealism is revived within the *Critique* the relation between substance and phenomena has undergone considerable changes. The understanding of substance as a pure concept is safeguarded

here but its connection to phenomena occurs through the process of schematization. Substance is subjected to schematization in the argument of the First Analogy and the notion of connection between substances as given in the concept of community is further schematized in the Third Analogy. The connection between these two elements of the Analytic of Principles is essential to the grasp of how Kant uses this strategy in his response to material idealism.

The First Analogy argument rests on the understanding of the change that is presented within appearances as requiring something unchanging for the notion of change to be given to us at all. The elements of the argument that are important for seeing it as part of Kant's strategy of response to material idealism include however the presentation of time as not merely the form of inner sense but also as that which is *permanent* in inner sense constituting time therefore as the "substratum" of appearances. Otherwise put, if time is the universal condition of all appearances by which we see anything as successive or simultaneous then time is in general the substrate or ground of anything appearing at all. This indicates that time itself must hence be a permanent or unchanging basis that enables change to be noticed.

Since one of the senses of the concept of substance is as substratum Kant in a sense here has brought substance and temporality in close connection. However, just as we have reached the conclusion that time itself is the basis on which changes within time can be given and is thus permanent, so we also must note that the condition of anything being perceived must be by means *of* time which latter leads to the conclusion that time itself is not perceived. This leads Kant to make the point that "the permanent in the appearances is therefore the substratum of all determination of time" (A183/B226) or that the appearances must contain in themselves perceptions that correlate to the permanence that we have found to be given in time itself as without such correlation there would be no grounds for them being given to us *by* time. The short way that Kant attempts to show the permanent in the appearances as expressed in the objects

themselves of perception is by reference to the constancy of the *matter* of intuition which matter only suffers alteration of *form* (A185/B228). This claim about the nature of the *matter* of intuition is also related to the argument of the Anticipations of Perception that there cannot be appearances given without an object of sensation which latter always has a given *degree* of being given, a “law of intuition” that is not merely formal. Just as the arguments of the Anticipations and the First Analogy suggest a basis for phenomenal claims of substance in terms of endurance of action as based on the continuity of the matter of such action so the Third Analogy connects to these points the further demonstration of the rules of appearance that permit the appearances of perceptual objects when Kant states: “Without community each perception of an appearance in space is broken off from every other, and the chain of empirical representations, that is, experience, would have to begin entirely anew with each object, without the least connection with the preceding representation, and without standing to it in any relation of time” (A214/B260).

Here Kant adds to the demonstrations already given the point that what space gives to appearances is the ground of community of perception from one event to another and hence that it is *the ground* of the continuity of perception between events that permits the appearance before us of something as a perceptual object. Hence, without space, there could be no enduring appearance of perceptual objects. Further, these perceptual objects are the basis of our reference to the enduring *matter* of perception, which serves as the phenomenal form of substance. So it is space that provides us finally with the ground of the claimed continuity between the elements of the matter of intuition as time alone, as given in perception, would generate only succession or, otherwise put, space is the ground of the aspect of time that we term duration in perception.

The connection of these points to the “refutation” argument becomes apparent when we note that in the Fourth Paralogism Kant replies to transcendental realism and

empirical idealism there by reference precisely to the claim that space and time present us with laws of intuition that enable us to sustain an empirical realism with regard to *perception*. In the argument of the Fourth Paralogism Kant attends to the argument that external objects are uncertain by distinguishing between the “transcendental object” which is allowed only problematic status as possible ultimate ground of outer intuitions and “the object of which we are thinking in the representations of matter and of corporeal things” (A372) which is an *empirical* object that requires connection to conditions of experience, space and time. Such an empirical object is material and “necessarily presupposes perception” (A373) which requires sensation to be experienced. The condition for discussion of external objects is hence here declared to follow from making the transcendental distinction between appearances and things-in-themselves so that, as Kant explicitly puts it, “The real of outer appearances is therefore real in perception only, and can be real in no other way” (A376).

The conditions of perceptions are conditions of the *matter* of intuition and the correlation of such matter to the *form* of intuition is precisely set out in the relation between the arguments of the Anticipations and the Analogies. Perceptions produce knowledge of objects and whilst illusions and dreams are possible the very possibility of them is grounded on the conditions of perception first being given as a ground of description of objects. The violations of rules of objective determinations that are given in such phenomena as dreams are imaginary variations on the expression of connections given in empirical laws and are derivative of the latter.

The fact that the argument of the Fourth Paralogism relies on this strategy of response to material idealism might already however be thought to count against this strategy given that this argument is eliminated from the second edition of the *Critique* and replaced by the explicit refutation of idealism. However it is less the use of this strategy than the means of its expression in the argument of the Fourth Paralogism that is at fault. In the argument of the Fourth

Paralogism Kant consistently refers to space and the objects presented by means of it as “representations”, a move that allowed readers of the first edition of the *Critique*, despite Kant’s precautions to the contrary, to conflate transcendental and empirical forms of idealism as the term “representation” was interpreted to mean something akin to Cartesian “ideas”. Hence the argument of the second edition “refutation” involves an explicit repudiation of this term “representation” in order that the argument that was made using it could be restated.

That it was not the use of this strategy itself as a response to material idealism that was repudiated in the re-writing of the Fourth Paralogism is further evidenced by the response to the Second Antinomy. Kant in presenting the resolution of the antinomy concerning the status of simples departs from the pre-Critical defence of them to an assertion that the status of phenomenal substance is such as to show the lack of need to refer to them. Substance as represented in space is nothing other than “body” we are told here. Body is not an absolute subject as “it is nothing at all save as an intuition in which un-conditionedness is never to be met with” (A526/B554), a point that demonstrates that sensible cognition can supply no correlate to simplicity which does not however prevent it from having reality. The response to the Second Antinomy is a reply to the dogmatic idealist contention that matter is a concept full of contradictions and in replying to the description of matter as involved in a mathematical conundrum Kant basically points to how the intuitive conditions of objects are not equivalent to those of figures.

The Derivation of Internal Principles From External

This first strategy suggests a disconnection between the notion of substance as a reference to something beyond all conditions of perception (which he terms the concept of a “transcendental object”) and the use of a notion correlating to that of substance in phenomena without repeating the dependence of connection in experience

between substances as based on a proof of the existence of God. We can hence see with it a development of thought and a reply by means of it to the coupled postulates of transcendental realism and empirical idealism whether the latter is conceived of as based on a comprehension of substances that negates the reality of phenomena or as a doubt that anything in experience matches the conditions of substances.

The second strategy I will examine is however less arcane than this first one and whilst less explicitly ontological does have in its ancestry a response to Leibnizian views of substance. In the *New Elucidation* Kant specifically targeted the view that what can be truly known concerning substances is an internal principle, the view that Leibniz presents in his *Monadology*.⁵ Since Leibniz there argues nonetheless for change arising from the internal principles of the monad the centre of Kant's argument in this piece is to suggest that the basis of change is connection *between* substances with the corollary that a substance that existed *alone* could not change.⁶ Kant gives some arguments against this that are logical as when he claims that principles that were internal to a substance could not change without an alteration of the grounds that they posit as any given principle must exclude its opposite. A different argument that appears to be based on logical considerations but involves something beyond them begins with the observation that a determining ground that posits something concerning a substance states something and that what is stated *by* it should be simultaneous *with* it. On the basis of this appeal to an equivocation in the notion of positing determinations Kant draws a conclusion that brings in reference to what he will later term laws of intuition when he writes:

Thus, whatever determining factors exist in some state of a simple substance, it is necessary that all factors whatever which are determined should exist simultaneously with those determining factors. But since change is the succession of determinations, that is to say, since a change occurs when

a determination comes into being which was not previously present, and the being is thus determined to the opposite of a certain determination which belongs to it, it follows that the change cannot take place by means of those factors which are to be found within the substance. (Ak. 1: 411)

In applying this argument Kant makes clear that it is a response to Leibniz's conception of pre-established harmony, the model of causal connection that arose from the claim that substances have only internal and no external properties. However Kant is also here explicit in deriving from his defence of the Principle of Succession a response to the "idealist" claim that bodies are only problematic objects of knowledge. Since the soul, like the Leibnizian monad, is subject to change, it follows on the basis of this general argument, that there must be things present external to the soul that are in connection with it. As Kant puts this application: "we could not have a representation, which was a representation of a body and which was capable of being determined in a variety of ways, unless there was a real thing present at hand, and unless its interaction with the soul induced in it a representation corresponding to that thing" (Ak. 1: 412).

However, Kant's description of the external relation between substances in this piece is not equivalent to a demonstration that this relation is one of real interaction since the following Principle of Co-Existence bases the grounds of their connection on a schema of the divine intellect. These problems with the first implementation of this strategy of response to idealism do not however undercut the strategy itself as the demonstration that the possibility of the substance undergoing change requires connection of it to conditions that permit such change will be repeated constantly as a way of demonstrating the derivation of internal principles from external ones.

The development of this response can be seen by comparison of the argument of the *New Elucidation* to the responses to material idealism in the *Critique* and beyond.

The Fourth Paralogism takes the claim of “idealism” to consist in a conception of perception whereby there is an immediate perception of one’s own existence whilst the existence of things beyond one are given only by inference. In seeing the way the strategy of derivation of internal principles from external works in this argument we can bypass the description of the nature of objects and turn directly to the way the self is discussed. Kant here exploits an ambiguity in the conception of self-perception. Self-perception is stated to be expressed in the *cogito* but the problem is that the *cogito* contains an existential assertion, not merely an intellectual statement that requires no intuition. Kant remarks that the difference between self-perception and perception of external things is no more than a difference between inner and outer sense stating that “the immediate perception” or consciousness of either is “at the same time a sufficient proof of their reality” (A371). Quite how this claim is to be understood in this bare sense has been a subject of considerable controversy and Paul Guyer has not been alone in thinking that the first edition Fourth Paralogism argument is a kind of reduction of the ontological independence of outer objects to inner states.⁷ That the argument is in fact a description of objects as perceptual appearances that are dependent on conditions of intuition does not alter the problem that in the use of the strategy of derivation of inner properties from outer Kant in this argument does not show in what sense we are to take his claim.

This is rectified in the reformulation of this strategy in the second edition of the *Critique*, a reformulation that connects the argument of the “refutation” to the re-written Paralogisms section. The very thesis of the “refutation” already points to this strategy as exploiting the ambiguity of claims to self-perception stating that: “*The mere, but empirically determined, consciousness of my own existence proves the existence of objects in space outside me*” (B275). Here self-perception is treated, in line with the argument of the *New Exposition*, as a form of determination of

something. Also, as with the argument of the *New Exposition*, this determination is connected to the possibility of temporal presentation as Kant mentions as the first premise of his “refutation” that I am conscious of my existence as determined in time. In accordance with the argument of the First Analogy Kant then points to the condition of determination of anything within time which is that there is something given in perception as permanent. The argument to the effect that this permanence cannot express something in my own state is based on the fact that without the determination being different from me I would have nothing to measure my states in accordance with. This leads him in short order to derive the need for perception, even of myself, to include reference to something that is outer or beyond me as this permanence is the ground of time-determination itself.

This part of the argument reprises in a sense elements of the first strategy against idealism and Kant here merely hints at further development when he suggests that outer sense cannot be based on inner sense due to the fact that outer sense gives us the notion of receptivity, a notion that would not arise from inner states alone. The real centre of the argument in relation to the strategy of derivation however is grounded on the point that self-perception would require reference to *intuition* and that we have disclosed that intuition of perceptual objects as determinately stable in the manner that is claimed *for the self* in the idealist thesis, requires reference to outer intuition. A merely intellectual representation of the “I” would give only spontaneity and no correlate of receptivity and such a representation would not include an existential assertion as is given in the *cogito*. The second edition version of the Paralogisms makes this point even more evident as Kant here argues that the “I think” is “an indeterminate empirical intuition, *i.e.* perception” (B422-3n) which shows that sensation lies at its ground of stating it as an existential proposition. For an existential proposition to be asserted by means of the *cogito* perceptions have to be given and the condition for percep-

tions refers us to the rules for sensations which demonstrates that the *cogito* as existential is not purely intellectual and if we take merely the “I think” without the existential element we do have a purely intellectual representation but not one that carries with it any conviction of something being grasped as a more certain existence as nothing correlating to existence is then given.

The exploitation of the ambiguity in the *cogito* that is the operation of the strategy of the derivation of internal principles from external follows the pattern of the account of determination in the *New Exposition* but does not require reference to anything other than the grounds of experience. What the nature of what has to be given as external to me is however is less apparent from the operation of this strategy than from the one beginning from an examination of substance as there the notion that objects of perception are specifically distinct ontologically from other conceptions of object was direct whereas with this strategy only the general fact of externality could be derived, not the character of what is given as external.

That what is given as external is the basis of the internal is also expressed in certain *Reflexions* written subsequent to the *Critique*. In No. 5654 for example Kant moves from the conception of an intentional object as including a representation of a state of affairs that is distinct from transcendental apperception, to the grounds for thinking of that which is distinct from apperception being actually external to it. Here Kant makes the stronger claim that even space itself would be not present to us without outer sense which requires immediate awareness of *something* being external to us (Ak. 18: 313). The permanent that has to be intuited for succession to be given as a primary datum of time “introduces an existence insofar as it is not subject to alteration” (Ak. 18: 313). The claim of this argument to the effect that not only is the internal derivative of the external but that one of the grounds for this is that the sense of external existence is productive of the notion of outer sense is a way of understanding the conception that the pure concept of sub-

stance is *a priori* but the directness of its way of being presented here marks this argument as a development of the strategy of derivation of the internal from the external any given in the *Critique* itself. *Reflexion* 5709 gives a further ground for the argument of 5654 when Kant points out that from inner sense alone we could have no object given in intuition but this could still be understood as a derivation of the object of outer intuition from outer sense as a general faculty and not as the argument to the effect that outer sense is itself made possible by outer objects that 5654 stated.

The Derivation of Time From Space

The *reflexionen* versions of the strategy intended to show that internal principles or states are derivative of external ones have taken us towards the third kind of strategy Kant uses in response to material idealism, where he gives reasons for taking time to be derivative of space thus demonstrating that space and objects in it are not mediate inferences. The distinction of this strategy from the previous one can be clearly seen when we note that in the *New Elucidation* the argument moved from an understanding of succession requiring connection between substances and hence for the need for external principles without explicit referral to space. In the “pre-Critical” period generally Kant’s predilection is not to take space as a primary datum in its own right but as derivative of externality in general, a derivation repeated in the *reflexionen* argument to the effect that outer sense is generally based on what can be presented within it. The problems inherent in such an approach are however well indicated in the argument of the Fourth Paralogism where Kant tells us that the transcendental realist proceeds in such a manner. As he puts it there: “if we regard outer appearances as representations produced in us by their objects, and if these objects be things existing in themselves outside us, it is indeed impossible to see how we can come to know the existence

of the objects otherwise than by inference from the effect to the cause” (A372).

This point that transcendental realism proceeds by assuming that the objects external to us are productive of outer appearances within us can cut against the type of argument given in *Reflexionen* 5654 unless we are careful in how we present the notion of “objects”. As the argument of the Fourth Paralogism reminds us the notion of outer object is ambiguous between a transcendental realist claim and reference to empirical conditions of objectivity. Kant is clear that the material element of intuition presupposes perception and that such perception presents something real in space. Here the implication of the argument for the primary status of space is that what is given in space could not be invented or, in other terms, be a product of imagination. The basis of this claim is not clear in the argument of the Fourth Paralogism which does not show the grounds for thinking of time as in any way derivative of space despite the use of the ambiguity of the sense of the *cogito* in this argument.

The argument of the “Refutation” in the second edition by contrast makes clear that the basis of measurement of change *within* time is due to the reference to a permanence that cannot arise *from* time as time is only the form of inner sense. Here in the direct “refutation” argument Kant refers again to the fact that space could not be a product of imagination. The reason given is that imagination is a part of the spontaneity of the mind, whilst space is part of its receptivity to that which is beyond it; a point that follows here from the argument that the basis of successive states being captured at all is that there is something permanent given. Just as this permanence is the ground of discussion of change so also the possibility of imaginative variation of appearances is derivative of the fact that such a multi-dimensional notion as the “outer” is first given at all. The point is further made here that for the conception of the self to include perception is for the thought of it to be determined and that such determination requires reference to the stability of the outer by which the inner is determined.⁸ With this

point Kant derives the conclusion that inner experience in general is possible only on the grounds of outer experience which is a way of stating that the argument has shown the requirement of self-perception to rest on perception on that which is beyond the self *and* for temporal representation to require spatial determination. Hence in the argument of the “Refutation” Kant presents an argument that brings together elements of both the second and third strategies.

However, fundamentally the move towards showing time to be derivative of space is bound up with the conditions of self-cognition requiring reference to something beyond the self. Versions of this strategy presented in the *Reflexionen* fragments are explicit in giving further grounds for why outer sense cannot be a product of imagination, versions that point always to the rationale for thinking that we cannot even cognise ourselves without reference to something beyond us as given in outer sense. As Kant puts this in *reflexion* 5653 inner sense alone is not immediate as it alone would only yield unceasing change and that what would point to persistence is precisely space. Partly the argument here resurrects a logical objection to internality being basic as when Kant points out that if space were not entirely differently related to us than time that the form of intuition would contradict itself. This is repeated in 6311 as the basis of the claim that space cannot be a product of imagination as, if it were, it would have to be possible to present space itself as a time and thus in one dimension which would involve a contradiction of its concept.

However a more important part of the strategy that presents reasons for not taking time to be primary over space is given in 6312 when Kant repeats the argument of the Third Analogy asking the question how simultaneity is possible for us. Here Kant states that just as persistence cannot be based on succession due to the fact that succession alone would contain nothing constant so also that which is persistent must rest on the same ground as simultaneity.⁹ The argument proceeds with the direct statement that space precedes the possibility of time determination and that space

is distinct from time precisely in not being a primary consciousness of inner states but of outer ones, carrying with it reference to objects that are external to us.

The nature of the connection of the argument that derives time from space in showing that without space even the primary recognitions of succession and simultaneity could not be given with the logical argument to the effect that the claim that there was only imagination and not outer sense is contradictory is made in *reflexionen* 6315. Here Kant points out that for the idealist view that outer sense is impossible to be right would be for our inner states to have the possibility of being outer ones in the sense of taking on dimensions. The point Kant here makes is that whilst a given perception of outer phenomena can indeed be imaginary in this way that this does not license the global suggestion made by the sceptic. The reason it does not is that all intuitions would have to basically have the same form for it to be possible that they also expressed the same state and on that ground we would never have been able in the first place even to make the distinction between inner and outer. The difference in form between inner and outer sense enables the distinction between them and if it was not immediate, so Kant points out, we could never arrive at it by inference either (Ak. 18: 620).

Comparison of the Strategies and Summary

What we find when we lay the three strategies out and compare them is that whilst the first strategy works primarily as a reply to transcendental realism but requires in its turn a clear commitment to a distinction between transcendental and empirical conditions of objectivity, that the second strategy by contrast articulates a ground for thinking that whatever is inner must be mutable and due to this derivative of what is outer. The basic thrust of the second strategy leads us on to an account of the nature of phenomenal properties as requiring outer sense which we can thus at this point bring out as needing

space. Whilst the first strategy justifies empirical objects as phenomenal substances, the second the need for external accounts in order to provide a notion of durability, the third shows the grounds of such durability to be spatial. Put together the arguments suggest that phenomenal substances have to be given in space in order for them to be possible cognitions for us. The combination of the second and third strategies deflates the appeal to inner experience as something immediate whilst the first strategy indicates that the reason the retreat to the sceptical position is made is due to an initial transcendental realist view of objects. It is only the combination of the strategies that produces a general argument as to why transcendental idealism is *not* in any conventional philosophical sense an idealism as it does not involve denial of the reality of that which is given to us in intuition or reduce it to a thought but rather insists on the dual stems of sensibility and intellect for thought to become knowledge.

Endnotes

¹ This is the influential view for example of Henry Allison who describes transcendental idealism as “epistemological or perhaps ‘metaepistemological’” rather than metaphysical as “it is grounded in an analysis of the discursive nature of human cognition”. Henry Allison (2004) *Kant’s Transcendental Idealism: An Interpretation and Defense Revised and Enlarged Edition* (Yale University Press: New Haven and London), p. 4.

² Allison *op.cit.* indeed refers to the adoption of this position as requiring a “separability thesis”, one which he sees Peter Strawson as the first advocate of. The most prominent current advocate of such an approach is however Paul Guyer who articulates its presuppositions clearly in Paul Guyer (1987) *Kant and the Claims of Knowledge* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge and New York), pp. 5-6.

³ There are some partial exceptions to this consensus. Rae Langton defends a metaphysical interpretation of Kant though notably not one that involves acceptance of transcendental idealism in R. Langton (1998) *Kantian Humility: Our Ignorance of Things In Themselves* (Oxford University Press: Oxford and New York). By contrast Karl Ameriks adopts a metaphysical view of transcendental idealism and *defends* such a doctrine, something he is almost alone in doing and which ensures that his view of Kantian idealism is closer to the one advanced here than any other. The relationship between this view and that of Ameriks will be discussed elsewhere.

⁴ I am here bringing together the discussion of “idealism” in paragraphs 11 and 12 with the description of the form of the intelligible world set out in paragraphs 16-22. Whilst Kant’s argument here is meant to establish a real

and not ideal connection between the substances on the basis of what he terms a “generally established” harmony the closeness of this position to that of Leibniz is still noticeable and the contrast between this account and the description of epigenesis at B167 very striking.

⁵ Leibniz reaches the conclusion that a monad could not be altered or changed externally as quickly as paragraph 7 of the *Monadology* having previously argued for its indivisibility and permanence in quantity. The redefinition of the permanence of quantity of substance in the formulation of the principle of the First Analogy as given in the second edition of the *Critique* is clearly a reply to this element of Leibniz’s conception of substance.

⁶ This point is subsequently repeated in the argument of the Third Analogy and Kant’s argument here is partly a fore-runner of the Third Analogy although the explicit principle that echoes that of the Third Analogy in fact invokes the need to refer to God as the ground of dynamical connection between substances (Ak. 1: 412-13).

⁷ See Paul Guyer (1987) Chapter 12.

⁸ This is the ground of Kant’s claim that he has here turned the game of the idealist “against itself” (B276) as the question of what is immediate is here reversed with the reference to the inner being shown only to be mediate but this effectively belongs with the second strategy.

⁹ Here this ground is argued to be “the intelligible” which makes this a version of the phenomenal substance strategy.