

Second Chapter

*On the Deduction of the Pure Concepts of
the Understanding*

First Section

<§ 13>^a

On the

principles^b of a transcendental deduction in general.¹⁴

Jurists, when they speak of entitlements and claims, distinguish in a legal matter between the questions about what is lawful^d (*quid juris*) and

^a Paragraph number added in the second edition. In the first edition, the second chapter of the "Transcendental Analytic," the "Transcendental Deduction," is divided into three main sections, the first of which is in turn subdivided into two subsections. Apart from a few minor changes in wording, which will be noted, and the addition of the section numbers themselves, the two subsections of the first section are retained in the second edition and are identical until the last paragraph of their second subsection, which is replaced by three new paragraphs in the second edition. The second and third sections of the chapter in the first edition are then replaced by an entirely new second section in the second edition, which is broken up into numbered paragraphs § 15 through § 27. We will present all of this material in the following sequence: the first section as it appeared in both editions, with the last paragraph of the first-edition version followed by the last three paragraphs that replaced it in the second edition; the second and third sections as they appeared in the first edition; then the second section, consisting of numbered parts § 15 through § 27, as it appeared in the second edition.

^b *Prinzipien*

^c The following notes are inserted here in Kant's copy of the first edition:

"Consciousness and inner sense are different. 'I think' is spontaneity and does not depend on any object. The representation, however, with which I think, must be given to me antecedently in intuition (through imagination). With regard to it I am affected." (E XLVI, p. 25; 23:26)

"It must be proved that if there were no sensible intuition *a priori*, and if this were not the form of sensibility in the subject, with which all appearances must be in accord, then:

"1. No categories would have significance.

"2. From mere categories no synthetic *a priori* propositions at all would be possible."

(E XLVII, p. 25; 23:26)

^d was *Rechterns ist*

that which concerns the fact (*quid facti*), and since they demand proof of both, they call the first, that which is to establish the entitlement or the legal claim, the **deduction**.¹⁵ We make use of a multitude of empirical concepts without objection from anyone, and take ourselves to be justified in granting them a sense and a supposed signification even without any deduction, because we always have experience ready at hand to prove their objective reality. But there are also concepts that have been usurped, such as **fortune** and **fate**, which circulate with almost universal indulgence, but that are occasionally called upon to establish their claim by the question *quid juris*, and then there is not a little embarrassment about their deduction because one can adduce no clear legal ground for an entitlement to their use either from experience or from reason.

Among the many concepts, however, that constitute the very mixed fabric of human cognition, there are some that are also destined^a for pure use *a priori* (completely independently of all experience), and these always require a deduction of their entitlement, since proofs from experience are not sufficient for the lawfulness of such a use, and yet one must know how these concepts can be related to objects^b that they do not derive from any experience. I therefore call the explanation of the way in which concepts can relate to objects *a priori* their **transcendental deduction**, and distinguish this from the **empirical** deduction, which shows how a concept is acquired through experience and reflection on it, and therefore concerns not the lawfulness but the fact from which the possession has arisen.

Now we already have two sorts of concepts of an entirely different kind,^c which yet agree with each other in that they both relate to objects completely *a priori*, namely the concepts of space and time, as forms of sensibility, and the categories, as concepts of the understanding. To seek an empirical deduction of them would be entirely futile work, for what is distinctive in their nature is precisely that they are related to their objects without having borrowed anything from experience for their representation. Thus if a deduction of them is necessary, it must always be transcendental.

Nevertheless, in the case of these concepts, as in the case of all cognition, we can search in experience, if not for the principle^d of their possibility, then for the **occasional causes of their generation**, where the impressions of the senses provide the first occasion for opening the en-

The categories as elicited by "occasional causes"

^a bestimmt

^b Objekte

^c Kant's copy of the first edition inserts: "They are not borrowed from experience" (E XLVIII, p. 25; 23:46).

^d Prinzipium

tire power of cognition to them and for bringing about experience, which contains two very heterogeneous elements, namely a **matter** for cognition from the senses and a certain **form** for ordering it from the inner source of pure intuiting and thinking, which, on the occasion of the former, are first brought into use and bring forth concepts. Such a tracing of the first endeavors of our power of cognition to ascend from individual perceptions to general concepts is without doubt of great utility, and the famous Locke is to be thanked for having first opened the way for this. Yet a **deduction** of the pure *a priori* concepts can never be achieved in this way; it does not lie down this path at all, for in regard to their future use, which should be entirely independent of experience, an entirely different birth certificate than that of an ancestry from experiences must be produced. I will therefore call this attempted physiological derivation,¹⁶ which cannot properly be called a deduction at all because it concerns a *quaestio facti*,^a the explanation of the **possession** of a pure cognition. It is therefore clear that only a transcendental and never an empirical deduction of them can be given, and that in regard to pure *a priori* concepts empirical deductions are nothing but idle attempts, which can occupy only those who have not grasped the entirely distinctive nature of these cognitions.

But now even if the sole manner of a possible deduction of pure *a priori* cognition is conceded, namely that which takes the transcendental path, it is still not obvious that it is unavoidably necessary. We have above traced the concepts of space and time to their sources by means of a transcendental deduction, and explained and determined their *a priori* objective validity. Geometry nevertheless follows its secure course through strictly *a priori* cognitions without having to beg philosophy for any certification of the pure and lawful pedigree of its fundamental concept of space. Yet the use of the^b concept in this science concerns only the external world of the senses, of which space is the pure form of its intuition, and in which therefore all geometrical cognition is immediately evident because it is grounded on intuition *a priori*, and the objects are given through the cognition itself *a priori* in intuition (as far as their form is concerned). With the **pure concepts of the understanding**, however, there first arises the unavoidable need to search for the transcendental deduction not only of them but also of space, for since they speak of objects not through predicates of intuition and sensibility but through those of pure *a priori* thinking, they relate to objects generally without any conditions of sensibility; and since they are not grounded in experience and cannot exhibit any object^c in *a priori* intuition on which

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B 120

A 88

^a As in the first edition; the second, declining *quaestio*, prints *quaestionem*.

^b The first edition here reads "diese" instead of the second's "des."

^c Object

to ground their synthesis prior to any experience, they not only arouse suspicion about the objective validity and limits of their use but also make the **concept of space** ambiguous by inclining us to use it beyond the conditions of sensible intuition, on which account a transcendental deduction of it was also needed above. Thus the reader must be convinced of the unavoidable necessity of such a transcendental deduction before he has taken a single step in the field of pure reason; for he would otherwise proceed blindly, and after much wandering around would still have to return to the ignorance from which he had begun. But he must also clearly understand from the outset its inevitable difficulty, so that he will not complain of obscurity where the subject-matter itself is deeply veiled or become annoyed too soon over the removal of hindrances, since we must either surrender completely all claims to insights of pure reason in its favorite field, namely that beyond the boundaries of all possible experience, or else perfect this critical investigation.

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No need for a deduction
of space and time In the case of the concepts of space and time, we were able above to make comprehensible with little effort how these, as *a priori* cognitions, must nevertheless necessarily relate to objects, and made possible a synthetic cognition of them independent of all experience. For since an object can appear to us only by means of such pure forms of sensibility, i.e., be an object^a of empirical intuition, space and time are thus pure intuitions that contain *a priori* the conditions of the possibility of objects as appearances, and the synthesis in them has objective validity.

B 122

Intuition could offer
us objects
independently of
the categories The categories of the understanding, on the contrary, do not represent to us the conditions under which objects are given in intuition at all, hence objects can indeed appear to us without necessarily having to be related to functions of the understanding, and therefore without the understanding containing their *a priori* conditions.¹⁷ Thus a difficulty is revealed here that we did not encounter in the field of sensibility, namely how **subjective conditions of thinking** should have **objective validity**.

A 90

validity, i.e., yield conditions of the possibility of all cognition of objects; for appearances can certainly be given in intuition without functions of the understanding. I take, e.g., the concept of cause, which signifies a particular kind of synthesis, in which given something *A* something entirely different *B* is posited according to a rule.^b It is not clear *a priori* why appearances should contain anything of this sort (one cannot adduce experiences for the proof, for the objective validity of this *a priori* concept must be able to be demonstrated), and it is therefore *a priori* doubtful whether such a concept is not perhaps entirely empty and finds no object anywhere among the appearances. For that

^a Object^b Emended in Kant's copy of the first edition to "posited according to an *a priori* rule, i.e., necessarily" (E XLIX, p. 25; 23:46).

B 123

objects of sensible intuition must accord with the formal conditions of sensibility that lie in the mind *a priori* is clear from the fact that otherwise they would not be objects for us; but that they must also accord with the conditions that the understanding requires for the synthetic unity^a of thinking is a conclusion that is not so easily seen.^b For appearances could after all be so constituted that the understanding would not find them in accord with the conditions of its unity, and everything would then lie in such confusion that, e.g., in the succession of appearances nothing would offer itself that would furnish a rule of synthesis and thus correspond to the concept of cause and effect, so that this concept would therefore be entirely empty, nugatory, and without significance. Appearances would nonetheless offer objects to our intuition, for intuition by no means requires the functions of thinking.

A 91

If one were to think of escaping from the toils of these investigations by saying that experience constantly offers examples of a regularity of appearances that give sufficient occasion for abstracting the concept of cause from them, and thereby at the same time thought to confirm the objective validity of such a concept, then one has not noticed that the concept of cause cannot arise in this way at all, but must either be grounded in the understanding completely *a priori* or else be entirely surrendered as a mere fantasy of the brain. For this concept always requires that something *A* be of such a kind that something else *B* follows from it necessarily and in accordance with an absolutely universal rule. Appearances may well offer cases from which a rule is possible in accordance with which something usually happens, but never a rule in accordance with which the succession is necessary; thus to the synthesis of cause and effect there attaches a dignity that can never be expressed empirically, namely, that the effect does not merely come along with the cause, but is posited through it and follows from it. The strict universality of the rule is therefore not any property of empirical rules, which cannot acquire anything more through induction than comparative universality, i.e., widespread usefulness. But now the use of the pure concepts of the understanding would be entirely altered if one were to treat them only as empirical products.

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^a Following Erdmann in reading "Einheit" for "Einsicht"; Kant uses "Einheit" in a parallel fashion in the next sentence.

^b Inserted in Kant's copy of the first edition: "If I were simply to say that without the connection of causes and effects I would not grasp the sequence of alterations, it would not at all follow from this that this must be precisely as an understanding needs it to be to grasp it, but I would not be able to explain whence they continuously follow one another. Only I would not raise this question if I did not already have the concept of cause and of the necessity of such persistence. A subjective necessity, habit, would make it worse. An implanted necessity would not prove necessity." (E L, pp. 25-6; 23:26)

"Transition
to the transcendental deduction of the categories.

There are only two possible cases in which synthetic representation and its objects can come together, necessarily relate to each other, and, as it were, meet each other: Either if the object alone makes the representation possible, or if the representation alone makes the object possible.

B 125

If it is the first, then this relation is only empirical, and the representation is never possible *a priori*. And this is the case with appearance in respect of that in it which belongs to sensation. But if it is the second, then since representation in itself (for we are not here talking about its causality by means of the will) does not produce its object as far as its **existence** is concerned, the representation is still determinant of the object *a priori* if it is possible through it alone to **cognize something as an object**. But there are two conditions under which alone the cognition of an object is possible: first, **intuition**, through which it is given, but only as appearance; second, **concept**, through which an object is thought that corresponds to this intuition. It is clear from what has

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been said above, however, that the first condition, namely that under which alone objects can be intuited, in fact does lie^b in the mind *a priori* as the ground of the form of objects.^c All appearances therefore necessarily agree with this formal condition of sensibility, because only through it can they appear, i.e., be empirically intuited and given. The question now is whether *a priori* concepts do not also precede, as conditions under which alone something can be, if not intuited, nevertheless thought as object in general, for then all empirical cognition of objects is necessarily in accord with such concepts, since without their presupposition nothing is possible as **object^d of experience**.

B 126

Now, however, all experience contains in addition to the intuition of the senses, through which something is given, a **concept** of an object that is given in intuition, or appears;¹⁸ hence concepts of objects in general lie at the ground of all experiential cognition as *a priori* conditions; consequently the objective validity of the categories, as *a priori* concepts, rests on the fact that through them alone is experience possible (as far as the form of thinking is concerned). For they then are related necessarily and *a priori* to objects of experience, since only by means of them can any object of experience be thought at all.

The 'objective' deduction

^a No section number appears here in the second edition, but "§ 14" should have been added to avoid an unnumbered section between § 13 and § 15.

^b Following Erdmann in reading "liegt" for "liegen"; Kant seems to have confused the singular antecedent (*Bedingung*) with the plural, perhaps because of the intervening occurrence of the plural "objects."

^c *Objecten*

^d *Object*

Section I. On the principles of a transcendental deduction

A 94

The transcendental deduction of all *a priori* concepts therefore has a principle^a toward which the entire investigation must be directed, namely this: that they must be recognized as *a priori* conditions of the possibility of experiences (whether of the intuition that is encountered in them, or of the thinking).¹⁹ Concepts that supply the objective ground of the possibility of experience are necessary just for that reason. The unfolding of the experience in which they are encountered, however, is not their deduction (but their illustration), since they would thereby be only contingent. Without this original relation to possible experience, in which all objects of cognition are found, their relation to any object^b could not be comprehended at all.

B 127

[There are, however, three original sources (capacities or faculties of the soul), which contain the conditions of the possibility of all experience, and cannot themselves be derived from any other faculty of the mind, namely **sense**, **imagination**, and **appception**. On these are grounded 1) the **synopsis** of the manifold *a priori* through sense; 2) the **synthesis** of this manifold through the imagination; finally 3) the **unity** of this synthesis through original appception. In addition to their empirical use, all of these faculties have a transcendental one, which is concerned solely with form, and which is possible *a priori*. We have discussed this **with regard to the senses** in the first part above, however, we will now attempt to understand the nature of the two other ones.]

A 95

B 127

^d<The famous Locke, from neglect of this consideration, and because he encountered pure concepts of the understanding in experience, also derived them from this experience, and thus proceeded so **inconsistently** that he thereby dared to make attempts at cognitions that go far beyond the boundary of all experience. David Hume recognized that in order to be able to do the latter it is necessary that these concepts would have to have their origin *a priori*. But since he could not explain at all how it is possible for the understanding to think of concepts that in themselves are not combined in the understanding as still necessarily combined in the object, and it never occurred to him that perhaps the understanding itself, by means of these concepts, could be the originator of the experience in which its objects are encountered, he thus, driven by necessity, derived them from experience (namely from a subjective necessity arisen from frequent association in experience, which is subsequently falsely held to be objective, i.e., **custom**);^e however he

^a *Principium*

^b *Object*

^c This paragraph in the first edition is omitted in the second and replaced by three that here follow it.

^d The next three paragraphs are added in the second edition, replacing the previous one.

^e *Gewohnheit*

B 128

subsequently proceeded quite consistently in declaring it to be impossible to go beyond the boundary of experience with these concepts and the principles that they occasion. The **empirical** derivation, however, to which both of them resorted, cannot be reconciled with the reality of the scientific cognition *a priori* that we possess, that namely of **pure mathematics** and **general natural science**, and is therefore refuted by the fact.^a

The first of these two famous men opened the gates wide to **enthusiasm**, since reason, once it has authority on its side, will not be kept within limits by indeterminate recommendations of moderation; the second gave way entirely to **skepticism**, since he believed himself to have discovered in what is generally held to be reason a deception of our faculty of cognition. — We are now about to make an attempt to see whether we cannot successfully steer human reason between these two cliffs, assign its determinate boundaries, and still keep open the entire field of its purposive activity.

B 129

I will merely precede this with the **explanation of the categories**. They are concepts of an object in general, by means of which its intuition is regarded as **determined** with regard to one of the **logical functions** for judgments.²⁰ Thus, the function of the **categorical** judgment was that of the relationship of the subject to the predicate, e.g., "All bodies are divisible." Yet in regard to the merely logical use of the understanding it would remain undetermined which of these two concepts will be given the function of the subject and which will be given that of the predicate. For one can also say: "Something divisible is a body." Through the category of substance, however, if I bring the concept of a body under it, it is determined that its empirical intuition in experience must always be considered as subject, never as mere predicate; and likewise with all the other categories.>

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The Deduction of the Pure Concepts of the Understanding Second Section

^bOn the *a priori* grounds for the possibility
of experience.

It is entirely contradictory and impossible that a concept should be generated completely *a priori* and be related to an object although it

^a *das Factum*

^b What follows is the version of the "Transcendental Deduction" as it appeared in the first edition, where it is divided into the second and third sections of the present chapter. In the second edition, these two sections will be replaced by a single second section, divided into subsections numbered from § 15 to § 27. See B 129-69 below.

neither belongs itself within the concept of possible experience nor consists of elements of a possible experience. For it would then have no content, since no intuition would correspond to it though intuitions in general, through which objects can be given to us, constitute the field or the entire object of possible experience. An *a priori* concept that was not related^a to the latter would be only the logical form for a concept, but not the concept itself through which something would be thought.

If there are pure *a priori* concepts, therefore, they can certainly contain nothing empirical; they must nevertheless be strictly *a priori* conditions for a possible experience, as that alone on which its objective reality can rest.

Hence if one wants to know how pure concepts of the understanding are possible, one must inquire what are the *a priori* conditions on which the possibility of experience depends and that ground it even if one abstracts from everything empirical in the appearances. A concept that expresses this formal and objective condition of experience universally and sufficiently would be called a pure concept of the understanding. Once I have pure concepts of the understanding, I can also think up objects that are perhaps impossible, or that are perhaps possible in themselves but cannot be given in any experience since in the connection of their concepts something may be omitted that yet necessarily belongs to the condition of a possible experience (the concept of a spirit), or perhaps pure concepts of the understanding will be extended further than experience can grasp (the concept of God). But the **elements** for all *a priori* cognitions, even for arbitrary and absurd fantasies, cannot indeed be borrowed from experience (for then they would not be *a priori* cognitions), but must always contain the pure *a priori* conditions of a possible experience and of an object of it, for otherwise not only would nothing at all be thought through them, but also without data they would not even be able to arise in thinking at all.

Now these concepts, which contain *a priori* the pure thinking in every experience, we find in the categories, and it is already a sufficient deduction of them and justification of their objective validity if we can prove that by means of them alone an object can be thought. But since in such a thought there is more at work than the single faculty of thinking, namely the understanding, and the understanding itself, as a faculty of cognition that is to be related to objects,^b also requires an elucidation of the possibility of this relation, we must first assess not the empirical but the transcendental constitution of the subjective sources that comprise the *a priori* foundations for the possibility of experience.

If every individual representation were entirely foreign to the other, as

a96

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^a bezöge

^b Objecte

it were isolated and separated from it, then there would never arise anything like cognition, which is a whole of compared and connected representations. If therefore I ascribe a synopsis to sense, because it contains a manifold in its intuition, a synthesis must always correspond to this, and receptivity can make cognitions possible only if combined with spontaneity. This is now the ground of a threefold synthesis, which is necessarily found in all cognition: that, namely, of the apprehension of the representations, as modifications of the mind in intuition; of the reproduction of them in the imagination; and of their recognition in the concept.²¹ Now these direct us toward three subjective sources of cognition, which make possible even the understanding and, through the latter, all experience as an empirical product of understanding.

The threefold synthesis

A98

Preliminary reminder

The deduction of the categories is connected with so many difficulties, and necessitates such deep penetration into the primary grounds of the possibility of our cognition in general, that in order to avoid the long-windedness of a complete theory and nevertheless not to omit anything in such a necessary inquiry, I have found it more advisable to prepare than to instruct the reader in the following four numbers, and only then to represent the exposition of these elements of the understanding systematically in the immediately following third section.^a For this reason the reader should until then not be deterred by the obscurity that is initially unavoidable in a path that is thus far entirely unexplored, but which will, as I hope, be completely illuminated in that section.

I.

On the synthesis of apprehension in the intuition.

Wherever our representations may arise, whether through the influence of external things or as the effect of inner causes, whether they have originated *a priori* or empirically as appearances – as modifications of the mind they nevertheless belong to inner sense, and as such all of our cognitions are in the end subjected to the formal condition of inner sense, namely time, as that in which they must all be ordered, connected, and brought into relations. This is a general remark on which one must ground everything that follows.²²

All representation is temporally ordered

Every intuition contains a manifold in itself, which however would not be represented as such if the mind did not distinguish the time in the succession of impressions on one another; for as contained in one

^a The third section, beginning at A115.

Section II. Grounds of the possibility of experience <A>

moment no representation can ever be anything other than absolute unity. Now in order for **unity** of intuition to come from this manifold (as, say, in the representation of space), it is necessary first to run through and then to take together this manifoldness, which action I call the **synthesis of apprehension**, since it is aimed directly at the **intuition**, which to be sure provides a manifold but can never effect this as such, and indeed as contained in **one representation**, without the occurrence of such a synthesis.

Now this synthesis of apprehension must also be exercised *a priori*, i.e., in regard to representations that are not empirical. For without it we could have *a priori* neither the representations of space nor of time, since these can be generated only through the synthesis of the manifold that sensibility in its original receptivity provides. We therefore have a **pure** synthesis of apprehension.

Does the representation
of space & time depend
on synthesis?

A 100

2.

On the synthesis of reproduction in the imagination.

It is, to be sure, a merely empirical law in accordance with which representations that have often followed or accompanied one another are finally associated with each other and thereby placed in a connection in accordance with which, even without the presence of the object, one of these representations brings about a transition of the mind to the other in accordance with a constant rule. This law of reproduction, however, presupposes that the appearances themselves are actually subject to such a rule, and that in the manifold of their representations an accompaniment or succession takes place according to certain rules; for without that our empirical imagination would never get to do anything suitable to its capacity,^a and would thus remain hidden in the interior of the mind, like a dead and to us unknown faculty. If cinnabar were now red, now black, now light, now heavy, if a human being were now changed into this animal shape, now into that one, if on the longest day the land were covered now with fruits, now with ice and snow, then my empirical imagination would never even get the opportunity to think of heavy cinnabar on the occasion of the representation of the color red; or if a certain word were attributed now to this thing, now to that, or if one and the same thing were sometimes called this, sometimes that, without the governance of a certain rule to which the appearances are already subjected in themselves, then no empirical synthesis of reproduction could take place.

The dependence of
association on affinity

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There must therefore be something that itself makes possible this re-

^a *Vermögen*

production of the appearances by being the *a priori* ground of a necessary synthetic unity of them. One soon comes upon this if one recalls that **appearances are not things in themselves, but rather the mere play of our representations, which in the end come down to determinations of the inner sense.** Now if we can demonstrate that even our purest *a priori* intuitions provide no cognition except insofar as they contain the sort of combination of the manifold that makes possible a thorough-going synthesis of reproduction, then this synthesis of the imagination would be grounded even prior to all experience on *a priori* principles,^a and one must assume a pure transcendental synthesis of this power, which grounds even the possibility of all experience (as that which the reproducibility of the appearances necessarily presupposes). Now it is obvious that if I draw a line in thought, or think of the time from one noon to the next, or even want to represent a certain number to myself, I must necessarily first grasp one of these manifold representations after another in my thoughts. But **if I were always to lose the preceding representations (the first parts of the line, the preceding parts of time, or the successively represented units) from my thoughts and not reproduce them when I proceed to the following ones, then no whole representation and none of the previously mentioned thoughts, not even the purest and most fundamental representations of space and time, could ever arise.**

The synthesis of apprehension is therefore inseparably combined with the synthesis of reproduction. And since the former constitutes the transcendental ground of the possibility of all cognition in general (not only of empirical cognition, but also of pure *a priori* cognition), the reproductive synthesis of the imagination belongs among the transcendental actions of the mind, and with respect to this we will also call this faculty the transcendental faculty of the imagination.

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3. On the synthesis of recognition in the concept.

Without consciousness that that which we think is the very same as what we thought a moment before, all reproduction in the series of representations would be in vain. For **it would be a new representation in our current state, which would not belong at all to the act^b through which it had been gradually generated,** and its manifold would never constitute a whole, since it would lack the unity that only consciousness can obtain for it. If, in counting, I forget that the units that now hover

^a *Prinzipien*

^b *Actus*; up to this point Kant has been using the word *Handlung*.

Section II. Grounds of the possibility of experience <A>

before my senses were successively added to each other by me, then I would not cognize the generation of the multitude^a through this successive addition of one to the other, and consequently I would not cognize the number; for this concept consists solely in the consciousness of this unity of the synthesis.

The word "concept" itself could already lead us to this remark. For it is this one consciousness that unifies the manifold that has been successively intuited, and then also reproduced, into one representation. This consciousness may often only be weak, so that we connect it with the generation of the representation only in the effect, but not in the act^b itself, i.e., immediately; but regardless of these differences one consciousness must always be found, even if it lacks conspicuous clarity, and without that concepts, and with them cognition of objects, would be entirely impossible.

And here then it is necessary to make understood what is meant by the expression "an object of representations." We have said above that appearances themselves are nothing but sensible representations, which must not be regarded in themselves, in the same way, as objects (outside the power of representation). What does one mean, then, if one speaks of an object corresponding to and therefore also distinct from the cognition? It is easy to see that this object must be thought of only as something in general = X , since outside of our cognition we have nothing that we could set over against this cognition as corresponding to it.

We find, however, that our thought of the relation of all cognition to its object carries something of necessity with it, since namely the latter is regarded as that which is opposed to our cognitions being determined at pleasure or arbitrarily rather than being determined *a priori*, since insofar as they are to relate to an object our cognitions must also necessarily agree with each other in relation to it, i.e., they must have that unity that constitutes the concept of an object.²³

It is clear, however, that since we have to do only with the manifold of our representations, and that X which corresponds to them (the object), because it should be something distinct from all of our representations, is nothing for us, the unity that the object makes necessary can be nothing other than the formal unity of the consciousness in the synthesis of the manifold of the representations. Hence we say that we cognize the object if we have effected synthetic unity in the manifold of intuition. But this is impossible if the intuition could not have been produced through a function of synthesis in accordance with a rule that makes the reproduction of the manifold necessary *a priori* and a concept in which this manifold is united possible. Thus we think of a triangle as

"concept" as unity of consciousness

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cognition and necessity of relation of representations in the object

A 105

^a Menge

^b Actus

an object by being conscious of the composition of three straight lines in accordance with a rule according to which such an intuition can always be exhibited. Now this **unity of rule** determines every manifold, and limits it to conditions that make the unity of apperception possible, and the concept of this unity is the representation of the object = X, which I think through those predicates of a triangle.

A 106 All cognition requires a concept, however imperfect or obscure it may be; but as far as its form is concerned the latter is always something general, and something that serves as a rule. Thus the concept of body serves as the rule for our cognition of outer appearances by means of the unity of the manifold that is thought through it. However, it can be a rule of intuitions only if it represents the necessary reproduction of the manifold of given intuitions, hence the synthetic unity in the consciousness of them. Thus in the case of the perception of something outside of us the concept of body makes necessary the representation of extension, and with it that of impenetrability, of shape, etc.

Every necessity has a transcendental condition as its ground. A transcendental ground must therefore be found for the unity of the consciousness in the synthesis of the manifold of all our intuitions, hence also of the concepts of objects^a in general, consequently also of all objects of experience, without which it would be impossible to think of any object for our intuitions; for the latter is nothing more than the something for which the concept expresses such a necessity^b of synthesis.

A 107 Now this original and transcendental condition is nothing other than the **transcendental apperception**.²⁴ The consciousness of oneself in accordance with the determinations of our state in internal perception is merely empirical, forever variable; it can provide no standing or abiding self in this stream of inner appearances, and is customarily called **inner sense** or **empirical apperception**. That which should necessarily be represented as numerically identical cannot be thought of as such through empirical data. There must be a condition that precedes all experience and makes the latter itself possible, which should make such a transcendental presupposition valid.

Now no cognitions can occur in us, no connection and unity among them, without that unity of consciousness that precedes all data of the intuitions, and in relation to which all representation of objects is alone possible. This pure, original, unchanging consciousness I will now name **transcendental apperception**. That it deserves this name is already obvious from this, that even the purest objective unity, namely that of the *a priori* concepts (space and time) is possible only through the relation of the intuitions to it. The numerical unity of this apper-

^a *Objecte*

^b Following Erdmann, reading *Notwendigkeit* for *Notwendig*.

Section II. Grounds of the possibility of experience <A>

ception therefore grounds all concepts *a priori*, just as the manifoldness of space and time grounds the intuitions of sensibility.

Just this transcendental unity of apperception, however, makes out of all possible appearances that can ever come together in one experience a connection of all of these representations in accordance with laws.²⁵ For this unity of consciousness would be impossible if in the cognition of the manifold the mind could not become conscious of the identity of the function by means of which this manifold is synthetically combined into one cognition. Thus the original and necessary consciousness of the identity of oneself is at the same time a consciousness of an equally necessary unity of the synthesis of all appearances in accordance with concepts, i.e., in accordance with rules that not only make them necessarily reproducible, but also thereby determine an object for their intuition, i.e., the concept of something in which they are necessarily connected; for the mind could not possibly think of the identity of itself in the manifoldness of its representations, and indeed think this *a priori*, if it did not have before its eyes the identity of its action, which subjects all synthesis of apprehension (which is empirical) to a transcendental unity, and first makes possible their connection in accordance with *a priori* rules. Further, we are now also able to determine our concepts of an object in general more correctly. All representations, as representations, have their object, and can themselves be objects of other representations in turn. Appearances are the only objects that can be given to us immediately, and that in them which is immediately related to the object is called intuition. However, these appearances are not things in themselves, but themselves only representations, which in turn have their object, which therefore cannot be further intuited by us, and that may therefore be called the non-empirical, i.e., transcendental object = X.²⁶

The pure concept of this transcendental object (which in all of our cognitions is really always one and the same = X) is that which in all of our empirical concepts in general can provide relation to an object, i.e., objective reality. Now this concept cannot contain any determinate intuition at all, and therefore concerns nothing but that unity which must be encountered in a manifold of cognition insofar as it stands in relation to an object. This relation, however, is nothing other than the necessary unity of consciousness, thus also of the synthesis of the manifold through a common function of the mind for combining it in one representation. Now since this unity must be regarded as necessary *a priori* (since the cognition would otherwise be without an object), the relation to a transcendental object, i.e., the objective reality of our empirical cognition, rests on the transcendental law that all appearances, insofar as objects are to be given to us through them, must stand under *a priori* rules of their synthetic unity, in accordance with which their re-

A 108

unity of apperception
depends on
awareness of identity
of "function"

Awareness of the
identity of self depends
on awareness of
identity of action

A 109

A 110

lation^a in empirical intuition is alone possible, i.e., that in experience they must stand under conditions of the necessary unity of apperception just as in mere intuition they must stand under the formal conditions of space and time; indeed, it is through those conditions that every cognition is first made possible.

4.

Provisional explanation of the possibility of the categories as *a priori* cognitions.

There is only one experience, in which all perceptions are represented as in thoroughgoing and lawlike connection, just as there is only one space and time, in which all forms of appearance and all relation^b of being or non-being take place. If one speaks of different experiences, they are only so many perceptions insofar as they belong to one and the same universal experience. The thoroughgoing and synthetic unity of perceptions is precisely what constitutes the form of experience, and it is nothing other than the synthetic unity of the appearances in accordance with concepts.

A III Unity of synthesis in accordance with empirical concepts would be entirely contingent, and, were it not grounded on a transcendental ground of unity, it would be possible for a swarm of appearances to fill up our soul without experience ever being able to arise from it. But in that case all relation of cognition to objects would also disappear, since the appearances would lack connection in accordance with universal and necessary laws, and would thus be intuition without thought, but never cognition, and would therefore be as good as nothing for us.

The *a priori* conditions of a possible experience in general are at the same time conditions of the possibility of the objects of experience. Now I assert that the categories that have just been adduced are nothing other than the conditions of thinking in a possible experience, just as space and time contain the conditions of the intuition for the very same thing. They are therefore also fundamental concepts for thinking objects^c in general for the appearances, and they therefore have *a priori* objective validity, which was just what we really wanted to know.

However, the possibility, indeed even the necessity of these categories rests on the relation that the entire sensibility, and with it also all possible appearances, have to the original apperception, in which everything is necessarily in agreement with the conditions of the thorough-

^a Verhältnis

^b Verhältnis

^c Objecte

going unity of self-consciousness, i.e., must stand under universal functions of synthesis, namely of the synthesis in accordance with concepts, as that in which alone apperception can demonstrate *a priori* its thoroughgoing and necessary identity. Thus the concept of a cause is nothing other than a synthesis (of that which follows in the temporal series with other appearances) **in accordance with concepts**; and **without that sort of unity, which has its rule *a priori*, and which subjects the appearances to itself, thoroughgoing and universal, hence necessary unity of consciousness would not be encountered in the manifold perceptions.** But these would then belong to no experience, and would consequently be without an object,^a and would be nothing but a blind play of representations, i.e., less than a dream.

All attempts to derive these pure concepts of the understanding from experience and to ascribe to them a merely empirical origin are therefore entirely vain and futile. I will not mention that, e.g., the concept of a cause brings the trait of necessity with it, which no experience at all can yield, for experience teaches us that one appearance customarily follows another, but not that it must necessarily follow that, nor that an inference from a condition to its consequence can be made *a priori* and entirely universally. But that empirical rule of **association**, which one must assume throughout if one says that everything in the series of occurrences stands under rules according to which nothing happens that is not preceded by something upon which it always follows – on what, I ask, does this, as a law of nature, rest, and how is this association even possible? **The ground of the possibility of the association of the manifold, insofar as it lies in the object,**^b is called the **affinity** of the manifold. I ask, therefore, **how do you make the thoroughgoing affinity of the appearances (by means of which they stand under constant laws and must belong under them) comprehensible to yourselves?**

On my principles it is easily comprehensible. All possible appearances belong, as representations, to the whole possible self-consciousness. But from this, as a transcendental representation, numerical identity is inseparable, and certain *a priori*, because nothing can come into cognition except by means of this original apperception. Now since this identity must necessarily enter into the synthesis of all the manifold of appearances insofar as they are to become empirical cognition, the appearances are thus subject to *a priori* conditions with which their synthesis (of apprehension) must be in thoroughgoing accord. Now, however, the representation of a universal condition in accordance with which a certain manifold (of whatever kind) **can** be posited is called a **rule**, and, if it **must** be so posited, a **law**. All appearances therefore stand in a thoroughgoing con-

^a Object

^b Objekte

A 114 nction according to necessary laws, and hence in a **transcendental affinity**, of which the **empirical affinity** is the mere consequence.

That nature should direct itself according to our subjective ground of apperception, indeed in regard to its lawfulness even depend on this, may well sound quite contradictory and strange. But if one considers that **this nature is nothing in itself but a sum of appearances**, hence not **a thing in itself but merely a multitude of representations of the mind**, then one will not be astonished to see that unity on account of which alone it can be called object^a of all possible experience, i.e., nature, solely in the radical faculty of all our cognition, namely, transcendental apperception; and for that very reason we can cognize this unity *a priori*, hence also as necessary, which we would certainly have to abandon if it were given **in itself** independently of the primary sources of our thinking. For then I would not know whence we should obtain the synthetic propositions of such a universal unity of nature, since in this case one would have to borrow them from the objects of nature itself. But since this could happen only empirically, from that nothing but merely contingent unity could be drawn, which would fall far short of the necessary connection that one has in mind when one speaks of nature.

nature as
sum of
appearances

A 115 Of the Deduction of the Pure Concepts of the Understanding Third Section

On the relation^b of the understanding to objects in general and the possibility of cognizing these *a priori*.

What we have expounded separately and individually in the previous section we will now represent as unified and in connection. The possibility of an experience in general and cognition of its objects rest on three subjective sources of cognition: **sense**, **imagination**, and **apperception**; each of these can be considered empirically, namely in application to given appearances, but they are also elements or foundations *a priori* that make this empirical use itself possible. **Sense** represents the appearances empirically in **perception**, the **imagination** in association (and reproduction), and **apperception** in the **empirical consciousness** of the identity of these reproductive representations with the appearances through which they were given, hence in **recognition**.

A 116 But pure intuition (with regard to it as representation, time, the form of inner intuition) grounds the totality of perception *a priori*; the pure synthesis of the imagination grounds association *a priori*; and pure ap-

^a Object

^b Verhältnisse

Section III. On the relation of understanding to objects <A>

perception, i.e., the thoroughgoing identity of oneself in all possible representations, grounds empirical consciousness *a priori*.²⁷

Now if we wish to follow the inner ground of this connection of representations up to that point in which they must all come together in order first to obtain unity of cognition for a possible experience, then we must begin with pure apperception. All intuitions are nothing for us and do not in the least concern us if they cannot be taken up into consciousness, whether they influence it directly or indirectly, and through this alone is cognition possible.²⁸ We are conscious *a priori* of the thoroughgoing identity of ourselves with regard to all representations that can ever belong to our cognition, as a necessary condition of the possibility of all representations (since the latter represent something in me only insofar as they belong with all the others to one consciousness, hence they must at least be capable of being connected in it). This principle^a holds *a priori*, and can be called the **transcendental principle^b of the unity** of all the manifold of our representations (thus also in intuition). Now the unity of the manifold in a subject is synthetic; pure apperception therefore yields a principle^c of the synthetic unity of the manifold in all possible intuition.*

This synthetic unity, however, presupposes a synthesis, or includes it, and if the former is to be necessary *a priori* then the latter must also be

* One should attend carefully to this proposition, which is of great importance. All representations have a necessary relation to a possible empirical consciousness: for if they did not have this, and if it were entirely impossible to become conscious of them, that would be as much as to say that they did not exist at all. All empirical consciousness, however, has a necessary relation to a transcendental consciousness (preceding all particular experience), namely the consciousness of myself, as original apperception. It is therefore absolutely necessary that in my cognition all consciousness belong to one consciousness (of myself). Now here is a synthetic unity of the manifold (of consciousness) that is cognized *a priori*, and that yields the ground for synthetic *a priori* propositions concerning pure thinking in exactly the same way that space and time yield such propositions concerning the form of mere intuition. The synthetic proposition that every different empirical consciousness must be combined into a single self-consciousness is the absolutely first and synthetic principle of our thinking in general. But it should not go unnoticed that the mere representation I in relation to all others (the collective unity of which it makes possible) is the transcendental consciousness. Now it does not matter here whether this representation be clear (empirical consciousness) or obscure, even whether it be actual; but the possibility of the logical form of all cognition necessarily rests on the relationship to this apperception as a faculty.

Argument from above (A116-19)

A 117

A 118

A 117

The principle of apperception as 'absolutely first principle'

It is the faculty not the representation that is central

^a Prinzip

^b Prinzip

^c Principium

a synthesis *a priori*. Thus the transcendental unity of apperception is related to the pure synthesis of the imagination, as an *a priori* condition of the possibility of all composition of the manifold in a cognition. But only the **productive synthesis of the imagination** can take place *a priori*; for the **reproductive** synthesis rests on conditions of experience. The principle^a of the necessary unity of the pure (productive) synthesis of the imagination prior to apperception is thus the ground of the possibility of all cognition, especially that of experience.²⁹

Now we call the synthesis of the manifold in imagination transcendental if, without distinction of the intuitions, it concerns nothing but the connection of the manifold *a priori*, and the unity of this synthesis is called transcendental if it is represented as necessary *a priori* in relation to the original unity of apperception. Now since this latter is the ground of the possibility of all cognitions, the transcendental unity of the synthesis of the imagination is the pure form of all possible cognition, through which, therefore, all objects of possible experience must be represented *a priori*.

A119 The unity of apperception in relation to the synthesis of the imagination is the **understanding**, and this very same unity, in relation to the **transcendental synthesis** of the imagination, is the **pure understanding**. In the understanding there are therefore pure *a priori* cognitions that contain the necessary unity of the pure synthesis of the imagination in regard to all possible appearances.³⁰ These, however, are the **categories**, i.e., pure concepts of the understanding; consequently the empirical power of cognition of human beings necessarily contains an understanding, which is related to all objects of the senses, though only by means of intuition, and to their synthesis by means of imagination, under which, therefore, all appearances as data for a possible experience stand. Now since this relation of appearances to possible experience is likewise necessary (since without it we could not obtain any cognition at all through them, and they would thus not concern us at all), it follows that the pure understanding, by means of the categories, is a formal and synthetic principle^b of all experiences, and that appearances have a **necessary relation to the understanding**.

Now we will set the necessary connection of the understanding with the appearances by means of the categories before our eyes by beginning from beneath, namely with what is empirical. The first thing that is given to us is appearance, which, if it is combined with consciousness, is called perception (without the relation^c to an at least possible consciousness appearance could never become an object of cognition for us,

^a *Principiūm*

^b *Principiūm*

^c *Verhältnis*

Section III. On the relation of understanding to objects <A>

and would therefore be nothing for us, and since it has no objective reality in itself and exists only in cognition it would be nothing at all). But since every appearance contains a manifold, thus different perceptions by themselves are encountered dispersed and separate in the mind, a combination of them, which they cannot have in sense itself, is therefore necessary. There is thus an active faculty of the synthesis of this manifold in us, which we call imagination, and whose action exercised immediately upon perceptions I call apprehension.* For the imagination is to bring the manifold of intuition into an **image**;^a it must therefore antecedently take up the impressions into its activity, i.e., apprehend them.

Perception are
"dispersed" in the mind

A 121

It is, however, clear that even this apprehension of the manifold alone would bring forth no image and no connection of the impressions were there not a subjective ground for calling back a perception, from which the mind has passed on to another, to the succeeding ones, and thus for exhibiting entire series of perceptions, i.e., a reproductive faculty of imagination, which is then also merely empirical.

Since, however, if representations reproduced one another without distinction, just as they fell together, there would in turn be no determinate connection but merely unruly heaps of them, and no cognition at all would arise; their reproduction must thus have a rule in accordance with which a representation enters into combination in the imagination with one representation rather than with any others. This subjective and **empirical** ground of reproduction in accordance with rules is called the **association** of representations.

Association of
representation in
reproductive
imagination

Contingency of fit
between appearances

A 122

But now if this unity of association did not also have an objective ground, so that it would be impossible for appearances to be apprehended by the imagination otherwise than under the condition of a possible synthetic unity of this apprehension, then it would also be entirely contingent whether appearances fit into a connection of human cognitions. For even though we had the faculty for associating perceptions, it would still remain in itself entirely undetermined and contingent whether they were also associative; and in case they were not, a multitude of perceptions and even an entire sensibility would be possible in which much empirical consciousness would be encountered in my mind, but separated, and without belonging to **one** consciousness of

A 120

* No psychologist has yet thought that the imagination is a necessary ingredient of perception itself. This is so partly because this faculty has been limited to reproduction, and partly because it has been believed that the senses do not merely afford us impressions but also put them together, and produce images of objects, for which without doubt something more than the receptivity of impressions is required, namely a function of the synthesis of them.

^a *Bild*

The objective ground
of association is
affinity

myself, which, however, is impossible. For only because I ascribe all perceptions to one consciousness (of original apperception) can I say of all perceptions that I am conscious of them. There must therefore be an objective ground, i.e., one that can be understood *a priori* to all empirical laws of the imagination, on which rests the possibility, indeed even the necessity of a law extending through all appearances, a law, namely, for regarding them throughout as data of sense that are associable in themselves and subject to universal laws of a thoroughgoing connection in reproduction. I call this objective ground of all association of appearances their **affinity**. But we can never encounter this anywhere except in the principle of the unity of apperception with regard to all cognitions that are to belong to me. In accordance with this principle all appearances whatever must come into the mind or be apprehended in such a way that they are in agreement with the unity of apperception, which would be impossible without synthetic unity in their connection, which is thus also objectively necessary.

A 123

The objective unity of all (empirical) consciousness in one consciousness (of original apperception) is thus the necessary condition even of all possible perception, and the **affinity of all appearances (near or remote)** is a necessary consequence of a synthesis in the imagination that is grounded *a priori* on rules.

The imagination is therefore also a faculty of a synthesis *a priori*, on account of which we give it the name of productive imagination, and, insofar as its aim in regard to all the manifold of appearance is nothing further than the necessary unity in their synthesis, this can be called the transcendental function of the imagination. It is therefore certainly strange, yet from what has been said thus far obvious, that it is only by means of this transcendental function of the imagination that even the affinity of appearances, and with it the association and through the latter finally reproduction in accordance with laws, and consequently experience itself, become possible; for without them no concepts of objects at all would converge into an experience.

The 'I' of
apperception

A 124

For the standing and lasting I (of pure apperception) constitutes the correlate of all of our representations, so far as it is merely possible to become conscious of them, and all consciousness belongs to an all-embracing pure apperception just as all sensible intuition as representation belongs to a pure inner intuition, namely that of time. It is this apperception that must be added to the pure imagination in order to make its function intellectual. For in itself the synthesis of the imagination, although exercised *a priori*, is nevertheless always sensible, for it combines the manifold only as it appears in intuition, e.g., the shape of a triangle.

Through the relation^a of the manifold to the unity of apperception,

^a *Verhältnis*

Section III. On the relation of understanding to objects <A>

however, concepts that belong to the understanding can come about, but only by means of the imagination in relation to the sensible intuition.

Pure imagination

We therefore have a pure imagination, as a fundamental faculty of the human soul, that grounds all cognition *a priori*. By its means we bring into combination the manifold of intuition on the one side and the condition of the necessary unity of apperception on the other. Both extremes, namely sensibility and understanding, must necessarily be connected by means of this transcendental function of the imagination, since otherwise the former would to be sure yield appearances but no objects of an empirical cognition, hence there would be no experience. Actual experience, which consists in the apprehension, the association (the reproduction), and finally the recognition of the appearances, contains in the last and highest (of the merely empirical elements of experience) concepts that make possible the formal unity of experience and with it all objective validity (truth) of empirical cognition. These grounds of the recognition of the manifold, so far as they concern merely the form of an experience in general, are now those categories. On them is grounded, therefore, all formal unity in the synthesis of the imagination, and by means of the latter also all of its empirical use (in recognition, reproduction, association, and apprehension) down to the appearances, since the latter belong to our consciousness at all and hence to ourselves only by means of these elements of cognition.

A 125

Thus we ourselves bring into the appearances that order and regularity in them that we call nature,³¹ and moreover we would not be able to find it there if we, or the nature of our mind, had not originally put it there. For this unity of nature should be a necessary, i.e., *a priori* certain unity of the connection of appearances. But how should we be able to establish a synthetic unity *a priori* if subjective grounds of such a unity were not contained *a priori* among the original sources of cognition in our mind, and if these subjective conditions were not at the same time objectively valid, being the grounds of the possibility of cognizing any object^a in experience at all?^b

We provide the order of nature

A 126

^a Object

^b Question mark added. At this point, the following note is inserted in Kant's copy of the first edition:

"That the laws of nature really have their origin in the understanding, and are just as little to be encountered outside it as space and time are, is already proved by the in any case already acknowledged assertion that we cognize them *a priori* and as necessary; for if, on the contrary, they had to be borrowed from outside, we could only cognize them as contingent. But then what sort of laws are those? No greater and no less than is necessary in order to bring appearances into a general connection with one consciousness, only in order to cognize objects as such — for that is the form of their intuition and at the same time the condition of their unity in apperception given, and given *a priori*." (E LI, pp. 26–7; 23:26–7)

Erdmann observes that this is the only substantial note in Kant's copy of the first-



We have above explained the **understanding** in various ways – through a spontaneity of cognition (in contrast to the receptivity of the sensibility), through a faculty for thinking, or a faculty of concepts, or also of judgments – which explanations, if one looks at them properly, come down to the same thing. Now we can characterize it as the **faculty of rules**. This designation is more fruitful, and comes closer to its essence. Sensibility gives us forms (of intuition), but the understanding gives us rules. It is always busy poring through the appearances with the aim of finding some sort of rule in them. Rules, so far as they are objective^a (and thus necessarily pertain to the cognition of objects) are called laws. Although we learn many laws through experience, these are only particular determinations of yet higher laws, the highest of which (under which all others stand) come from the understanding itself *a priori*, and are not borrowed from experience, but rather must provide the appearances with their lawfulness and by that very means make experience possible. The understanding is thus not merely a faculty for making rules through the comparison of the appearances; it is itself the legislation for nature, i.e., without understanding there would not be any nature at all, i.e. synthetic unity of the manifold of appearances in accordance with rules; for appearances, as such, cannot occur outside us, but exist only in our sensibility. The latter, however, as the object of cognition in an experience, with everything it may contain, is possible only in the unity of apperception. The unity of apperception, however, is the transcendental ground of the necessary lawfulness of all appearances in an experience. This very same unity of apperception with regard to a manifold of representations (that namely of determining it out of a single one) is the rule, and the faculty of these rules is the understanding. All appearances as possible experiences, therefore, lie *a priori* in the understanding, and receive their formal possibility from it, just as they lie in the sensibility as mere intuitions, and are only possible through the latter as far as their form is concerned.

Thus as exaggerated and contradictory as it may sound to say that the understanding is itself the source of the laws of nature, and thus of the formal unity of nature, such an assertion is nevertheless correct and appropriate to the object, namely experience. To be sure, empirical laws, as such, can by no means derive their origin from the pure understanding, just as the immeasurable manifoldness of the appearances cannot be adequately conceived through the pure form of sensible intuition.

A 128 But all empirical laws are only particular determinations of the pure

edition deduction, from which he infers that Kant in fact very early gave up hope of improving the deduction by minor changes.

^a Changed to "Rules, so far as they [represent] existence as necessary . . ." in Kant's copy of the first edition (E LII, p. 27; 23:46).

Section III. On the relation of understanding to objects <A>

laws of the understanding, under which and in accordance with whose norm they are first possible, and the appearances assume a lawful form, just as, regardless of the variety of their empirical form, all appearances must nevertheless always be in accord with the pure form of sensibility.

The pure understanding is thus in the categories the law of the synthetic unity of all appearances, and thereby first and originally makes experience possible as far as its form is concerned. But we did not have to accomplish more in the transcendental deduction of the categories than to make comprehensible this relation^a of the understanding to sensibility and by means of the latter to all objects of experience, hence to make comprehensible the objective validity of its pure *a priori* concepts, and thereby determine their origin and truth.

Summary representation
of the correctness and unique possibility of this
deduction
/ of the pure concepts of the understanding.

If the objects with which our cognition has to do were things in themselves, then we would not be able to have any *a priori* concepts of them at all. For whence should we obtain them? If we take them from the object^b (without even investigating here how the latter could become known to us), then our concepts would be merely empirical and not *a priori* concepts. If we take them from ourselves, then that which is merely in us cannot determine the constitution of an object distinct from our representations, i.e., be a ground why there should be a thing that corresponds to something we have in our thoughts, and why all this representation should not instead be empty. But if, on the contrary, we have to do everywhere only with appearances, then it is not only possible but also necessary that certain *a priori* concepts precede the empirical cognition of objects. For as appearances they constitute an object that is merely in us, since a mere modification of our sensibility is not to be encountered outside us at all. Now even this representation – that all these appearances and thus all objects with which we can occupy ourselves are all in me, i.e., determinations of my identical self – expresses a thoroughgoing unity of them in one and the same appearance as necessary. The form of all cognition of objects (through which the manifold is thought as belonging to one object),^c however, also consists in this unity of possible consciousness. Thus the way in which the manifold of sensible representation (intuition) belongs to a

A 129

^a Verhältnis

^b Object

^c zu Einem Object

- A 130 consciousness precedes all cognition of the object, as its intellectual form, and itself constitutes an *a priori* formal cognition of all objects in general, insofar as they are thought (categories). Their synthesis through the pure imagination, the unity of all representations in relation to original apperception, precede all empirical cognition. Pure concepts of the understanding are therefore possible, indeed necessary *a priori* in relation to experience, only because our cognition has to do with nothing but appearances, whose possibility lies in ourselves, whose connection and unity (in the representation of an object) is encountered merely in us, and thus must precede all experience and first make it possible as far as its form is concerned. And from this ground, the only possible one among all, our deduction of the categories has been conducted.