

The distinction between intuition, ‘perception’, and experience in Kant

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§1. Introduction: taking Kant at his word

1.1. *The familiar Kant.* A fairly natural way to understand Kant’s picture of the human mind (in its ‘theoretical’ use) is to take him to embrace two theses:

- (i) *Dualism:* there is a sharp distinction between both the mental capacities of sensibility and understanding, as well as their basic kinds of acts (intuiting and thinking), as well as the basic kinds of contents of these acts (appearances and concepts) – all of which underwrites the sharp distinction Kant draws between the subject-matter of ‘Aesthetic’ (as the science of sensibility) and that of ‘Logic’ (as the science of understanding); and
- (ii) *Idealism:* the basic contents of acts of intuition are ideal not real, because they only exist within these representations, rather than having a self-standing existence.

Here is some of the relevant Kant-terminology put into table-form, for ease of reference:

Table 1: Kant’s division of the mind: its capacities, acts, contents, objects, and relevant sciences

capacity	act	representational content	object	science
understanding	thinking	concept	common property (‘mark’)	Logic
sensibility	intuiting	appearance	individual	Aesthetic

1.2. *Revisionary challenges.* Recent trends in Kant-scholarship have tried to argue that we should revise the more familiar interpretation of Kant on these two related points:

- (i) *Monism:* Kant should not be read as drawing a sharp distinction between concepts and intuitions, because he in fact embraces a kind of *conceptualism*; hence we need to rethink the independence of sensibility and understanding, and the separability of the sciences of Aesthetic and Logic (cf. John McDowell, Hannah Ginsborg, Steve Engstrom, Paul Abela, Stephanie Grüne, Thomas Land, Aaron Griffith);
- (ii) *Realism:* Kant should not be read as committed to any interesting form of idealism about the objects of intuition, because he in fact embraces a form of *direct realism* about intuition itself (cf. McDowell again, Lucy Allais, Rae Langton, Arthur Collins, Colin McLear).

1.3. *Responding to the revisionary challenges.* My concern today will be to show how the primary textual evidence furnished in favor of these two revisionary interpretations

becomes much less problematic for the familiar reading, and its commitments to Dualism and Idealism, once it is recognized that in the passages in question Kant is not discussing ‘intuition [Anschauung]’ directly, but rather two other related but distinct forms of representation – what Kant calls ‘*Wahrnehmung*’ and ‘*Erfahrung*’, translated as ‘perception’ and ‘experience’, respectively. I will focus especially on ‘*Wahrnehmung*’, as its distinctive significance has been almost universally overlooked by even some of the most careful of Kant’s readers.

1.4. *The pivotal lessons concerning ‘Wahrnehmung’.* The three main points I hope to establish in what follows are: (1) For both Kant and the tradition to which he belongs, the mental act that is referred to by ‘*Wahrnehmung*’ is one that involves the intellectual activity of reflection upon an already given sensible representation (for the Leibnizians, *perceptiones*; for Kant, sensation and intuition), along with distinguishing among what is given and comparing these parts, so as to become ‘aware’ of – ‘apperceive’ – what is contained in the already given sensible representation. (2) More specifically, both Kant and the tradition to which he belongs associate the act of ‘*wahrnehmen*’ with the first operation (*operatio*) of the intellect: simple apprehension (*apprehensio simplex*). (For this reason, I will suggest that it might be less misleading to contemporary readers to simply translate ‘*Wahrnehmung*’ as ‘apprehension’ rather than ‘perception’ (though cf. §3.4 and §7).) (3) For both Kant and the tradition to which he belongs, the intellectual activity of reflection, distinguishing, and comparison is involved in ‘*Wahrnehmung*’ and apprehension is not required for, or involved in, the original sensible representation itself (is not required for Leibnizian *perceptiones*), but rather introduces something additional, something alongside of, and subsequent to, the original sensible representation (namely: *apperceptio*). In Kant’s terms, neither sensation nor intuition per se requires or involves the intellectual activity of ‘synthesis’ or combination that is constitutive of ‘*Wahrnehmung*’ and apprehension.

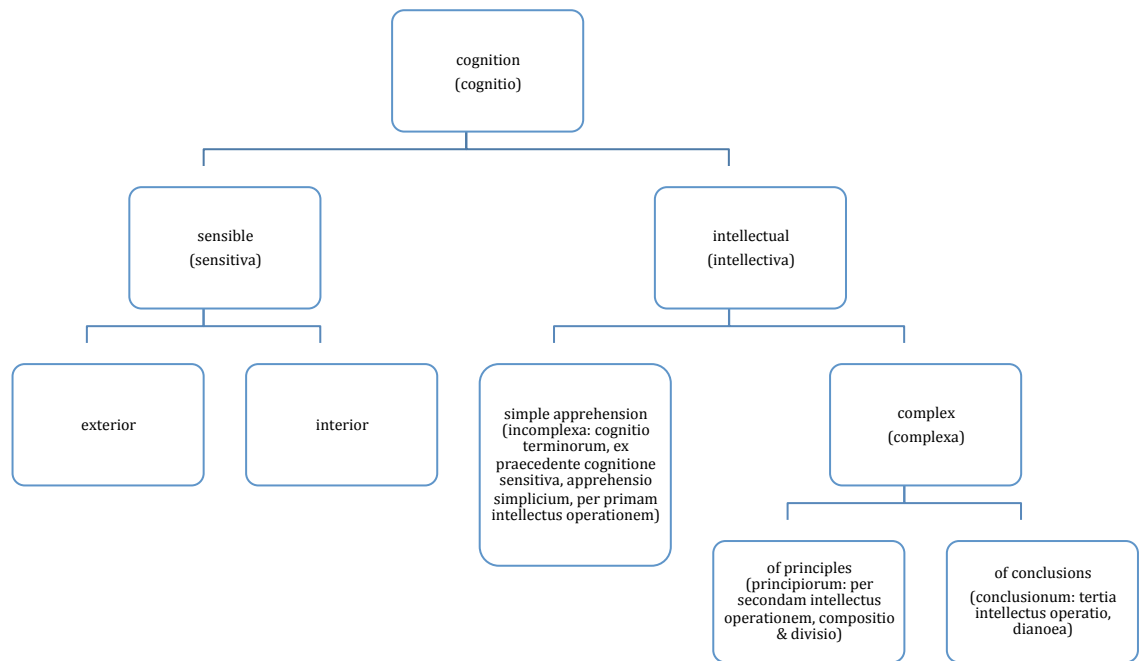
1.5. *My strategy.* I will begin by demonstrating the existence and the systematic importance of the distinction between intuition, as merely sensible representation, on the one hand, and ‘*Wahrnehmung*’, on the other, within the broader modern German philosophical tradition in which Kant belongs (§2). Once we are keyed into its potential significance, the systematic role this distinction plays in Kant’s own texts will become quickly apparent (§3). It will also then allow us to more sharply foreground Kant’s subsequent distinction between ‘*Wahrnehmung*’ and ‘experience [Erfahrung]’ (§4). I then return (in §5) to the two initial revisionary challenges, and argue, first, that conceptualism fails because it elides the distinction between intuition and ‘perception’ qua ‘*Wahrnehmung*’, whereas direct realism fails because it elides the distinction between both of these and experience. I conclude (in §6) by pointing out how the recognition of this threefold distinction allows us to better hold onto the familiar Kant. Along the way, I also sketch how the recognition of this threefold distinction helps to clarify several important though difficult moments in Kant’s analysis, including the Transcendental Deduction and the distinction between ‘judgments of perception’ and ‘judgments of experience’. (There is also an appendix (§7) in which I give a sketch of the consequences of the foregoing for how we ought to understand Kant’s own infrequent uses of the Latin ‘perceptio’, in particular his use of this term on the classification-scheme in the well-known ‘Stufenleiter’ passage.)

§2. The distinction between sensible representation and ‘Wahrnehmung’ in Kant’s historical context

2.1. *Goclenius*. The roots for Kant’s own distinction between intuition and ‘Wahrnehmung’ can be found already at the outset of the early modern period in German philosophy, in Rudolf Goclenius’s (Göckel’s) 1613 *Lexicon philosophicum*.

2.1.1. *Goclenius on cognitio*. In his entry on *cognitio* (p383), Goclenius provides a classification scheme for the various species of cognition in chart-form as follows:

Table 2: *Goclenius’s taxonomy of cognitio*



2.1.2. *Four key points for our purposes*. (1) Sensitive cognition is not ruled out from being cognition, despite the fact that it is *merely* sensitive, and so is not identical with any of the three ‘acts [operationes]’ of the intellect. (2) A fortiori, sensitive cognition is not identical with this first act of simple apprehension by the intellect. (3) Sensitive cognition is something which ‘precedes’ the first act of the intellect (*apprehensio simplex*), and is that on the basis of which apprehension arises. (4) The transition from simple apprehension to the second intellectual act involves ‘composition and division’, which means that these acts, too, cannot already be present in, or constitutive of, merely sensitive cognition.

2.2. *Leibniz*. By the time of the writings of Leibniz, ‘*perceptio*’ gains a more official currency, as does another term important for Kant: ‘*apperceptio*’, something which Leibniz associates with ‘reflection’ on a perception. Though Goclenius uses the Latin terms ‘*percipere* [to perceive]’ and ‘*perceptio* [perception]’ throughout his *Lexicon*, they do not receive their own place among the classification of cognitions. What is more, neither ‘*perceptio*’ or ‘*apperceptio*’ receives its own entry in the *Lexicon* itself.

2.2.1. *Leibniz on perception, sensation, apperception.* In §4 of his 1714 *Principles of Nature and Grace* (G 6.599-600; PE 208), for example, Leibniz uses the French equivalents of these terms to distinguish between four different things:

- (i) the ‘impressions’ upon sense-organs that are ‘received’ by each mind (monad),
- (ii) the ‘perceptions [perceptions]’ that ‘represent’ each of these impressions,
- (iii) what Leibniz calls ‘sensation [sentiment]’, which is perception which is ‘accompanied by memory’ sufficiently forceful or long enough ‘so as to make itself noted or understood [se faire entendre]’ (cf. *Monadology* §19), and finally
- (iv) the actual noting or act of understanding itself is what Leibniz calls ‘apperception’, which he identifies with ‘consciousness [conscience]’ or the ‘reflective cognition [connaissance]’ of a perception.

2.2.2. *Comparison with Goclenius.* Leibniz’s classification here introduces two twists that were not present on the surface of Goclenius’s. First, Leibniz now introduces three terms all in the neighborhood of Goclenius’s sensible cognitions: (i) the impressions given from the senses, (ii) the perceptions which represent these impressions, and (iii) those perceptions which stay in memory for some duration. Second, Leibniz associates the first act of the intellect (understanding) with (iv) an act of ‘reflection’ upon perception so as to ‘note or remark [remarquer]’ something about it (cf. *Nouveaux Essais* G 5.47; PE 295), which is what he calls ‘apperception’.

2.3. *Wolff.* The basics of these distinctions find their way into the writings of Leibniz’s perhaps most influential immediate successor in German philosophy, Christian Wolff, though with certain important differences.

2.3.1. *The generality of ‘perception’.* For one, Wolff uses ‘*perceptio*’ in such a way as to generalize over *every* representation of *any* object, not just the representation of impressions. This is evident from his 1732 *Psychologia empirica* (2nd ed., 1738): ‘We say that the mind perceives when it represents some object, and so perception [perceptio] is the act of mind by which it represents some object’ (Psych Emp, §24).

2.3.2. *Apperception as involving ‘distinguishing’.* For another, Wolff more explicitly emphasizes the role of ‘distinguishing’ parts from wholes in the act of apperception. On Wolff’s picture, we are first ‘given’ a ‘total perception’: ‘We call the total perception that which is composed of all that we have as simultaneously given in some one moment’ (Psych Emp §43). Echoing Leibniz’s language of ‘remarquer’, Wolff likewise claims that it is only once the soul ‘distinguishes’ parts within this total perception that it is said to be ‘conscious’ of its perception (‘perceived things’): ‘When the soul distinguishes [distinguit] partial perceptions from the total perception, it is conscious [conscia] of perceived things; and vice versa’ (Psych Rat §11). This consciousness of its perceptions, and what is contained in them, is what Wolff takes to constitute *apperception*: ‘We attribute apperception to the mind insofar as it is conscious [conscia] of its perceptions’ (Psych Emp, §25).

2.4. *Baumgarten.* It is only with Wolff’s own successor, Alexander Baumgarten, that some of this Latin terminology is finally systematically associated with German terms, in particular with ‘wahrnehmen’.

2.4.1. *Baumgarten on perceptio vs. apperceptio.* Like Wolff, Baumgarten uses ‘perception’ in a very broad sense, to cover any ‘representation of something’ (cf. his 1761 *Acroasis logica* (2nd ed., 1773), §1). Also like Wolff, Baumgarten takes the transition to apperception to require ‘distinguishing [distinguerere]’ or ‘perceiving diversity’ (Acroasis §2): ‘to distinguish an entity is to apperceive it, or to be conscious [conscium] of it’ (Acroasis §3).

2.4.2. *Baumgarten on apperceptio as attentio, and as thinking.* Baumgarten also joins Wolff in taking the ‘ground [fundus; Grund]’ of the soul’s operations to be a ‘complex’ of ‘obscure perceptions’ (1739 *Metaphysica*, 7th ed. 1779, §511), which Baumgarten also calls a ‘total perception’ (§514). Baumgarten identifies our soul’s ‘faculty’ to *have* such a ‘totum’ composed of ‘obscure, confused, and indistinct cognitions’ with the ‘lower faculty for cognizing’ (§520), with cognitions of this sort themselves being called ‘sensitive’ (§521; my ital.). It is only with the operation of the ‘higher faculty for cognizing’, or our intellect, that ‘attention’ to perception itself is possible. This attention can either (a) be directed ‘successively’ to the parts of the total perception in an intellectual act of what Baumgarten also calls ‘reflection’, or (b) be directed to the whole perception itself after such reflection, in an intellectual act of what Baumgarten calls *comparatio*, where this has the sense not of comparing something with something else but of ‘taking’ the parts ‘together’ – of *Zusammenhalten*, to use the German equivalent that Baumgarten himself provides (§626). Finally, Baumgarten claims that it is this sort of mental act, an ‘apperceived perception [perceptio appercepta]’, which is what is meant by ‘thought [cogitatio]’ (Acroasis §3).

2.4.3. *Baumgarten on ‘Wahrnehmung’.* What is perhaps as crucial for our purposes, however, are the German glosses Baumgarten gives in the *Acroasis* to the act of being conscious of an object by way of distinguishing and apperceiving. To ‘*quae ens aliquod distinguit, illa appercepit, seu eorum sibi est conscium*’, Baumgarten appends: ‘*derer ist es sich bewusst, solche bemerkt es, solche nimt es wahr*’. Whereas the first two carry familiar associations – apperceiving is an act in which one ‘is conscious [bewusst] of’ an object, in which one ‘notes [bemerkt]’ it – the last gloss introduces the term ‘*wahrnehmen*’. Nowadays, it would be typical to render ‘wahrnehmen’ as ‘to perceive’; this is surely behind its use in the Cambridge translations of Kant. Yet given the co-presence of ‘perceptio’ as a *contrasting* term in this context, using ‘perception’ for ‘Wahrnehmung’ as well would surely obscure the very distinction Baumgarten is trying to foreground. For it is precisely *not* mere ‘perception’, in the sense of ‘*perceptio*’, that is now supposed to be in focus, with the addition of these further mental acts. Rather than being a simple act arising closely on the heels of sense-impressions, ‘*wahrnehmen*’ is instead an act that the *Acroasis* tells us involves both apperception and distinguishing. As the *Metaphysica* describes the Latin correlate, this act involves ‘attending’ to what given in an initial total perception by ‘reflecting’ on it. But then Baumgarten cannot intend ‘*wahrnehmen*’ to mean the same thing as ‘*percipere*’, since it involves these further acts of mind.

2.5. *Tetens.* We can see one final and especially instructive example of this more complex connotation for ‘wahrnehmen’, if we now turn to Johann Tetens’ 1777 *Philosophische Versuche*. Though Tetens is explicit about his desire to follow Locke in his methodology rather than the Leibniz-Wolffians, he also clearly means to be casting his views in

terminology that echoes the distinctions familiar from the Leibniz-Wolffian writings (Versuche 1.1; 5-6; cf. 1.2; 10).

2.5.1. *Tetens on sensation vs. representation of sensation.* Echoing Leibniz before him (on ‘sentiment’), Tetens himself is happy to claim that ‘the first original representations’ are ‘representations of sensation [Empfindungsvorstellungen]’ (Versuche 1.3.12; 23). Also like Leibniz, however, Tetens thinks that these are ‘representations or images [Bilder] that are achieved *out of* [aus] sensations’, *rather than* things that are *identical with* sensations or impressions (1.3.12; 23; cf. 1.4; 32).

2.5.2. *Tetens on perception as the representation of sensation.* The nearness to Leibniz is also brought out by Tetens’ claim that among the ‘representations of sensation’ is what Tetens calls ‘post-sensation [Nachempfindung]’, which represents a sensation the mind has previously had but no longer has (1.3.12; 23). Such a ‘representation of sensation’ can ‘remain for a while in us’ even when the relevant sensation (or ‘impression’ or ‘feeling’) is itself no longer present (1.5; 32). (This all suggests that Tetens means for ‘Empfindung’ and ‘Empfindungsvorstellung’ to correlate with Leibniz’s ‘impression’ and ‘sentiment’.) Later Tetens calls the power responsible for such original representations of sensation the ‘capacity for *perception* [Perceptionsvermögen]’ (1.3.14; 26; cf. 1.13; 105). Tetens claims that these ‘original representations of sensation are the basic material [Grundstoff] of all the others’ (1.13; 104).

2.5.3. *Tetens on perception vs. ‘Gewahrnehmen’.* Like Baumgarten, Tetens then sharply distinguishes ‘thoughts [Gedanken]’ (and ‘ideas [Ideen]’) from all representations of sensation via the capacity for perception (1.3.15; 26). The grounds for Tetens’ claim here is that representations of sensation only provide the ‘material’ for thoughts, but cannot be identified with thoughts. This is because such representations ‘for themselves’ are such as to ‘contain’ *only* an ‘image’ of something, whereas thoughts contain, *over and above* such images, ‘a consciousness [Bewusstsein]’ and a ‘distinguishing [Unterscheiden]’, and ‘presuppose comparisons [Vergleichungen]’, and, finally, involve a ‘taking with awareness [Gewahrnehmen]’ (1.3.15; 26). Hence, as with Baumgarten, here again we have a cognate of ‘wahrnehmen’ being associated *not* with what arises from the mere *Perceptionsvermögen* but rather with what arises due to thought and consciousness, via distinguishing and comparing, as a ‘taking up with awareness’.

2.5.4. *Gewahrnehmen involves apperception.* In addition to associating ‘Gewahrnehmen’ with thoughts and acts that involve ‘a consciousness’, rather than with the more original Leibnizian *perceptiones*, Tetens also joins Baumgarten in associating ‘Gewahrnehmen’ with apperception as well: ‘When the soul grasps an object as a specific object, singles it out from among others, distinguishes it from them, then there is present what is called a becoming-aware [Gewahrwerden] or a taking with awareness [Gewahrnehmen], or *apperception* [Apperception]’ (Versuche 3.1; 262).

2.5.5. *Gewahrnehmen and Erkennen.* It is also worth noting that Tetens takes this to imply that it is only with such ‘Gewahrnehmen’ that the soul reaches the level of ‘cognizing [erkennen]’ its objects: ‘The soul may have images of objects, it may put them aside and later develop them, it may combine [verbinden] and separate [trennen] them, and it may

work them up as it will. Nevertheless, all of this is something distinct from taking with awareness [gewahrnehmen] of these images in themselves, from cognizing [erkennen] them as to what they are...' (Versuche 1.3.15; 27).

2.5.6. *Gewahrnehmen involves judgment.* Finally, because, 'in taking up something with awareness', Tetens thinks 'there arises in us a thought', a 'distinguishing', a 'singling out', Tetens concludes that what arises in us already with this 'taking up with awareness' is in fact a '*judgment* [Urteil]' (Versuche 3.3; 273). For all of these reasons, Tetens assigns the act of 'Gewahrnehmen' to 'the capacity of the soul' that is called 'the power of thinking' (Versuche 4.1; 295) or 'the understanding' (Versuche 4.1; 296).

2.5.7. *The possibility of 'unwahrgenommene' perceptions.* Given this analytical context, it is perhaps unsurprising that Tetens accepts that 'there are representations *without consciousness*' (Versuche 3.2; 265; my ital.), in the sense of there being representations 'in us' yet of which we 'take' no 'awareness'. For example, there are 'impressions of things outside of us' which are '*in themselves* composed of many and grouped together [zusammengesetzt]', but 'in which *we* do not distinguish anything' (3.2; 265; my ital.). Here Tetens takes himself to agree with Leibniz: 'the ground [Grund] and base [Boden] of the soul consists in representations which are not taken up with awareness [unwahrgenommene Vorstellungen], just as Leibniz said' (3.2; 265; my ital.). Note here again that, though nowadays 'unwahrgenommene' could naturally be rendered as 'unperceived', in the present context this would threaten to make a nonsense of Tetens' point, since it is precisely the original deliverances of 'the capacity of *perception*' (cf. §2.5.3 above) which are being left 'unwahrgenommene'. Tetens point here is rather that there are representations '*in us*' which are nevertheless nothing '*to us*' or '*for us*', to anticipate Kant's language, because we have not yet 'accompanied' them 'with consciousness' of the sort that is distinctive of 'thinking' (cf. B131-32). That is to say, the point is precisely that there are Leibnizian *perceptiones* which are not *apperceived*; the point is obviously not that there are perceptions which do not involve perception (or are 'unperceived').

2.6. *Hegel.* As one last bit of evidence to further demonstrate the broad consensus on this use of 'Wahrnehmung' in Kant's modern German historical context, we can note that shortly after Kant, Hegel, too, draws the very same distinction between simple sensible representations and 'Wahrnehmung', in the first two sections of his 1807 *Phenomenology of Spirit*. What is more, we can also note that Hegel then draws a further distinction between both of these two acts (sensible representation and 'Wahrnehmung') and a third act which involve more complex intellectual activity by the intellect (understanding). This will finally bring us to the threshold of Kant's own threefold distinction between *Anschauung*, *Wahrnehmung*, and *Erfahrung*.

2.6.1. *Hegel's distinction between 'sense-certainty' and 'Wahrnehmung'.* For Hegel, 'wahrnehmen' involves our 'understanding [Verstand]' actively distinguishing and being conscious of the parts of a sensible whole, e.g., the colors (white), shapes (cubical), and tastes (sour) that are contained in it. These are what Hegel calls 'sensible universals' (cf. PhG §130). 'Wahrnehmung' therefore is meant to explicitly contrast with the apparently more basic mental act which is involved in simple 'sense-certainty [sinnliche Gewissheit]', in which a sensible whole is 'simply' and 'immediately related to [unmittelbar zu verhalten]', as a

mere ‘this’ which is ‘here’ and ‘now’ for ‘me’, simply ‘taken in’ or ‘taken up [aufnehmen]’ without any distinguishing or discriminating as to its parts (cf. PhG, §90).

2.6.2. *From Wahrnehmung to the positing of ‘supersensible’ things beyond ‘appearances’.* *Wahrnehmung* is also, however, meant to contrast with the more complex act performed by the understanding of positing a *further ‘supersensible’ object* of which this sensible whole, with its now discriminated parts, is merely the ‘appearance [Erscheinung]’ (PhG §§143-44). Here the understanding goes beyond the mere distinguishing and comparing of what is sensibly present by positing a relation of (i) the appearance as what is sensibly given (and now discriminated) to (ii) a further thing which is not sensibly present but lies in a ‘supersensible’ world, and whose ‘power or force [Kraft]’ is responsible for the bringing about of the appearance in the first place (cf. §§143-45). The language here helps us to anticipate what is involved in Kant’s own notion of ‘experience [Erfahrung]’ (cf. §3 below).

2.7. *Summarizing the results.* What we have found through the modern German tradition, first, is that a distinction is consistently drawn between (a) mere sensible ‘perception’ (*perceptio* in Leibniz’s sense) and (b) something else involving acts of the intellect, which is directed at sensible perceptions but also adds something to them. Secondly, we have seen that the German term ‘wahrnehmen’ (like its kin ‘gewahrnehmen’) is associated with the latter intellectual act rather than the former merely sensible act. Third, there is also an insistence on the fact that both the sensations and impressions, as that which perceptions themselves arise out of and thereby represent, as well as the perceptions themselves, can be in our minds, and so be what they are, independently of our ‘taking’ them up ‘with awareness’, accompanying them ‘with consciousness’, or ‘apperceiving’ them. Finally, and relatedly, given the reflexive nature of *Wahrnehmung*, the immediate object of *Wahrnehmung* is a sensible representation, a Leibnizian *perceptio*. We can try to capture the picture that is present throughout this tradition via the following chart:

Table 3: summary of distinctions within the modern German tradition

Goclenius	Leibniz	Wolff	Baumgarten	Tetens	Hegel
	impression			sensation	
sensible cognition	perception	perception	perception	representation of sensation = perception	sense-certainty
intellectual cognition as simple apper- hending, of either an individual object or universal	apperception as noting a perception	apperception as distinguishing a perception	‘wahrnehmen’ as apperception, as being conscious, noting, distinguishing, reflecting, attending, thinking of a perception	‘Gewahr-nehmen’ as apperception as being conscious, distinguishing, comparing, thinking, judging a perception	‘Wahr-nehmung’ as the under-standing’s distinguishing the sensible universals ‘in’ what is sensibly given

§3. The distinction between intuition and ‘Wahrnehmung’ in Kant’s texts

3.1. *Kant’s own use of these distinctions.* As we now turn to Kant’s texts, let me first show how Kant more or less directly takes over the terminological distinction between merely sensible representation, on the one hand, and ‘Wahrnehmung’ as the reflective consciousness of such representations on the other. I will then turn to the task of showing how both acts are to be distinguished from what Kant calls ‘experience [Erfahrung]’ (§4).

3.2. *The prevalence of ‘Wahrnehmung’ in Kant’s texts.* The first thing to note is that, aside from two sentences in the Stufenleiter passage (cf. §6 below), *every single occurrence* of the English terms ‘perception’ and ‘perceive’ in the Cambridge edition of the first *Critique* tracks the German terms ‘Wahrnehmung’ and ‘wahrnehmen’, rather than the Leibnizian ‘*perceptio*’. The same thing holds of texts other than the *Critique*: ‘Wahrnehmung’, by contrast, ‘wahrnehmen’ and ‘Wahrnehmung’ show up all over the place (occurring literally several hundreds of times), whereas ‘*perceptio*’, ‘*percipere*’, and the Germanized ‘*Perception*’ occur barely a dozen or so times (cf. B376-77, Prol §20 4:300, Jäsche Logic §VIII 9:65, Anthr §4 7:134n, Anthr §6 7:138, ‘Aus Sömmering’ 12:31).

3.3. *Merely sensible representation vs. Wahrnehmung in Kant’s texts.* What is of more significance for our purposes, however, is that Kant shows that he is sensitive to just the distinction that ‘Wahrnehmung’ and its cognates were introduced by the Leibniz-Wolffians to mark – namely, the distinction between (a) our having in our mind a sensible representation that consists either of a sensation or a representation that involves a relation to sensations, but does not yet involve any reflection, comparison, distinguishing, etc. or any ‘consciousness’ of its content in this sense, and (b) our actively ‘taking’ up such a representation ‘with awareness’ by reflecting, comparing, distinguishing, etc. For Kant himself actually uses the term ‘Wahrnehmung’ to mark just this second kind of mental act (b). What is more, Kant also stays close the tradition by associating the act of ‘wahrnehmen’ with the intellectual act of ‘apprehension’ that yields a consciousness of an ‘image’.

3.3.1. *Intuition and Wahrnehmung in the Aesthetic.* The Aesthetic provides the first clues that Kant means to draw a distinction between the merely sensible representations such as ‘sensation [Empfindung]’ itself or what Kant calls ‘intuition [Anschauung]’. (1) First, in light of the traditional use we have seen of the term ‘Wahrnehmung’ to refer to acts that involve the *understanding*, it also makes good sense that Kant’s discussion in the Aesthetic is almost entirely in terms of intuition and not *Wahrnehmung*, since the main topic of the Aesthetic is that which belongs to *sensibility alone*, investigating what remains once we ‘isolate’ sensibility and ‘separate off everything that the understanding thinks through its concepts’ (B36). (2) Second, in the places where ‘wahrnehmen’ does occur, Kant shows that he means to distinguish this act from intuition. For example, in the ‘Transcendental Exposition’ of the concept of space, Kant claims that the ‘intuition’ of space ‘must be encountered in us prior to all *Wahrnehmung* of an object’ (B41). Similarly, in the ‘Conclusion’ to the discussion of space, Kant claims that space as the ‘form of all appearance’ must be ‘given in the mind prior to all actual *Wahrnehmungen*’, and therefore be involved in ‘a pure intuition’ (B42); this is repeated in the ‘General Remarks’ (cf. B60).

These claims would make little sense if Kant meant the same thing by ‘Wahrnehmung’ and ‘intuition’.

3.3.2. *The intuition vs. the Wahrnehmung of space and time.* A further clue in this direction stems from the fact that while Kant is quite clear in the Aesthetic that both space and time are ‘given’ to us in (pure) intuition (cf. B39-40 and B47-48), and so *can* be ‘intuited’, Kant later claims in the Principles that both space and time *cannot* be ‘wahrgenommen’ (cf. B209; for time in particular, cf. B219, B225-26, B233).

3.3.3. *Intuition vs. Wahrnehmung in the A-edition Transcendental Deduction.* In the 1st (A-)edition of the Transcendental Deduction, the distinction between intuition and ‘Wahrnehmung’ is even more sharply drawn. What is more, Kant also here clearly draws the traditional link between the intellectual activity associated with ‘Wahrnehmung’ and apprehension, linking ‘Wahrnehmung’ to what he himself calls ‘the synthesis of apprehension’. At the outset of the A-Deduction, Kant draws a distinction between what an intuition *contains* per se, which *is* something manifold, and the *representation of* what an intuition contains *as a manifold* (A99). What is more, Kant thinks that these two things have different conditions; most importantly, the *representation* of what is contained in an intuition *as manifold* requires that the mind first ‘distinguishes [unterschiede]’ what is so contained:

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 moment no representation can ever be anything other than absolute unity. (A99)

Note that, with respect to its own being, Kant claims that an intuition *is* an absolute unity which *contains* a manifold. *Being* a unity that contains a manifold, however, is different from *being represented as* a unity that contains a manifold. For the latter representation of what is in an intuition, further mental activity is necessary:

Now, in order for unity of intuition to come from this manifold...it is necessary first for there to be *the running through* [Durchlaufen] and then the *taking together* [Zusammennehmung] of this manifoldness, which action I call the *synthesis of apprehension* [Apprehension], since it is *aimed directly at* [gerichtet gerade zu auf] the intuition, which to be sure provides the manifold but can never effect this as such, and indeed *as* contained in one representation, without the occurrence of such a synthesis. (A99; my ital.)

And when Kant shortly thereafter returns to this synthesis of apprehension, he explicitly says its result is to ‘represent appearances empirically in *Wahrnehmung*’ (A115). In other words, just as for the Leibniz-Wolffians, so too for Kant: the activity of distinguishing, running through, and taking together what is already contained in an intuition *just is* the act of ‘becoming conscious of’ what is contained in the intuition, which *just is* the act of ‘Wahrnehmen’. Kant makes the progression from intuition (appearance) to ‘Wahrnehmung’ explicit a few paragraphs later: ‘the first thing that is given to us is appearance, which, *if it is combined with consciousness*, is called *Wahrnehmung*’ (A119-20; my

ital.). And note the further echoes of the earlier usage: Kant's 'if [wenn]' here implies that an appearance *per se* is what it is *whether or not* it is taken up in a 'Wahrnehmung'.

3.3.4. *In the B-edition Deduction.* In the 2nd edition of the Deduction, Kant repeats both the same distinction between intuition and 'Wahrnehmung', as well as the same link between 'Wahrnehmung', consciousness, combination or composition, and 'apprehension':

[B]y the synthesis of apprehension I understand the composition [Zusammensetzung] of the manifold in an empirical intuition, through which *Wahrnehmung*, i.e., empirical consciousness of it (as appearance), becomes possible. (B160); Thus if, e.g., I make the empirical intuition of a house into a *Wahrnehmung* through apprehension of its manifold.... (B162)

And note, again, Kant's use of 'if [wenn]' here, which implies that an intuition *per se* is what it is *whether or not* it is 'made into a *Wahrnehmung* through apprehension'.

3.3.5. *Intuition vs. apprehension and Wahrnehmung in the Principles.* The same distinction continues to be present in the Principles. In the Aesthetic, Kant had characterized an appearance as the 'undetermined [unbestimmte] object' of an (empirical) intuition (B34). What is more, the objects of pure intuition, space and time, were described as 'infinite given magnitudes' (B39-40). In the Axioms, however, Kant now notes that, though space and the appearances that are in them can be intuited and though they are in fact 'already' given as magnitudes, something else is required for space and appearances to be 'cognized' and 'apprehended by us *as* extensive' – namely, an act of synthesis:

Every appearance as intuition is an extensive magnitude, as it can only be cognized [erkannt] through successive synthesis (from part to part) in apprehension. All appearances are accordingly *already* [schon] intuited [angeschaut] as aggregates (multitudes of antecedently given parts), which is not the case with every kind of magnitude, but only with those that are represented and apprehended [apprehendiert] as extensive. (B204)

Kant summarizes his point here as follows, inferring from synthesis and 'composition' as a condition for the 'apprehension' of appearances to their being a condition for the *Wahrnehmung* of them:

[Appearances] cannot be *apprehended* [apprehendiert]...i.e., *taken up* [aufgenommen] *into* empirical consciousness, except through a *synthesis* of the manifold through which the representations of a determinate [bestimmte] space and time are generated, i.e., through the *composition* [Zusammensetzung] of that which is homogeneous and the consciousness of the synthetic unity of this manifold.... Thus even the *Wahrnehmung* of an object, as appearance, is possible only through the same synthetic unity.... (B202-3; my ital.)

Again, the point here is not about what is required for the intuition of an appearance to be an intuition, or to make an intuition come about, but rather what is required for the apprehension or *Wahrnehmung* of an appearance that we have already intuited.

3.3.6. *Wahrnehmung and apprehension in the Anthropology*. If we look outside the first *Critique*, we find the same sort of usage. In his later *Anthropology*, for example, Kant is just as explicit about the link between *Wahrnehmung* and apprehension, even going so far as to offer latter term as a gloss on the former. Writing about early childhood, Kant says ‘in this period of time one begins to follow with his eyes shining objects held before him, and this is the crude beginning of the progress of *Wahrnehmungen* (apprehension of the representation of sensation), which grows into *cognition* of objects of sense, that is, to *experience*’ (Anthr §1, 7:127-8). Note the echoes with Tetens’ formulations above, in Kant’s identification of the immediate object of *Wahrnehmung*/apprehension: the representation of sensation.

3.3.7. *In the Opus Postumum*. Kant returns to the connection between ‘*Wahrnehmung*’ and apprehension in his last writings, the so-called *Opus Postumum*. Here, as in the *Anthropology*, Kant makes a more or less explicit identification of ‘*Wahrnehmung*’ with the Latin term ‘apprehension’ (22:66; cf. 22:463, 487), and gives ‘*apprehensibile*’ as a gloss on ‘Gegenstand der *Wahrnehmung*’ (cf. 22:35; cf. 22:42, 46, 415). What is more, at one point he even appears to identify ‘*Wahrnehmung*’ with ‘*apprehensio simplex*’ (22:413; cf. 22:483 for ‘*apprehensio*’).

3.4. ‘*Wahrnehmung*’ as ‘*taking with awareness*’ or ‘*apprehension*’. All of this suggests that we need a term besides ‘perception’ for a less misleading rendering of ‘*Wahrnehmung*’ in the context of the tradition to which Kant belongs, so as not to confuse what is meant by it with the Leibnizian significance of ‘perceptio’. (This despite the few times that Kant himself nevertheless seems to associate the Latin ‘perceptio’ with ‘*Wahrnehmung*’, such as in Prol §20 4:300; cf. §4.2 below and then §7.) My suggestion would be either something modeled on what we found in Tetens: perhaps ‘taking with awareness’ (or even a bit more literally (if literary): a ‘wary taking’); or simply the English ‘apprehension’. The latter is perhaps a less happy choice, given Kant’s use of the Latinized German terms ‘Apprehension’ and ‘apprehendieren’. To complicate things even more, by the 3rd *Critique* Kant associates a further German term, ‘*Auffassung*’, with ‘Apprehension’ (cf. KU §VII 5:189 and 192, and §26 5:251). For now, I will continue to leave it untranslated.

§4. Kant’s threefold distinction between intuition, *Wahrnehmung*, and experience

4.1. Having gotten a good start on distinguishing mere intuition from its being taken up with consciousness in *Wahrnehmung*, we can now turn to the further task of distinguishing both of these from the mental act that Kant calls ‘experience [*Erfahrung*]’.

4.2. *Experience involves judgment*. We can get our bearings from a passage from the *Prolegomena* in which Kant provides the following ‘analysis’ of experience: ‘at the bottom [of experience] lies the intuition of which I am conscious, i.e. *Wahrnehmung* (*perceptio*), which belongs solely to the senses. But secondly judging (which pertains solely to the understanding) also belongs here’ (4:300). Bracketing for the moment Kant’s use of ‘perceptio’ here (cf. §7 below): whereas *Wahrnehmung* arises through the becoming-conscious of what was already contained in an intuition, experience arises through a

further act of judging. Experience would thus seem to be twice removed from mere intuition.

4.3. *Experience involves judgments about objects beyond appearances.* As the *Prolegomena* goes on to suggest, however, there are actually two kinds of judgment Kant thinks can take place in relation to what is given in intuition. First, Kant thinks we can simply ‘combine’ several apprehensions ‘in a consciousness of *my* state’, after we ‘compare’ them to one another, in order to make a judgment about what is contained ‘in’ my *Wahrnehmungen* themselves. Here, however, my judgment consists in ‘the mere connection [Verknüpfung] of *Wahrnehmungen* within my mental state’ (4:300). These are ‘judgments of *Wahrnehmung*’. We can, however, go *beyond* a judgment directed merely toward *Wahrnehmungen* themselves, or toward the appearances we have thereby *wahrgenommen*, if we ‘add’ a further concept (category) ‘under which’ we ‘subsume’ the relevant appearances and determine their connection (and the connection of *Wahrnehmungen*) in our mental state as ‘objectively valid’ (4:301) – namely, by specifying their ‘relation to an object’ (4:300; my ital.). By introducing the representation of a further object to which these *wahrgenommene* appearances are ‘related’, Kant thinks we ‘add’ something that ‘determines’ the judgment as ‘necessary’ and as ‘universally valid’ (4:304). These more complex judgments are what Kant calls ‘judgments of *experience* [Erfahrungsurteilen]’ (4:300). (Compare how Kant describes experience at the outset of the Deduction: ‘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’ (B126; my ital.).)

4.4. *Experience involves the synthesis of Wahrnehmungen.* In the first *Critique*, Kant characterizes the further act of the ‘subsumption’ of appearances required for experience to arise as another act of connection and synthesis, though now one that ‘determines’ an object ‘through’ the relevant *Wahrnehmungen*: ‘Experience is cognition through connected [durch verknüpfte] *Wahrnehmungen*’ (B161); ‘Experience is only possible through the representation of a necessary connection [Verknüpfung] of *Wahrnehmungen*. Experience...is cognition that determines an object through *Wahrnehmungen*. It is therefore a synthesis of *Wahrnehmungen*’ (B218).

4.5. *Experience is the cognition of an object through appearances, Wahrnehmung is the cognition of an appearance itself as an object.* Here, then, we have arrived at a chief difference between *Wahrnehmung* and experience: whereas *Wahrnehmung* involves the reflection upon what is given or contained ‘in’ an intuition – and so consists in the taking of the *appearance* of some object as itself an object of consciousness (as the Leibnizian *apperceptio* of a *perceptio*) – *experience*, by contrast, involves the thinking and judging that the appearances so apprehended, and so the *Wahrnehmungen* themselves, are related to *some further object* that is not itself an appearance or *Wahrnehmung*; experience involves the ‘determining’ of this object ‘through’ appearances and *Wahrnehmungen*.

4.6. *Confirmation of this distinction in the division of the Principles themselves.* This distinguishing feature between *Wahrnehmung* (and intuition), on the one hand, and experience, on the other, is put forward as the basis for Kant’s division of the Principles for judgment, according to whether (a) they ‘pertain’ directly and ‘merely’ to *appearances* (either as merely intuited or as ‘taken up with awareness’ (*wahrgenommen*)) or whether (b) they pertain to ‘the

existence [Dasein]’ of some further object that is related to an appearance, as determined through the synthesis of *Wahrnehmungen* (B199; my ital.). The first set of (mathematical) principles applies directly to each appearance (as given in mere intuition) and then to each *Wahrnehmung* considered singly, in order to determine the extensive or intensive magnitude of an appearance and a *Wahrnehmung* itself. By contrast, the second set of (dynamical) principles applies only to the synthesis of a series of *Wahrnehmungen* across time, in order to ‘determine’ the relevant *wahrgenommene* appearances as ‘of’ some ‘existent’ object lying beyond any one of these appearances, e.g., a substance or cause. This is why the former Principles are Principles for (directed at) intuition and *Wahrnehmung* (the Axioms and Anticipations, respectively), whereas it is only with the Analogies that we have rules that ‘determine’ apriori when these representations relate to the further objects of *experience* (i.e., to the existents that appearances are determined as representing or being appearances ‘of’).

4.7. *The resulting picture.* We can summarize the resulting picture as follows:

Table 5: Kant’s distinction between intuition, *Wahrnehmung*, *experience*

mental act	content	object represented by content	
[real]	[ideal]		[real]
intuition	appearance		existent thing
<i>Wahrnehmung</i>	concepts of quantity, quality (reflection on intuition)	appearance	
experience	concepts of relation and appearances, apprehended to form images, etc (<i>Wahrnehmungen</i> ‘determined’ via synthesis)		existent thing (‘the existence’ of appearances)

§5. Revisiting the revisionary challenges

5.1. *Responding to the challenges from the conceptualist.* My hope is that the preceding has been of interest independently of the two recent interpretive debates over Kant’s dualism and idealism mentioned at the outset. It can also, however, help us see the confusion that lies at the bottom of such debates. I will turn first to the conceptualist challenge to dualism.

5.1.1. *Mistaking Kant’s talk of the synthesis of apprehension ‘in intuition’ for the making-up (or bringing about) of an intuition.* For one thing, many conceptualist readers of Kant have been misled by Kant’s talk of the synthesis of apprehension being ‘in an intuition’ (cf. §3.3 above), and his related talk of a ‘function’ or concept of the understanding giving ‘unity’ to ‘the synthesis of different representations in an intuition’ (B104-5). Such readers conclude that Kant means to say that it is this synthesis or function or concept must be at work in the very *production* of each single intuition in the first place. As we have seen, this is a mistake.

This synthesis (along with whatever functions or concepts are involved therein) is ‘directed at’ an intuition that is *already there*, is a unity, contains a manifold, etc. – though it is not yet (reflectively) *represented as* (not yet ‘apprehended’ as) having a unity or as containing a manifold, etc. Kant seems to think that *no* such synthesis is required for there to simply be an intuition, for an object to appear. Rather, an intuition requires only that there be what Kant calls ‘a *synopsis* of sense’ – literally: a ‘seeing-together’ – something that ‘contains a manifold in its intuition’, which, however, is something Kant sharply distinguishes from any ‘*synthesis*’, as the latter could only be something that ‘corresponds to’ the synopsis (A97). Only the former (synopsis) *constitutes* what is contained in an intuition (what is ‘seen together’); as we saw above, the latter (synthesis) is instead only ‘directed at’ what already belongs there once we engage in the reflective apprehension of an intuition via *Wahrnehmung*.

5.1.2. *Mistaking Kant’s claims about ‘perceptions’ necessarily stand under the categories for claims about intuitions.* Relatedly, some conceptualist readers have taken Kant’s discussion of the conditions of ‘perceptions [Wahrnehmungen]’ in the Deduction to entail conclusions about intuitions. As we have seen, Kant – with his tradition – surely thinks that distinguishing, consciousness, reflection, etc., is necessary for the *Wahrnehmung* of what is contained in a sensible representation, and so thinks that *Wahrnehmung* involves intellectual activity, and so thinks that the involvement of the understanding and thus some concepts (i.e., the categories) is a necessary condition for the possibility of *Wahrnehmung*. Indeed, this is what Kant explicitly claims at the end of the Deduction:

[S]ince all possible *Wahrnehmung* depends on the synthesis of apprehension, but the latter itself, this empirical synthesis, depends on the transcendental one, thus on the categories, all possible *Wahrnehmung*, hence everything that can ever reach empirical consciousness, i.e., all appearances of nature, as far as their combination is concerned, stand under the categories.... (B164-5)

Kant takes himself at this point to have shown that the reflective *Wahrnehmung* of an appearance via the synthesis of apprehension stands under the categories, and therefore that appearances ‘as far as their combination is concerned [ihrer Verbindung nach]’ do so as well. None of this, however, entails anything about the understanding and its concepts or its syntheses being necessary conditions for the possibility of *intuitions*, as merely sensible representations, or the possibility of appearances per se, prior to their being apprehended, distinguished, combined, etc.

5.1.3. *Seeing a very unfortunate, confused, and unnecessary method at work in Kant’s attempt at a Transcendental Deduction of the validity of the categories, with respect to appearances and intuition.* On the basis of this assumption of the necessary role that the synthesis of apprehension must play in the constitution of intuition, rather than just ‘perception [Wahrnehmung]’, it is often inferred, furthermore, that Kant’s attempt at the Deduction of the validity of the categories (pure concepts), with respect to their application to appearances, simply *cannot succeed* if the categories themselves do not make appearances and intuition possible, by literally making them up or bringing them into being. There are three problems with this interpretation: it makes Kant look very confused; it directly contradicts Kant’s own pronouncements; and it is not necessary.

(1) The first problem is that this would saddle Kant with a decidedly schizophrenic mode of composition. According to this interpretation, the Deduction achieves its task by showing that there can be no worry that the understanding won't find something in intuition to which it can apply itself and its concepts because the understanding is already there behind the scenes making the intuition what it is in the first place. In other words, this interpretation holds Kant's aim to be that of revealing the understanding to be some sort of puppet-master, as it were, already at work, surreptitiously, inside of every intuition. All of this, despite the claims at the outset of the Aesthetic (noted above) that sensibility, along with its original representations, is what it is *independently* of its connection to the understanding.

(2) As many have noted, this interpretation also simply and directly contradicts Kant's own opinion concerning the independence of sensible representations from the understanding, its acts, and its concepts, as it is stated at the outset of the Deduction itself. There Kant explicitly claims that the concepts of understanding, its functions for thinking, etc. are *not* conditions for appearances or intuitions (cf. B122-23).

(3) Finally, as we now can see, such a reading of the Deduction is in no way forced on us. What Kant actually claims the categories are conditions for is the *Wahrnehmung* of appearances and intuition, and the synthesis of *Wahrnehmungen* into experience, *not* appearances and intuitions themselves. In fact, it is precisely because the concepts *are not* conditions for appearances and intuitions per se that Kant seems to think that we must do the hard work of showing that sensibility's representations are nevertheless, in fact, amenable to conceptual representation, *despite the fact that they arise outside of the understanding*. Rather than think that the categories can be shown to be valid of intuitions and appearances because the categories help *make them up* in the first place, Kant instead points to facts which are internal, as it were, to the sensible representations themselves. Perhaps most importantly, he appeals to facts about time that obtain independently of the understanding's representations, such as time's being the fundamental whole in which all of our sensible representations are contained, etc.

5.1.4. *Mistaking Kant's claims in the Deduction that (a) features of some representation of space and time that he attributes to sensibility in the Aesthetic is actually due to understanding, for a claim that (b) features of the intuitions of space and time are due to the understanding.* Many conceptualist readers highlight a footnote in the B-deduction, in which Kant says that something he 'ascribed' to sensibility actually 'presupposes a synthesis' and so arises only due to a 'determination' from the understanding (B160-1n). It is assumed that Kant must here be talking about the *intuitions* of space and time, and so it is inferred that Kant thinks that these intuitions would not be possible, but for an act of synthesis. What Kant here claims, though, is only that space and time are only 'first given *as* intuitions' (my ital.) via this synthesis, which involves the 'comprehension [Zusammenfassung]' of the manifolds that are in space and time (ibid.). Both of these points, however, sound very much like the ones Kant associated with the act of *wahrnehmen* via the synthesis of apprehension, which, as we saw above, involves just such a reflective running-through and a taking-together of what is given in an intuition. Yet as we also saw above, this was perfectly compatible with there being a synthesis- and comprehension-independent way in which the intuition itself was already constituted, with there being synthesis-dependent conditions only on how the intuition could *be represented as being*, through the reflection involved in *Wahrnehmung*. Kant gives a further hint that he has something like this in mind by signaling that he is

concerned with ‘space represented *as object* (as is really required for geometry)’ (ibid.). What Kant is ascribing here to the understanding is only what results ‘as the understanding determines sensibility’ (ibid.). The initial result of such a ‘determination’ would be something like the beginning of the *Wahrnehmung* of space (and time), which would be the first step toward representing *with consciousness* the unity that already pertains to space, representing space as a unity or as unified. (Though, as we noted above, space (and time) cannot actually (ever) be (completely) *wahrgenommen*; cf. B209.) The originary intuition of space, by contrast, does not represent space *as object*, and does not involve representing space with the consciousness that it is any particular way; instead, the original intuition simply ‘gives’ space immediately, without representing it ‘as’ anything at all. (And, indeed, gives it wholly.)

5.2. *The challenge from the direct realist.* Let me now turn, more briefly, to the challenge to direct realism.

5.2.1. *Mistakenly inferring that because Kant talks of being related to houses and ships in experience, through intuition, therefore appearances must be like these objects, rather than image-like representations of such objects.* Many direct realists are impressed with Kant’s willingness (at times) to talk about the objects of intuition and experience as being things like houses and ships, rather than being the appearances of them (cf. B162). What they infer from this, however, is that Kant actually does not hold that what we are immediately aware of in an intuition is a representation of an object, rather than the object itself. Rather, in intuition and experience, we are simply and directly in touch with ‘physical’ objects. (McDowell and Allais are especially good at motivating this thought.) Against this, however, we should note, first, that the make-up of intuition and of experience are very different. Secondly, we should insist that, for Kant, we are *never* immediately related to objects other than appearances, *not even in experience*. To be sure, in experience, we do in fact ‘think’ additional objects *for* the spatial and temporal objects (appearances) that we *are* immediately in contact with, and in this sense experience relates us mediately to objects that are not representations. Nevertheless, experience institutes this relation by having as its immediate object (its content) a hybrid of appearances synthesized under concepts; something that Kant says explicitly functions as an ‘image [Bild]’ of some further object (cf. A120).

5.2.2. *Mistakenly inferring more generally Kant talks about the objects of experience as permanent, publicly observable objects, therefore appearances must be like this, rather than image-like representations of such objects, because the objects of experience just are appearances.* Here we can again point to the fact that appearances only function, along with pure concepts, as partial *contents* (immediate objects) for experience, and not as the *ultimate object* about which we are judging or thinking ‘*through* appearances’ and their synthesis (and ‘*through* concepts’ as well). This is the ‘existence of or for the appearance’ (cf. above). To be sure, our concepts of the substances and causes to which we are related through experience only acquire significance and rules for their application by linking them up to what is present in the sensible representations (appearances) of objects outside of us (or, in the special case of inner experience, appearances of what is inside of us). Nevertheless, the object that we thereby think and judge to be related to these appearances, in virtue of the features present in the appearances themselves, is not identical with any one of its appearances,

nor is it identical with the image that results from the combination of such appearances via the synthesis of apprehension.

§6. Concluding remarks

6.1. *Restoring the autonomy of sensibility.* One of the virtues of the familiar reading of Kant is that, via Dualism, it maintains the *autonomy of sensibility* as something that ‘gives’ us a more direct link to objects existing independently of ourselves, in virtue of a more or less mechanical bringing about or causing of representations (appearances) of these objects (through what Kant calls ‘affection’ (B33)). In this way, it does not succumb to the pressure of making sensibility be the way it is due to our ‘spontaneous’ thinking or judging, and so blocks the slide toward German Idealism, and the full assimilation of Kant’s idealism with Hegel’s. This is so, even if it of course acknowledges the broader mind- or subject-dependence of sensible contents (appearances) and so remains committed to Kant still being an idealist in this sense.

6.2. *Restoring the immediacy of appearances.* This leads to a second virtue of this reading. It keeps much closer to Kant’s insistence that what is *immediately* present in an intuition is something ‘ideal’ rather than ‘real’ – namely, an *appearance*. What is immediately present in one of my intuition is ‘ideal’ because it exists only in the relation between myself and whatever object (‘existent’) it was that caused this presence, and because this effect is a representation of this something else. The ‘affecting’ object that exists ‘in itself’ (in addition to being related to me through affection) is *never* what is immediately present, is not (necessarily) dependent for its existence on its relation to me, and is not (necessarily) a representation of any further thing.

§7. Appendix: how to understand Kant’s own use of ‘perceptio’

7.1. *Wahrnehmung and ‘perceptio’ in Kant’s own writings.* I have argued that Kant stays close to the use of ‘Wahrnehmung’ that is common to many of his predecessors in modern German philosophy, according to which *Wahrnehmung* involves intellectual activity. In this, *Wahrnehmung* is to be distinguished from what the Leibnizians called mere ‘perceptio’, since the latter does not yet involve ‘apperceptio’. I have also noted that Kant himself hardly ever uses the Latin ‘perceptio’ or ‘percipere’ in his Critical writings. There are, however, a few places where he does use these Latin terms. What I want to now focus on in this Appendix are these several uses of the Latin terms. What I will argue is that, though Kant shares his tradition’s understanding of ‘Wahrnehmung’, Kant perhaps surprisingly, and surely confusingly, breaks with his tradition by associating the Latin terms ‘perceptio’ and ‘percipere’ with the act of *Wahrnehmung* itself.

7.2. *‘perceptio’ in the Prolegomena §20.* In the *Prolegomena* §20, for example, Kant seems to gloss ‘Wahrnehmung’ with the Latin term ‘perceptio’: ‘At the bottom [of experience] lies the intuition of which I am conscious, i.e., *Wahrnehmung* (*perceptio*), which belongs solely to the senses’ (4:300). Note, first (as we did above), that Kant here actually identifies ‘Wahrnehmung’ with my ‘*being conscious of an intuition*’ (4:300). Nevertheless, note, secondly, that it is this same act of ‘being conscious of an intuition’ that Kant also associates with ‘perceptio’. This association, however, would have been blocked by the

Leibnizians, since a *perceptio* is not the act of being conscious of a sensible representation (this is *apperceptio*) but it is rather the object or target of such consciousness.

7.3. *'percipere' in Jäsche's Logic*. A similar association is made in Jäsche's edition of Kant's notes for his logic lectures. In §VIII of the Introduction, we find a distinction drawn between 'the first degree of cognition', which is simply 'to *represent* something [sich etwas vorstellen]', and the second degree, which is 'to represent something with consciousness [mit Bewusstsein], or *wahrnehmen* (*percipere*)' (9:65). Here again we find the same sharp contrast with e.g., Baumgarten's usage, for whom it was precisely 'aliquid repraesentare' that was to be identified with 'percipere' (Acroasis §1), with 'bewusst' only being in play with 'appercipere' (Acroasis §3).

7.4. *'perceptio' on the Stufenleiter*. With all of this in mind, let us now turn to what is surely the most well-known passage in which Kant uses the Latin term 'perceptio', the passage known as the 'Stufenleiter':

The genus [Gattung] is representation in general [Vorstellung überhaupt] (*repraesentatio*). Under it stands the representation with consciousness [mit Bewusstsein]. A perception [Perception] (*perceptio*) that relates [bezieht] merely to the subject as a modification of its state is sensation (*sensatio*) [Empfindung]; an objective perception is cognition (*cognitio*) [Erkenntnis]. The latter is either intuition [Anschauung] or concept [Begriff] (*intuitus vel conceptus*). The former is immediately related to [bezieht sich unmittelbar auf] the object and is singular; the latter is related mediately, by means of a mark, which can be common [gemein] to several things. (B376-77)

Here, too, we see Kant using the Latin 'perceptio' to pick out, not representation per se (ala the Leibnizians), but rather a representation that is 'with consciousness', or what the Leibnizians would have associated only with *apperceptio*. And though Kant uses the Latinized German term here ('Perception'), the gloss is of a piece with the one provided for the association of 'perceptio' with 'Wahrnehmung'.

7.5. *Kantian perceptio as Wahrnehmung vs. Leibnizian perceptio as object of Wahrnehmung*. It would appear, then, that Kant means to break with his tradition and use 'perceptio' interchangeably with 'Wahrnehmung'. Yet if this is correct, then it should also follow that what a Kantian *perceptio* has as its object is nothing other than a Leibnizian *perceptio*, insofar as a Kantian *perceptio* is a *Wahrnehmung*, and a *Wahrnehmung* just is, for Kant, the reflective conscious apprehension of a sensible representation by way of running through it, taking it together, etc. That is, Kant's *perceptio* will have a sensible representation (a sensation, an intuition) as its object.

7.6. *Two or three kinds of apprehensio in Goclenius*. What is striking to note, at this point, is that the tradition we have looked at does not, in fact, limit the objects of 'apprehensio' to distinctly *sensible* representations. In fact, if we look a little more closely at Goclenius's analysis of 'apprehensio', for example, we learn that there are actually two distinct kinds of intellectual acts that get brought under the heading of 'apprehensio simplex' (cf. Lexicon, pp120-21). On the one hand, there is the simple apprehension by the intellect

of a simple *individual* object such as a man (e.g., Mauritius); on the other hand, there is the simple apprehension by the intellect of ‘*universalia*’, i.e., of things which have been ‘abstracted from its particulars’, such as being an animal (Lexicon, p120). What is more, over and above this distinction between whether or not the object of apprehension is singular or universal, Goclenius also recognizes a distinction within apprehension based on whether or not the object of apprehension is sensible, via what we ‘perceive [percipimus]’, or intellectual, available only via an act of ‘abstractio’ (Lexicon, p120).

7.7. *Three kinds of Wahrnehmung in Kant.* This opens up the possibility for specifying three distinct forms of reflective apprehension (*Wahrnehmung*) of representations, depending upon which sort of representation is serving as the object or target of such reflection and apprehension:

- (i) sensible apprehension of *sensations*: one which reflectively targets the content of sensible representations simply qua mental act or occurrence (sensations),
- (ii) sensible apprehension of *appearances*: one which targets the contents of those sensible representations which represent an individual object, i.e., are ‘related to’ one (intuitions), and, finally,
- (iii) intellectual apprehension of *concepts*: a third which targets the contents of intellectual representations (concepts), i.e., those representations which also represent (‘relate to’) objects, but do so by way of representing (via abstraction) common marks that can be borne by several objects.

7.8. *The Stufenleiter as classifying the three basic forms of Wahrnehmungen.* It is, therefore, open to us to see Kant, on the Stufenleiter, as dividing ‘Perception’ in his sense (qua *Wahrnehmung*) in just this threefold manner: *Perception/Wahrnehmung* can be a reflective representation of either (i) a sensation, (ii) an intuition, or (iii) a concept. In the former two cases, it will count as sensible apprehension, in the latter merely intellectual apprehension. And because the objects of apprehension in cases (ii) and (iii) are representations which are related to still further objects (individuals, marks), these are naturally grouped together under the heading of ‘objective *Perception*’, whereas in (i), the object of apprehension is ‘subjective’ due to its being a representation of some state of mind that is indicative of (‘related to’) something merely about the subject. Strictly speaking, then, it is not right to say that a sensation, an intuition, or a concept is a species of *Perception (Wahrnehmung, perceptio)*. Rather, each of these provide one of the three basic types of objects of *Perception*, only the apprehension of which (the reflective being conscious of which) itself provides the species of *Perception* ((i) sensible *Wahrnehmung* of a sensation; (ii) sensible *Wahrnehmung* of an intuition; (iii) intellectual *Wahrnehmung* of a concept). This would be, in effect, to view the entirety of the Stufenleiter below ‘Perception’ as presenting a division of intellectual acts of apprehension (‘with consciousness’) all of which would therefore belong under what Goclenius had identified as ‘apprehensio simplex’.