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Roots and role of imagination in Kant: Imagination at the core

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Roots and Role of the Imagination in Kant:

Imagination at the Core

by

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of the requirements for the degree of
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ABSTRACT

Kant's critical philosophy promises to overturn both Empiricism and Rationalism by arguing for the necessity of a passive faculty, sensibility, and an active faculty, understanding, in order for cognition to obtain. Kant argues in favor of sense impression found in standard empirical philosophies while advocating conceptual necessities like those found in rational philosophies. It is only in the synthesis of these two elements that cognition and knowledge claims are possible. However, by affirming such a dualism, Kant has created yet another problem familiar to the history of philosophy, one of faculty interaction. By affirming two separate and exclusive capacities necessary for cognition, Kant has bridged the gap between the two philosophical traditions, but created a gap that must be overcome in order to affirm his positive programmatic. Kant himself realizes the difficulty his new philosophy faces when he claims the two sources of knowledge must have a "common, but unknown root." To complete Kant's program one must ask: "What bridges the gap between sensible intuition and conceptual understanding?"

In my dissertation, I turn to Kant's philosophy and find the answer to this question in the productive imagination. In order to evaluate the viability of this answer, I

problematize the imagination as it has been found in the history of Western philosophy. By tracing the historical use of the imagination in archetypal figures from both empiricist and rationalist traditions, one finds a development of imagination that culminates in the fundamental formulation found in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. In his critical philosophy, Kant synthesizes the imagination (*Einbildungskraft*) and the use of imagination found in both traditions, thus demonstrating its role in both sensation and understanding. By employing the imagination at both sensorial and conceptual levels, Kant has found, I argue, the liaison that overcomes the dualism established by his requirements for knowledge, as well as the common root for both.

Introduction

Due to technical vocabulary, complexity of thought and overall intricacy of Kant's philosophical position, isolating any one element of his cognitive apparatus in order to make clear its function, status, role and employment in cognition presents an interpreter with a number of challenges. For example, isolating sensibility from the rest of the cognitive structures e.g. the understanding and reason, and determining its constituent role in knowledge production appears to be nearly impossible if not entirely so. How can one understand this element without reference to its counterpart, and, furthermore, how can one clearly determine its role in cognition without the contraposing faculty with which it combines in knowledge production? By focusing on one element in Kant's philosophy, one runs the risk of failing to illustrate said element's proper place in Kant's critical philosophy. And yet, one cannot understand Kant's philosophy without providing an analytic of the elements by which one can isolate constitutive parts and determine them in their interactions.

For this essay, I would like to propose that an isolation of one element is not only possible, but also necessary in an interpretation, defense and emendation of Kant's critical works. By focusing on the imagination, one will be able, I argue, to interpret and defend Kant's critical evaluation of scientific, metaphysical, practical and aesthetic knowledge. Knowledge is, according to Kant, a synthesis of two

separate and heterogeneous faculties, sensibility and understanding. With such a formulation, Kant must present an explanation for how two such disparate faculties can be synthesized. The imagination, I contend, is just such a liaison between sensibility and understanding. My intent here is to focus on the imagination in order to gain greater insight on this “blind but indispensable function” as well as to defend Kant’s description and prescription for knowledge claims.

Moreover, by focusing on the imagination one is able to further illustrate central doctrines of Kant’s critical philosophy. Describing the functions of other faculties as well as the origin and development of their products is one such chief concern. By defining knowledge as a synthesis of the products of sensibility and the understanding, intuitions and concepts respectively, Kant presents himself and the reader with a considerable dualism. Sensibility has its own processes and products separate from understanding. So too does the understanding have its own processes and products removed from the influence of sensibility. By bifurcating knowledge production between two separate faculties, Kant resurrects and defends a doctrine that will reconcile the passivity of empirical sensation with the activity, spontaneity, of intellectual processes involved in understanding. But such a dualism presents Kant with a number of problems: What are the origins of the products of both capacities, that is, what is the source for the elemental factors involved in the separate faculties, what do they have in common, and what ensures the correct applicability of concepts to intuitions, in short, their objective validity? If they are mutually exclusive faculties and their products are radically different, how can such a synthesis come about, and

what applicability do we find in human experience, in short, their objective reality? Kant must address not only the sources and the correctness of the products of the faculties, but he must also demonstrate that they are connected in application and use in knowledge claims. By turning to the imagination, I hope to present a coherent interpretation and defense of this central doctrine of Kant's critical works, but also to gain insight into this overlooked and often marginalized, but necessary, capacity of human cognition.

Rather than approaching this topic through the regular means—by examining the arguments found in the Transcendental Deduction of the 1st Critique, an approach most Anglo-American Kant scholars pursue—I prefer to examine the imagination in several of Kant's works. The Anglo-American debate has combined to present a standard interpretation, one which posits Kant's pure concepts, categories, as having no explanation other than his assumption and emendation of Aristotle's categories in conjunction with a table of logical judgments. To combat this interpretation, I would like to center the focus of this protracted debate around the use Kant makes of the imagination. The mediating capacity of the imagination, between sensibility and understanding, is a provocative suggestion Kant himself makes, one to which non-Anglo-American philosophers only occasionally attend and Anglo-American interpreters generally neglect. Treatments of the imagination in Kant's corpus, however, one finds to be remarkably incomplete. More often than not, imagination is discussed in context of Kant's 3rd Critique and analysis of aesthetic judgments. But it is precisely with the aesthetic that Kant begins his critical enterprise. Therefore I

propose to examine the imagination not only in context of Kant's 3rd Critique, but also in terms of the Transcendental Aesthetic of the 1st Critique, his discussion of sensibility, and its connection to the Transcendental Analytic, Kant's discussion of the understanding. By focusing on the imagination, I propose to draw connections between Kant's works and to provide an explanation for the list of pure concepts Kant provides, all under the auspices of determining the objective validity and reality of our concepts. The general thesis of this work is that Kant's use of the imagination is well-informed and radical. And as such, I propose to illustrate the various treatments of the imagination from various archetypes in the history of philosophy, to demonstrate formulations that presage and pre-figure Kant's understanding in order to provide a heuristic against which Kant provides his own account. By employing the imagination as the liaison between sensibility and understanding, Kant draws upon the historical tradition that attributes this mediating function to the imagination, but he also transforms the imagination from the specious and mistrusted faculty of tradition into a necessary element of human thinking.

Chapter One: Problematics

The Problem of the Imagination

The imagination is largely an untreated and ambiguous topic in the history of philosophy. The ontological status of both the imagination and its products as well as the epistemic role they play in human cognition is underdeveloped in most major philosophical thinkers. From some of the earliest Western philosophers, Plato and Aristotle, to the end of the modern period, Kant's critical works, authors acknowledge some use of the imagination in cognition, but more often than not excoriate the imagination as an instrument of folly. Plato broadly cautions against imaginative mimesis while Kant indicates the importance of the imagination while failing to expound upon it properly. This comprehensive confusion might indeed lead one to say the state of the imagination is a mess.

The difficulty of this inquiry is compounded by several factors. Not only are primary texts often inexact, obscure and inconsistent, but secondary authors discussing the imagination in the various primary authors of tradition are in radical disagreement concerning how the inquiry should be approached. Scholarship on this issue is divided as well as divisive. Depending on proclivities, scholars typically evaluate the uncertain status of the imagination according to literary, psychological, or philosophical perspectives or any combination of thereof. Also, depending upon

proclivities, scholars approach this issue from a conceptual or historical or phenomenological standpoint. Methodology is always at issue; whether to focus on particular individuals or represent the entirety of history, whether to pursue imagination conceptually or descriptively, often phenomenologically.

One further obfuscation is whether one can look to a certain author or group of authors and distill a theory of the imagination, or whether one attempts an inquiry more comprehensive in scope. Certain scholars prefer a fine grain analysis of one or few primary authors, others favor a global approach writing topically, but superficially, on a great number of authors. The former presents deeper analysis while losing comprehensiveness, the latter is all-inclusive while risking critical rigor and philosophical insight. It would seem that not only is the state of imagination a mess, but also the state of commentary on the imagination, is a mess.

Even with such intricacies, I believe the state of the imagination and the authors who deem fitting to discuss such obscurities may be summarized according to three generalizations: those who find the imagination as a superordinate faculty, those who find the imagination as subordinate and subservient to other faculties and those who find the imagination as a mediator between faculties. The first of this three-fold division are those literary and philosophical masters we find in the 19th Century Romantic movement, particularly English Romanticism, and German Idealism. These authors sing paeans to the glory of the imagination, the *sine qua non* of human experience. Literary figures like Baudelaire, Coleridge, Keats and Blake exalt the imagination in sentiments such as:

imagination created the world¹

The primary IMAGINATION I hold to be the living power and prime Agent of all human Perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM²

and

The world of Imagination is the world of Infinite and Eternal... There exist in that Eternal World the Permanent Realities of Every thing which we see reflected in this Vegetable place of Nature.³

Soberer thinkers such as Fichte, Schelling and Hegel also promote the imagination as the

central creative process that allows human experience. Fichte observes:

Through this passage of an indeterminate product of the free power of imagination to its total determination in one and the same act, that which occurs in my consciousness becomes an image [*Bild*] and is posited as an image. It becomes *my* product because I must posit it through absolute self-activity.⁴

In Fichte's cryptic phraseology, he attributes certain processes enabled by the imagination as the cornerstone of the appearance of self and world at all. A more aggrandizing sense of the imagination is difficult to behold.

Conversely, there are those who denigrate the imagination and marginalize it as subordinate to all other processes involved in human experience. Most notorious is Plato's relegation of the imagination [*eikasia*] and products of the imagination [*eikos*]

¹ Baudelaire, Charles. "La Reine des Facultés" in *Curiosités esthétiques [et] L'Art romantique*, ed. H. Lemaître (Paris: Garnier, 1962), p. 321. from Casey.

² Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. *Biographia Lieteraria*, ed. George Watson (London: Dent, 1965), p. 167. from Casey.

³ Blake, William. *Between 1790 and 1820, The Poems* ed. W.H. Stevenson (London: Longman, 1971). p. from Brann.

⁴ Fichte *Wissenschaftslehre* p. 3.

to the third remove from reality. Plato decries the imagination because of its mimetic function, stating “imitation is far removed from the truth.”⁵ Imagination, for Plato, is the lowest form of human experience and knowledge.⁶ Less conspicuous, but more telling, is a general oversight for most thinkers to treat of the imagination at all and the implication that it is subordinate to more important matter of cognition and metaphysics. Even the seemingly most systematic of philosophers, like Aristotle or Kant, offer only oblique references and obscure explanations for what appears to most as an integral portion of both cognitive processes and metaphysics. Edward Casey attributes this to the Platonic invective against imagination at the beginnings of Western philosophical discourse. “The course of philosophical theorizing about the imagination” he writes, “is launched in a highly critical vein.”⁷ Thus, a consequence of Plato’s critique is an original suspicion and mistrust of the imagination that carries into most subsequent philosophers.

A third way of evaluating places the imagination as a mediator between other powers of the mind. According to this view, imagination is neither the “queen of the faculties” nor is it a mere slave or false mimesis of higher, truer cognitive processes. Integral to human experience, this third way argues for the imagination as the mediator between sense perception and intellection/reason/understanding. This route neither belittles nor exalts. Classically, authors like Aristotle, Kant and most

⁵ Plato. Republic, Book X, 598b” in *Plato Complete Works* ed. John M. Cooper (Cambridge: Hackett, 1997), p. 1202.

⁶ Republic 513e.

⁷ Casey, Edward S. *Imagining: A Phenomenological Study* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976), p. 16.

medieval thinkers attribute some mediational felicity to the imagination. Aristotle claims:

Imagination (*phantasia*) is different from either perceiving (*aesthesis*) or discursive thinking (*dianoia*), though it [imagination] is not found without sensation, or judgement (*hypolepsis*) without it.⁸

Kant echoes this sentiment when he writes,

Synthesis in general, as we shall hereafter see, is the mere result of the power of imagination (*Einbildungskraft*), a blind but indispensable function of the soul, without which we should have no knowledge whatsoever, but of which we are scarcely ever conscious.⁹

For this group of thinkers, the imagination is typically both a faculty/capacity/function, with a specific product. The faculty is denoted by the unique function the imagination obtains in the transference of sense perception to thinking, and no knowledge, no judgment, no intellection about what is availed by the senses is possible without the employment of the imagination.

These three evaluations, superordinate, subordinate and mediational are representative of the three standard approaches to imagination. *Prima facie*, one can attribute the ranking of the imagination to each groups' approach and definition of the imagination, and this depends upon the very conceptualization the word "imagination" warrants for each group. Moreover, the etymology of imagination further demonstrates the mire in which one finds oneself in such an inquiry. The Latinate imagination has no clear etymological foundation. Phonetically, it is related

⁸ Aristotle De Anima III.3 in *The Complete Works of Aristotle* ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984) p. 680.

⁹ Kant, Immanuel *The Critique of Pure Reason* A78/B103 trans. Norman Kemp Smith (New York: Macmillan & Co, 1965), p. 112.

to the noun *imaginationem* and the verb *imaginari*. Another clear connection is to the noun *imago*, the product of such activity, from from the Latin *imagine* and *imitari*. From these last words we gain not just imagination and image, but, also, imitate and imitation. The Latinate “imitation”, *mimus*, is thus traced back to the Greek mimesis, *mimo*. Plato’s condemnation of imagination can be attributed to this mimetic function found in the etymology of the term “imagination.” Imagination, according to the head of the Academy, neither creates, discovers, nor thinks, it merely copies what has presented itself. The term Plato employs, however, is that of *eikasia*. Another difficult term to disclose fully, *eikasia*, engenders terms still in currency today. Icon, iconoclast and idea all cluster around *eikasia* and *eikos*, which is closely akin to the Greek *eidola*, *eidos*. The connection between icons and that which they represent in religious ceremony is not far from the original understanding of what ideas are and what they entail. The correct *eidos* is to grasp reality; so, too, to possess a true icon is to possess something of the divine.

But *eikasia* is not the only Greek term for imagination. Although Plato employs *eikasia*, *phantasia* was also available to the Greek speaking world. *Phantasia* is the nominal form of the verb *phanesthai*, to appear. What appears through the process of *phanesthai* is *phantasia* or a *phantasia*. Phantasy, or fantasy, in its original usage had little to do with flights of fancy, it pertained to what was appearing/what appears. In ancient and medieval use, *phantasia*, phantasy, is the very process of presenting what appears. Ancient and medieval thinkers appealing to

the mediational nature of imagination draw from this source. What appears to the senses must appear to the intellect by means of *phantasia*.

In German, one finds two terms for imagination, both *Imitation* (*Nachahmung*) and *Einbildungskraft*, each with their own etymological origins. *Imitation* follows the Latin etymology closely, but *Einbildungskraft* has different sources. Literally, it is a, *ein*, power, *kraft*, of formation, *bildung*, from *das Bilden*. Furthermore, *das Bilden* possesses several connotations; from building in a literal constructive sense to articulation in physical and mental. The imagination is the power to build or construct. Mediational employment of imagination in German thinking, Kant especially, draws from this sense of building a bridge between sense perception and understanding.

Traditional etymologies lead from imagination to *imitari* to *mimesis* and *phantasia*. Unorthodox etymologies, however, might also prove insightful. The goal behind such etymological discussion is to capture what concepts the term “imagination” brings to bear. And while much of the standard etymological picture explains the subordinate and mediational camps of imagination authors, further inquiry may shed light on the third. What we seek is not literal phonetic and morphological etymology, but a conceptual etymology as well. To explain the superordinate elevation of imagination, further etymology can be unearthed.

If one focuses on the phoneme “*mag*” in imagination, one is easily led to the *magus*, *magus*, found in Latin. The magus, a wise and often magical individual, possesses truth and utilizes exceptional means to obtain such. Wizardry and magic

appear to be instruments of imagination and supernatural abilities lend themselves to those who employ imagination. But with this supernatural access typically comes mistrust. Also, in tracing the development from *mim(o)* in the Greek to the Latin *imitatio*, one apprehends that in the transliteration the first consonant “m” is dropped. *Mim(o)* first becomes “*imo*” to which is then added further phonemes. Pausing at this transitional point, however, another set of related, but often overlooked words comes into appearance. “*Imo*” is phonologically related to “*emu*” as found in the family of words surrounding emulate and emulation. Conceptually similar, emulation is a copying, a mimesis. Additionally, with emulation, comes the connotation of attempting to equal and often overpass. The superordinators of imagination subscribe to this understanding of imagination. The imagination is not merely some faculty, or a middle player in the process of human experience. Rather, the imagination surpasses all other processes to ascend to the apex of human experience. Imagination is the world and creates the world for these authors. But as with magic and supernatural abilities to obtain truth, just such ennobling of the imagination meets with skepticism and mistrust. This very sentiment of both glorification and wariness is found in the ancient Hebrew term *yetser*. *Yetser* can be both good (*yetser ha-Tov*) and/or bad (*yetser ha-Ra*). *Yetser* derives from the same root word *yzr* as creation (*yetsirah*), creator (*yotser*) and create (*yatsar*). A creative impulse, one marked by caution, informs those authors who wish to elevate the imagination to a creative impulse.

In contemporary discussions of the imagination, recent authors have attempted to acknowledge both the historical and etymological curiosities of imagination and to account for the equivocality of imagination in its conceptual and etymological obscurities. Prodigious authors such as Jean-Paul Sartre, John Sallis and Edward Casey approach the imagination from a phenomenological perspective. Sartre continues a roughly standard interpretation accounting for the imagination as a hermeneutic device through which both pretensions (projections) and retentions must proceed and then concerns himself with a theory of the nature of images. He surmises “the only way to establish a true theory of the being of images is to propose nothing which does not have a direct source in reflective experience.”¹⁰ The latter two authors follow Sartre’s phenomenological lead, but focus on the verbal component of the term “imagination,” Sallis calling it a force or power at work in human cognition, Casey exploring the imagination as it takes place in an act, in imagining. Casey’s assessment of the problem of the imagination explores the ambiguity that the term has received in canonical accounts and proceeds to describe the details involved in the imagining act itself and not any evaluation of powers or faculties. Sallis commends Casey for his methodological approach, but chides him for reducing the imagination to mere imagining, while himself treating the imagination as many classical authors do while employing a phenomenological method.¹¹

¹⁰ Sartre, J.P. *Imagination* trans. Forrest Williams (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1962), p. 3.

¹¹ Sallis, John *Force of Imagination* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2000), p. 15.

In a different vein, historical scholars have attempted to provide individual accounts, epochal understandings and entire histories of the imagination. Each of these factions attempts to arrange etymological and historical facts into a coherent narrative for their respective projects. The range of historical scholarship runs the gamut from particularists to generalists. With Robert Brumbaugh¹² and his exploration of images in Plato's mathematical treatises, one finds specialists who focus on a particular individual, even an obscure doctrine of a singular individual, in history. With figures such as Jacques LeGoff¹³ and Murray Bundy¹⁴ who represent the authoritative voice for medieval scholarship on the imagination, one finds an epochal conceptualization. With historians like J.M. Cocking, who until his death worked on a manuscript delineating a complete history of imagination, Richard Kearney and Eva Brann, one finds an historical approach that borders on the comprehensive.

With so many approaches and so many projects, with so many interpretations and with so much disagreement, what is to be made of the imagination? The first theme of this essay—tracing the history of imagination up to the time of Kant—presents considerable obstacles.

¹² Cf. Braumbaugh, Robert S. *Plato's Mathematical Imagination: The Mathematical Passages in the Dialogues and their Interpretation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press) 1954.

¹³ Cf. LeGoff, Jacques *The Medieval Imagination* trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press) 1985.

¹⁴ Cf. Bundy, Murray W. *The Theory of Imagination in Classical and Medieval Thought* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press) 1927.

The Problem of Kant Studies

The second theme of this thesis—the imagination in Kant—fares little better. Kant scholarship does not find itself in much better shape than the arena of imagination. While there are well-established translations, well-rehearsed arguments and well-defined doctrines of Kantian philosophy, methodological and conceptual disagreements have relegated the field to certain fiefdoms, which, once certain claims are made, are bitterly defended. And, once and again, forays are made into other lands, exploratory, invasive raids are made in attempt to expand empires. These empires, much like feudal lands are bequeathed to trusted vassals, inheritors of the realm.

Much as we find with the imagination, Kant scholars disagree on conceptualizations, methodology and specificity. Depending on whether one pursues the Marburg, Southwest or Anglo-American schools of thought, disparate interpretations and infighting occur on issues aesthetic, metaphysical, epistemic, moral and now even environmental. One oversight in the establishment of these feudal properties is a holistic approach. Much current scholarship confines itself to the well-documented “critical period,” roughly 1781-1894. Inherent in this narrow approach is a marginalization of the “pre-critical” period and the late writings of an academic in retirement, one that might present a coherent narrative to Kant’s life and

works rather than the disparate story commonly told.¹⁵ An integrationist approach is, however, fraught with peril of its own. With internal inconsistency, evolution of ideas, different versions of the same texts, difficulties surrounding legitimacy of late texts and seeming ravings at the end of his life, attempting to provide an account of the entirety of Kant comes across as fool-hardy. Kant studies, while not mired in the same morass as imagination, does find itself in an analogous situation, an abundance of source material and yet no cohesion. And so, a similar question arises, what should one make of Kant? More specifically, what should one make of imagination in Kant?

I propose to attempt my own foray into such an imperiled landscape; I propose an integrationist approach to determine the role imagination plays in Kant's philosophical corpus. It is not lightly that I undertake this project, but with caution in mind; my aim is not to tilt at windmills. Like any interpreter, one must pick and choose salient features to one's project. Much of Kant scholarship provides exacting analyses of many key issues. One, however, that is not thoroughly represented is Kant and the theory of imagination.

More often than not, Kant and his employment of imagination are relegated to marginal treatment or, worse, isolated to a passing footnote. For those authors that do treat the imagination in Kant more extensively, the focus is isolated on one or perhaps

¹⁵ Manfred Kuehn is one author who makes excellent inroads overcoming the common conception that Kant breaks completely with a Leibnizian-Wolffian philosophy during the "silent decade" after which he begins his "critical period." Kuehn illustrates trends in Kant's thinking that present developmental connections from the so-called periods of Kant's life. While not a biography, this work follows this lead by drawing connections between different works and periods of Kant's life in order to show the development and importance of imagination in his thought. Cf. Kuehn, Manfred *Kant: A Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) 2001.

a few texts.¹⁶ Sarah Gibbon's work, *Kant's Theory of the Imagination*, is the only text that attempts an integrationist account of the imagination in all three critiques. Conspicuously lacking, however, is much connection to the pre-critical period, the *Anthropology* and the *Opus Postumum*.¹⁷ Moreover, by emphasizing "the possibility of cognition from the point of view of the judging subject"¹⁸ and the mediational role of imagination, Gibbons misses a more radical origin of the resources of cognition, that is from the imagination itself.¹⁹ Furthermore, Gibbon's work fails to illustrate the historical tradition from which Kant draws his development of imagination, subsequently failing to note the radical transformation of this faculty in Kant himself. No volume exists that attempts to integrate a comprehensive and radical view of the imagination and its employment in Kant's corpus.

Methodology

In order to undertake such a project a programmatic must first be established. Attempting to combine a thematic delimitation of imagination within a particular individual's philosophy runs counter to most methodological intuitions. One needs

¹⁶ Makkreel, Crowther, Kneller etc. Plus a host of papers on imagination and perception.

¹⁷ With the exception of Kant's *Inaugural Dissertation*.

¹⁸ Gibbons, Sarah *Kant's Theory of Imagination* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), p. 6.

¹⁹ A theme certainly understood by some of his contemporaries and many of his students, and one which is capitalized on by his immediate inheritors, the German Idealists.

either to present a comprehensive theory of the imagination or narrow the search to a particular epoch or individual, so standard concerns with methodology dictate. I would rather, however, assert that the story of the imagination is one that needs be told, and in the telling of that story we find in Kant's philosophy a climactic and radical use of the imagination. In his works, Kant employs two imaginations, both productive and reproductive. The latter employment accounts for much of the standard mediational interpretations of the use of the imagination, one necessary for cognition, one that is more often a mere instrument in higher order cognitive processes.. The productive imagination as Kant presents it, however, implies a fundamental grounding of all cognitive capacities in imaginative acts.²⁰ The categories of pure understanding themselves, as I intend to address later are products of the imagination. Likewise, the unified manifold of intuition, that may then be subsumed under a category, is a product of the imagination. The act of synthesis itself, as Kant pointedly reminds his reader, is "the mere result of the power of imagination"²¹ In recounting the story of the imagination, I am really presenting preliminary attempts to understand an elemental power, which finds its rightful, if undocumented, employ in the philosophy of Kant. In tracing the history of the imagination, I hope to discern certain philosophical precedents, ones that inform Kant's use, and to demonstrate his continuity within the historical tradition. Once the history is complete, the second effort is to determine to what extent the imagination informs Kant's philosophy. The claim already alluded to is that in Kant we find a

²⁰ A unique function not to be misunderstood as mere phantasy/fantasy.

²¹ A78/B103.

synthesis and radicalizing of the importance of imagination. His two-fold description of reproductive and productive imagination incorporates the historical dimensions while involving transcendental arguments for the necessity of imagination in human cognition. After Kant, the history of imagination is changed forever.

In order to carry out this project, I will employ a variety of methodologies. Archeological, etymological, historical, inter and intra-textual analysis will be offered. I propose a four-fold methodological inquiry. Following John Sallis' methodological explication in *The Gathering of Reason*, I will present four levels of interpretation/interrogation: duplex, projective, inversive and subversive.²² Duplex interpretation is mainly used in the historical exegesis of the imagination as it has unfolded in archetypal figures from the history of philosophy. This strategy involves primary documents and a duplication of them as representative of certain species of philosophical inquiry on the imagination. In presenting a copy of another author's thought, the image-making function of imagination is inherently at work, or, perhaps, in these cases a sketch/schema-making function. Furthermore, in the reproduction of others' theories, room is made for reflection on the topic. This reflective process, while remaining within the horizon of the original author's framework, sanctions clarification of the conceptualization and aims of the author's use of the imagination. In duplicating historical authors the imperative is to faithfully present the authors' understanding.

Projective interpretation is a process by which one subordinates duplicative reflection in favor of a reflective recovery. Projective interpretation attempts to

²² Cf. John Sallis' *The Gathering of Reason* (Athens, OH; Ohio University Press, 1980) pp. 11-13.

return to origins in the historical understanding of the project. The endeavor is to return to the origins from which one may gain insight on the current project. In venturing a history of imagination, the promise is to return to Kant's conception with a more robust sense of the precedence that has led to Kant's use. This is not to imply causal connections between authors or an evolutionary conceptualization of the imagination in history. Rather, the endeavor is to uncover the experiential dimension from which traditional authors draw their explications, or lack thereof, of the imagination. Reflection on the origins and the history of the imagination support and corroborate Kant's radical theory of imagination by informing it and being transformed in it.

The third interpretive strategy, the inversive, will chiefly be employed in the inter- and intra-textual interpretation of Kant's theory. Inversive reflection broadens the textual base by inverting components found in the faithful duplicative process. Rather than merely presenting the standard formulations found in textual sources, the inversive process promotes insight, perhaps not ventured by the author. By drawing attention to obscure and often inconsistent passages in Kant's philosophy, I hope to draw out the nature of Kant's understanding and the radical employment he makes of the imagination. The promissory note here is that such inversion will unearth a concealed stratum in Kant's philosophy, perhaps unbeknownst to the author himself. As Kant himself expressed, "it is by no means unusual, upon comparing the thoughts which an author has expressed in regard to his subject, whether in ordinary

conversation or in writing, to find that we understand him better than he has understood himself.”²³

The final stage of interpretation is the subversive. In this phase, one re-installs the texts within the general history, to subvert tradition in order to gain insight on current issues. By returning to the history with new-found reflection, the leading question in this inquiry; “what do we make of the imagination?” will once again be promoted. In turning away from specific texts, one returns to the conceptual issue at hand. This final phase of interpretation is intended to gain ground on contemporary questions still present in both scholarship on Kant and the imagination. This last interpretive strategy will not find complete execution in this work. For the sake of brevity, only general consequences of Kant’s transformation can be drawn in this work. The tenor of this text, however, resonates with the implications of Kant’s ingenuity. Unfortunately, these suggestions can only be hinted at in the closing remarks of this work. However, the first three interpretive strategies, I believe, come to fruition. Not only will a faithful reproduction of archetypes of philosophy and their use of the imagination be presented, but I will endeavor an archeology that attempts to unearth the origins and questions that prompt such uses of the imagination in the history of ideas. Drawing from these duplicative and projective exercises, I will attempt an inversion of the imagination in Kant’s critical works, while illustrating preliminary connections with some of the non-critical works. The implications and integrations necessary to the final stage, the subversive, are presented in abbreviated form, but offers promising research in the future, one that

²³ A314/B370.

will perhaps be able to shed further light on the imagination both itself and within the greater context of Kant's complete works.

Following these interpretive strategies for the imagination I hope to maintain the reflective openness such a term connotes. It is my understanding that I approach both topics from a generalist view yet with particular application. In using these strategies, I look to delineate the imagination and demonstrate its conceptual stronghold in Kant's philosophy. Boldly stated, the imagination is the mark of human finitude, human life and human experience. It remains at the center of perception, judgment, protentions for the future, the retentions of memory, synthesis and a sense of identity- it is at the heart of the any knowledge obtainable by humans cognition. Following the romantic German and Anglo Idealists, it is the *sine qua non*, without which human cognition would not be *human* cognition. But mitigating the romantic nostalgia, my claim is merely that it is integral to the processes. This position does not deify the imagination as found in romantic sensibilities. Rather, it gives the imagination its proper dignity among the processes of human cognition.

Generalist Narratives

When surveying the literature that deals with the imagination and its role in human cognition, it is not until the beginning of the sixteenth century and the work of Pico della Mirandola, *On the Imagination* published in 1500, that one finds a text that thematically examines the topic on its own. Fortunately, Pico's work establishes precedent in treating the imagination as a topic worthy of exclusive treatment; unfortunately, Pico's ideas are not original, but merely a compilation and summary of the fragmentary treatment of the topic in Medieval thinking. Nevertheless, Pico ushers in an era in philosophical investigation where the imagination begins to play a more prominent role and embarks upon establishing the imagination as a topic worthy of consideration in its own right. Quite recently, authors have taken up the work of Pico and have begun to chart the historical dimensions of the imagination, expanding Pico's work from a compilation and thematic coherence of only the Medieval period, but have begun to include the echoes of imagination in Plato, the references Aristotle makes to the topic, the place of imagination in the cognitive hierarchies of the Medieval period, the role and possible transformation of imagination in the modern period, and even the suggestion of a post-modern imagination. The imagination, it would seem, has arrived.

The contemporary approaches vary as much in methodology and content as the history of philosophy displays for any topic. The trends in scholarship

run from particularists to generalists; from analytic to continental, psychological to philosophical to religious.

The foremost generalists who address the history of imagination are Eva Brann and Richard Kearney.²⁴ Both authors present a comprehensive accounting of the history, provide detailed analysis of individual and epochal conceptualizations and attempt a coherent narrative for the development of the imagination. Unfortunately, with these general concerns their similarities are at an end.

Brann's formidable compendium, *The World of Imagination*, attempts to exhaust multiple fields of inquiry concerning the imagination; including philosophy, psychology—classical and experimental—, religion and literature. This voluminous work centers around Brann's central claim that, while given a pivotal role in various disciplines, the imagination has long suffered from limited explanation, and her endeavor is to provide a unifying explanation throughout the disparate fields. Central to her claim is the understanding of the imagination as a "faculty of representation" responsible for 'creating' images. This fundamental function is manifest in various formulations throughout the history of ideas;

a) in *philosophy*, as a power mediating between senses and reason by virtue of representing perceptual objects without their presence.

²⁴ Notable inclusions are J.M. Cocking and John Sallis. Sallis provides multiple brief sketches of the imagination, but limits his accounts to a handful of authors. Cf. Sallis' *Delimitations* (1995), *The Gathering of Reason* (1980) and *Force of the Imagination* (2000). Cocking's work *Imagination: A Study in the History of Ideas* (1991) was, unfortunately, incomplete at the time of his passing and thus an incomplete account of the survey he intended.

- b) in *psychology*, as a class of representations, quasi-sensory or quasi-perceptual which occurs in the absence of the usual external stimuli and which may have behavioral consequences different from those attendant on their sensory counterpart.
- c) in *ordinary discourse*, as the capacity for seeing things in one's head.²⁵

Notably, all three definitions cluster around the ability and/or product of presenting or re-presenting the objects of sensation as ideas. This representing, or “image-making” as Brann describes it, is the signal and exclusive function of imagination. Throughout history, commentators- philosophical, psychological, religious or literary- all employ imagination homogenously, or nearly so. What is missing, however, is adequate explanation for the homogeneity of the image-making function found amongst the various authors.

Kearney, on the other hand, denies homogeneity of the imagination in his work, *The Wake of the Imagination*. Here Kearney plots a course through history demonstrating an evolution of use and conceptualization of the imagination. He accords his own methodology the laudation of genealogy, tracing the family resemblance of all the terms used as imagination. In its first employment, in ancient Greek and Medieval thought, the imagination is merely a mimetic faculty. Kearney's paradigmatic metaphor for this epoch is a mirror. What human imagination performs in this era is an image-making function of nature, *deus sive natura*. The locus of reality and truth is located in the natural order of things. Moreover, meaning ascription is located in the original. Human cognition in its imaginative capacity

²⁵ Brann, Eva *The World of Imagination* (Savage, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc., 1991), p. 26.

simply mirrors the world in its original meaning. In ancient Greek culture, the meaning of objects and the world is found in the dynamic cosmos of change and becoming. The imagination in its reproductive capacity has the ability to create temporary stases in the world of flux and thus ensconce meaning in eternal, immutable ideas. In Medieval thought the imagination finds itself not reproducing merely nature, but the order of the universe as created by God. Human understanding as reflected in the mirror image of the world is ultimately dependent/derivative on the totalization depicted in God's knowledge or nature's order. Both ancient and medieval formulations are inherently, Kearney claims, theocentric.²⁶

Shifting from ancient and medieval imagination and the metaphor of the mirror, Kearney describes and compares the modern conception of imagination as a lamp to that of the ancient/medieval epoch of a mirror. This productive imagination, found in the humanistic considerations of modern era, is the source of light and inspiration within human experience. No longer dependent upon a transcendent world, moderns find themselves with the power and position to provide themselves with meaning in the world. According to Kearney, this anthropocentrism marks the modern paradigm as it concerns the imagination. Humans are no longer mere derivative beings, but are, rather, the inventors and creators of their world.

The final stage alleged by Kearney is the ex-centric imagination found in the postmodern era of ubiquitous images. Because of the sheer number of images and the technologically-enabled reproductive capacity we find in contemporary culture,

²⁶ Kearney, Richard *The Wake of the Imagination* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1988) p. 11.

Kearney argues that the images afforded by imagination have no clear originals, neither in theo- nor anthropocentricism. Images of images of images characterize the postmodern condition. Losing sight of the originals, no longer are humans nor the world/god the locus of meaning, rather, meaning arises from a “labyrinth of looking glasses” from which no origin can be found.²⁷ Kearney’s metaphor shifts, once again, from the lamp to the *bricoleur*,²⁸ someone who plays with fragments of meaning, which she herself did not create. This process, Kearney claims, is even unconscious to the *bricoleur* herself. Often, creative artists, wordsmiths, poets, or philosophers, believe themselves to be the author of meaning, yet they are merely recombining already given fragments to express different permutations of already existing elements. According to Kearney, the development of the imagination has a linearity that can be traced from ancient, anonymous, theocentric, mirror-like mimesis; to modern, self-expressive, anthropocentric, lamp-like creativity; to post-modern, unconscious, ex-centric, labyrinthine playing. Because of the ubiquity and commonality of images and imagining, the imagination, he declares, is a “species under threat of extinction.”²⁹

Before the long argument for evolving imagination, Kearney offers a summary of the Western conceptualization of the imagination. He enumerates the two basic definitions of the imagination as follows:

- a) as a representational faculty, which reproduces images of some pre-existing reality

²⁷ Kearney, 17.

²⁸ Literally, a handyman, fiddler, tinkerer- one who assembles from pre-existing materials. From the French *bricoler* v.- to tinker with, to throw together.

²⁹ Kearney, 6.

and

- b) a creative faculty which produces images, which often lay claim to an original status in their own right³⁰

Kearney even extends this analysis to four ways in which the imagination may be conceived. In order to represent or produce, the imagination may employ different approaches. Kearney cites them as the four main meanings of the term imagination, which are the following:

- a) the ability to evoke absent objects which exist elsewhere, without confusing these absent objects with things present in the here and now
- b) a construction and/or use of material forms and figures such as paintings, statues, photographs etc. to represent real things in some 'unreal' way
- c) a fictional projection of non-existent things as in dreams or literary narratives
- d) the capacity of human consciousness to become fascinated by illusions, confusing what is real with what is unreal.³¹

Kearney's approach allows him to embrace the equivocity that accompanies imagination through the many translations and transliterations. Without isolating a singular definition of the imagination, he manages to agree with much of what Brann argues for, while maintaining a polysemantic understanding of the term.

The disagreement between Brann and Kearney is precisely about development of the imagination, or lack thereof. Brann cites the homogeneity of the imagination, with its conspicuous lack of treatment in the history of philosophy, as a viable and interesting contemporary issue. It is the "missing mystery" in the history of ideas,

³⁰ Kearney, 15.

³¹ Kearney, 16.

one that needs exploring, explanation and demonstration. For Kearney, it is the interesting development among epochal changes that elicits interest and demands the “story of the imagination” be told. More importantly, it is precisely the nature and employment of imagination upon which they seemingly disagree.

However, upon closer scrutiny, both authors do actually describe remarkably similar accounts of the imagination as it appears in the use of historical figures. Neither Kearney nor Brann discount the representative power of imagination. Neither deny the subordinate, mediate, and superordinate denigrations and elevations recited from the historical record. Neither deny the claim that the imagination possesses the ability to present that which is absent. What the two authors do disagree upon, is the role imagination takes in meaning ascription, world constitution and experience orientation. In short, they disagree on the way humans understand the imagination. Both authors agree on the use and function of the imagination as a liaison between the senses and the intellect. The imagination in its reproductive role, they both contend, does mediate between the senses and the intellect. In addition to the standard role of imagination as handmaid to reason or intellection, is the often overlooked application of reason and judgment back into the practical life-world. It is in this second aspect that Kearney cites the true difference between his three paradigms of the imagination. If the imagination is merely a reproductive capacity, then it is just a mediator. If, however, the imagination serves a more productive role in meaning and orientation, then he has a strong case for his evolutionary story of the imagination. Yet, it is just at this juncture that Brann and Kearney can be reconciled. If the function of the

imagination is nearly always the same, it is on other metaphysical issues, those pertaining to the sources of meaning and whether humans create meaning or receive it from an external source, that Brann and Kearney disagree. The imagination may indeed be the same throughout the course of history, but what it reproduces, or produces for that matter, and the source of the 'original' is the issue at contention. Kearney's extrapolation from imagination to meaning-making is the contention that is outstanding. It needs both explanation and justification.

The aim of this historical section is to follow the historical ledger, largely as Brann, Kearney and others have, in order to present a coherent narrative or story of the imagination. I hope to continue in the spirit of Brann and Kearney, both in illustrating the role of the imagination in historical figures, developing a story of the imagination, but, moreover, to isolate signature insights of antecedent philosophers in the understanding and employment Kant has of the imagination. This historiography is an attempt to continue the work of Brann and Kearney. To do so, I will supplement both Kearney and Brann's treatment's, providing the way specific philosophers understand the imagination in particular epochs, something Brann tends to overlook in arguing for a single imagination in history, and isolating a single function of the imagination, a claim Kearney never denies, but fails to include in his development of human orientation. In short, my own historiography is a synthesis of these two approaches. In so doing, I hope to demonstrate in greater detail both the agreement and disagreement between these two eminent scholars, and to continue work begun

by these authors in excavating the imagination from the arcana of the history of philosophy.

And yet, this historical section is more than presenting an account that offers a suggestion of reconciliation between these two authors, one that can affirm an essential function of the imagination while leaving room for variety in the use of its products. This historical section purports to build a narrative of the imagination, to show its fulfillment and culmination as Kant employs it in his philosophical system, while finding historical precedent in his predecessors. The historical sections will begin with ancient Greek philosophy and end with a pre-amble to Kant found in the empiricist philosophies of Locke and Hume.

With all the contention concerning the imagination, as a linear development, as an essentially static faculty, whether it is subordinate or superordinate- all these issues can only be addressed by addressing the history proper. So it is to the ancient Greeks I propose to turn first. But before beginning, I feel it imperative to establish some programmatic concerning the analysis and treatment of the historical individuals represented here. The figures represented in this abbreviated history are chosen because they are the earliest recorded harbingers of schools of philosophy that arise as a consequence of their works. From Plato is established a trend in thinking that is roughly approximate with his writings, Platonism; from Aristotle we gain Aristotelianism and his dominant influence in Western philosophy for nearly two-thousand years; from Augustine and Aquinas we are left with a trenchant Scholasticism, the likes of which are only overthrown (arguably) by Descartes

himself and his foundationalist paradigm for philosophy and science; from Descartes both rationalism and empiricism arise.³² These archetypes of philosophy each, in their individual ways, influence the discourse of the imagination. And, in order to tell the story of the imagination, each figure must in turn be treated to trace the subtle transformations, in our understanding of the imagination itself. What I propose in these historical sections is to treat each figure independently by interrogating the understanding and use each figure places on the imagination in their particular philosophical formulations. The hope is to illustrate how the imagination works within their philosophical systems, which, in turn, will shed light on their archetypal understandings of the imagination. This archeology of the imagination will in turn be able to demonstrate developments of imagination, if there be any, and establish firm precedence for Kant's employment of this faculty. In order to interrogate these historical figures, it will be important to ask several questions, all of which some will be able to answer, and others who will be able to answer only some of the questions. Inherent in such a topical treatment, the single most important question is: "what is the nature of the imagination according to person X." But such a questioning elicits more questions than answers. To facilitate answers to this overriding question, I propose to decompose this broad question into narrower foci. One deep problem with the imagination is its role in cognition; whether it is reliable, and whether the

³² The two exceptions to this approach is the inclusion of Pico della Mirandola and Richard of St. Victor. The former is included because of the precedent set by writing specifically on the imagination, his placement as a transition figure between Scholasticism and Modern philosophy, and for his ability to summarize the views of his predecessors in a concise and often emphatic manner. The latter aptly describes the imagination sympathetically to St Augustine's description by presenting his allegory in such a manner that deserves short treatment in its own right.

“figments” of the imagination are in any way real. Thus I intend to address these two concerns by explicitly asking two related questions:

1) What is the ontology of the imagination and its products?

and

2) What relation do the products of the imagination bear to the deliverances of the senses?

The first question interrogates the metaphysics of any particular historical character and places the imagination within his schema for establishing the ultimately real. The second question addresses questions concerning the role of imagination in veritative judgment formation, that is, it addresses the epistemic question.

Because the study of cognition has historically found itself entrenched in problems of its own, I propose to examine the imagination in terms of faculty psychology. This approach is not an attempt to entitize certain powers or capacities of the mind itself, but, rather, allows us to draw contrasts between different, recognized powers of the mind by nominalizing these capacities.³³ This nominalization of the powers of the mind permits predication in order to ease discussion of the capacities and functions of our mental abilities. Since this common heuristic is found in many of our historical figures, I feel it appropriate to address these thinkers on their own terms and to continue employing the vocabulary of faculty psychology. In doing so, another question arises:

³³ “Pointed out by Jerry A. Fodor, although faculty psychology is pronounced dead in every century, it invariably recovers.” from Sepper, p. 13, fn. Faculty psychology is not an attempt to make entities of these capacities, but is a helpful heuristic in discussing intangible properties of the mind and can aid in the elaboration of human cognition. Cf. also Fodor’s *The Modularity of the Mind: An Essay on Faculty Psychology* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1983).

- 3) Where, in a particular thinker's faculty psychology, do we find the imagination? or In the hierarchy of cognitive faculties, where do we find the imagination?

Answering this third question will assist in evaluating the responses to the other two interrogatives. In other words, by applying the two basic questions to the faculties of the mind, we are then left with the questions, "Is the faculty of imagination and its products real (in any deep sense of the term) and what role(s), if any, do they play in making knowledge claims?"

A fourth question, one quite sublunary yet salient to the task of this study, is to ask:

- 4) How do these formulations of the imagination presage or pre-figure Kant's understanding, or, alternatively, provide a heuristic against which Kant provides his own account.

This last question is the tie that binds the historiography from the preliminary chapters of this thesis from those that address Kant's works. In order to prove the contention that Kant employs the imagination in a conventional sense, but radicalizes the imagination into the ground for both sensibility and understanding, I hope to recount the established view in order to demonstrate the innovation in Kant's thinking. Investigating this last question will facilitate an understanding of the narrative of the imagination and Kant's place within it.

Chapter Two: Imagination in Greek Philosophy

Promethean Imaginings

Arguably, Western culture has been molded by two primary influences, Greek culture and concepts and Judeo-Christian theology. The Hellenic culture of speculative philosophy and the biblical tradition of Judeo-Christian revelation have provided Western thinking/philosophy with most of its formative concepts and have exercised an enduring influence.³⁴ Not surprisingly, the theoretical framework by which we understand the imagination finds its roots in the Greek tradition. As Richard Kearney notes, “the first properly philosophical categories of imagination are to be found in the writings of Plato and Aristotle.”³⁵ This does not imply, however, that imagination is not manifest before these two behemoths of Greek culture and philosophy.

Poetic mythos had long been employing imaginative thinking, both in the production of myth and in the depiction of the narratives expressed. Poets, rhapsodes and sophists utilized imagination in the production of their artistic and pedagogical representations. Homer figuratively paints a picture of the travails of Odysseus and rhapsodes claim to interpret the words of Homer by emphasizing certain elements, highlighting with embellishment others, and down-playing even others by use of

³⁴ Kearney, 79.

³⁵ Kearney, 79.

imaginative variation. Even in Greek myths themselves we find elements of fabrication and the art of making. The Promethean myth provides a curious moral tale, cautioning humans against the hubris of claiming the status of original creator. At most, humans create images or replicas of Nature. Prometheus' punishment is a reminder to the audience what occurs when one attempts to assume the privilege of divine fabrication/creation held by the gods. Fire and the subsequent creative arts enabled by this unique catalyst of change and forge-craft, once exclusively the realm of the gods, was bequeathed to humanity by Prometheus' theft, but at a dear price. The primary punishment was Prometheus' bondage, but the secondary cost was the epistemic uncertainty concerning the correspondence of the creations of humanity to those of the gods. Quite literally in some cases, the artifacts of human creation are considered forgery by use of fire/imagination. Consequently, "the stigma of the theft was thus attached to imagination as that Promethean foresight which enabled man to imitate the gods."³⁶ This imitative understanding of imagination with its metaphysical and epistemic duplicity is explicitly documented by Plato and Aristotle and relegates the imagination to an often necessary component for human representation, both as knowledge and in artifacts, but one that undermines any claims to veracity. Imagination as imitation does not, however, end with the Greek thinkers, it continues into medieval philosophy as well. From Plato and Aristotle we see the first formulations of the imagination that gestate and increase in subtlety in medieval thought.

³⁶ Kearney, 80.

Plato

In Plato, we find an ambivalent account of the imagination; ambivalent because, while Plato seems extremely caustic to works of art, he also accedes the necessity of images in discursive thinking (*dianoia*). This ambivalence is to have ramifications for the history of philosophy. Suspicion of this faculty is to remain in many of the treatments of imagination, even while acknowledgment of its power will be understated. Kant himself will suggest that certain imaginings should be considered folly and yet finds proper place for this powerful faculty. This ambivalence in Plato draws directly from his metaphysical view of reality, and, subsequently, the assignation of epistemic verity, or lack thereof, in the physical world of human sensation. It is in *Republic* Book VI that we find the articulation of Plato's metaphysical model, the so-called divided line analogy.

The real, according to Plato, is located in the world of the Form(s),³⁷ which is inaccessible by human sensation. The Form of the Good, for example, is, rather, accessed by intellect (*nous*) through the process of "pure seeing" (*noesis*). Literally, the Form of the Good is "seen" with the soul through pure understanding/reason, the purely intelligible. Plato likens the act whereby the soul comprehends the truth of the Form(s) to a metaphor of seeing objects by the visible light of the sun. In his words; "when the [soul] focuses on something illuminated by the light of truth and what is, it

³⁷ The singular/(plural) variation on the world of the Form(s) is left to indicate the difficulties of interpretation found in Plato scholarship on whether the Form(s) need be articulated as synthesis of the just/true/beautiful/good or whether they can be thought separately. Also preserved in this presentation is the difficulty in determining whether there are individual forms for the objects found in the material world and how they may relate to the Form(s). For a discussion of the difficulties cf. F.M. Cornford's *Plato's Theory of Knowledge* (New York: The Liberal Arts Press, 1957) pp. 252-272.

understands, knows and apparently possesses understanding, but when it focuses on what it mixed with obscurity, on what comes to be and passes away, it opines and is dimmed.”³⁸ What “comes to be and passes away”, according to Plato, is the realm not of truth, but of *doxa*, belief. In the act of *noesis*, the knower comes to comprehend the truth, which is unchanging, permanent, immaterial, and eternal. The visible, material world provided by sensation cannot meet the criteria of seeing the Form(s) with the figurative “mind’s eye.” What humans gain by the deliverances of the senses are merely sensible, commonly visible, tactile and/or audial representations obscured by becoming and decay. Thus sensation cannot yield knowledge of the truth and is relegated to the realm of facsimile or mimesis of the truth of the Forms.³⁹ These replications, however, can never be true copies or images of the Forms, owing to the operations of sensation and its inability to reproduce the constancy required for episteme, true knowledge.⁴⁰

In Plato’s divided line, purposive, creative images and even accidental reflections are even further removed from the Form(s) than sensation. Since the non-visible Form(s) are the locus of truth and objects in the visible world can never maintain the permanence of the Form(s), these objects are imperfect replications of the true Form. Moreover, artistic representations and reproductions of the objects of sensation, are thus replications of replicas. *Eikasia* is the name Plato ascribes to this act of reproduction, and he firmly places it at the lowest division in his divided line

³⁸ Republic, 508b.

³⁹ Republic, 510 d-e.

⁴⁰ Theaetetus, 186e.

analogy.⁴¹ To illustrate, Plato describes three types of bed. The first “is in nature a bed, and... a god makes it.”⁴² Because it is “the very one that is the being of a bed” there can be no two beds made by “the god”. In Plato’s divided line, this original bed is placed at the level of intelligibility- the form of bed. As such, there can be only one. The second type of bed is that made by the carpenter. The carpenter fashions a visible, physical bed, one that comes into being by the manipulations of the carpenter and yet does not remain, for its materiality is subject to decay and the process of becoming. The third bed belongs to the artist. An artist’s likeness of a bed merely imitates what the god or the carpenter make. Plato tells us “the artist’s representation is a long way removed from the truth, for it touches only a small part of each thing, and a part that is itself only an image.”⁴³ The artist’s reproduction of any visible object is an imitation of something that itself is not ultimately real. Artistic representations, Plato argues, are three removes from reality. The first, true reality, belongs to the Form of the Good, from which “the god”/demiurge creates the form of bed, only one of which exists, as it is the being of all things humans classify as beds. The visible objects created by craftsmen only imitate the intelligible being that the form of bed itself possesses. Visible objects accessible by sensation already present an initial chasm between reality, intelligibility, *episteme*, and the world of material objects, availing themselves only to sensibility, *doxa*. The visible bed is already an imitation of the form of bed, which is derived from the Form of the Good. Simply, at the level of *doxa*, human understanding is already two removes from reality. Yet

⁴¹ Republic, 509d-e.

⁴² Republic, 597b, also Timaeus 29-31.

⁴³ Republic, 598b.

redemptive at the carpenter's level is the act of making that participates in the form (and presumably the function) of bed and we accord belief (*pistis*) to the reproduction because of its participation in the form of bed. When viewing an artistic representation of a bed, however, say a painting of a bed, only the superficial qualities of the object remain, even the integral participation between form and function is lost. A painting of a bed cannot be slept upon. As an imitation of a representation of the form of that is drawn from the Form(s), artistic works are at three removes from reality. Such distance from the real, Plato suggests, presents only the merest of appearance and in so doing presents us with little more than illusion. Plato's excoriating criticism of *eikasia* leads him to banish artists and poets from the Republic, for they peddle illusion and do not further human development toward the Form(s).⁴⁴

But even at the level of *eikasia*, the physical representations found in works of art, Plato wishes to make a distinction between veracity and falsehood.⁴⁵ In image production, in imagination proper, we can distinguish between faithful and illusory imitation. Among the many images found at the level of *eikasia*, Plato distinguishes between iconic images (*eikones*) and phantasy (*phantasia*). The former imitate faithfully, and are thus true images of forms, while the latter are purely illusory. Art works and images that represent unfaithfully, like those depicting the gods or heroes in manifest immoral and irrational behavior, depict falsehoods and are pure

⁴⁴ Republic, 605b.

⁴⁵ Republic, 376e.

phantasy.⁴⁶ This imaginative or creative imagination, what will come to be called the “creative imagination”, is just a species of deceit.⁴⁷ They play upon strong sentiments and desire, irrational portions of our soul, and encourage immoral actions.⁴⁸

However, should poets depict elevating and ennobling sentiments in their work—those that encourage intellection over passion, rationality, morality and truth—then Plato can readmit these artists into the Republic.⁴⁹ Making for such allowances, the severest of strictures guided by pedagogical purposes, Plato ultimately displays the ambivalence and irony in his position on images.

In another powerful metaphor, the allegory of the Cave, Plato further clarifies the difference between faithful and unfaithful employment of images in judging. He describes the process by which individuals may be liberated from the fetters of the visible, hence imagistic, thinking to determine true judgments.⁵⁰ At the initial level of judging, in bondage, individuals are beholden to images projected upon the wall of the cave. Plato suggests that accurate prediction of the sequence of images, that is, judging the order correctly, wins high esteem.⁵¹ By mixing the *phantasia* presented with rational judgment, according to the order in which images appear from memory, faithful predictions of order can be produced. Plato argues that “sensation makes some sort of impression in the soul,” which is then stored and called upon as needed through memory.⁵² Memory may be either faithful or false, and faithful memory is

⁴⁶ Republic, 377e.

⁴⁷ Brann, 38.

⁴⁸ Republic 378 b-e, 386 b.

⁴⁹ Republic 286 b-c.

⁵⁰ Republic, 514-517.

⁵¹ Republic, 516 c-d.

⁵² Theaetetus, 195d, 193b, also Brann, 39.

rewarded by the accurate prediction of the objects of the visible world, which is afforded through sensation. This mixing of *phantasia* and rational principles in the act of judging indicates a proper pedagogic function of imagination, if only at the level of the visible—shadows this case. Instructive here is Plato’s willingness to employ images as they arise in memory, informed by rational principles, in the act of judging, in order to provide for empirical efficacy, prediction.

Furthermore, in the process of discursive thinking, “Plato concedes that knowledge, *episteme*, may at time have recourse to what he terms ‘thought images’ in order to enable our human understanding (*dianoia*) to give figurative expression to its abstract ideas.”⁵³ Analogous to the usefulness of imagistic thinking and memory in the prediction of empirical events, images may also be employed in discursive thinking to aid in the representation of abstract ideas. Plato’s most celebrated example of the role of imagistic thinking in discursive thought is that found in geometrical practices. When mathematicians

use visible figures and make claims about them, thought is not directed to them but to those other things that they are like. They make their claims for the sake of the square itself and the diagonal itself, not the diagonal they draw, and similarly with others. These figures that they draw... they now in turn use as images, in seeking to see those others themselves that one cannot see except by means of thought.”⁵⁴

In other words, when mathematicians utilize material models and sketches as inexact representations of abstract forms, “the dianoetic power picks up natural shapes and

⁵³ Republic, 510 d-e, also Kearney, 99.

⁵⁴ Republic, 510d-e.

diagrammatic drawing and interprets them as images.”⁵⁵ Thus, *dianoia* stands a middle-ground between pure thinking (*nous*) and sensibility. It employs the spatiality and visibility of sensation to provide the exemplars found in abstract ideas. In drawing a circle, the geometer imperfectly represents an object, whose properties include all points on the circumference equidistant from the center, for the purposes of diagramming and exploring further consequences of its abstract definition. Such diagrams may prove useful in clarifying relationships, aiding memory in faithful representation of abstract entities and discovering subsequent properties. So also this obtains for other natural images. In the process of abstraction and discursive thinking, images of visible objects are stored and compiled in memory, in order to facilitate human understanding of different forms. By sensible exposure to multiple instances of a type of object, memory records the natural shape, and perhaps other characteristics, and, by contrast and comparison of these shapes and characteristics, that is discursive thinking, renders an image employable for latter use with subsequent exposure to similar objects. Thus, a form, an exemplar, imperfect though it may be, of any type of object is produced. Accordingly, these abstract ideas generated by human understanding cannot be lauded as the form of any object, as the epistemic verity of the form may only be attributed to noetic understanding, but the importance of image production that enables abstract thinking can no longer be denied. Plato must afford some positive use of imagination to explain the process of abstract thinking and its relation to visible objects. In addition to natural and geometric images in the education and employment of discursive thinking, Plato

⁵⁵ Brann, 38.

allows one further use of the imagination, that of the artist for moral and pedagogic edification. Such examples are, presumably, like those works such as Plato's own dialogues. By fostering discursive thinking through the use of image, metaphor, allegory, and analogy, Plato can accept artistic representation as positive in a pedagogical schema that can lead to truth. Ironic as his condemnation of imagination may be, Plato affords a positive role, one that follows his own lead.

This ambivalence is the most commonly featured characteristic of Plato's imagination in the remarkably sparse commentary offered on the topic. Generalist historians such as Kearney, Brann, Sallis and Cocking all note Plato's seemingly mixed attitude to the imagination and the place of images on the divided line.⁵⁶ This ambiguity is characterized by the use of twin terms *eikasia* and *phantasia*.

Commentator H.S. Thayer mitigates this confusion translating *eikasia* as likeness and *phantasia* as semblance.⁵⁷ Likenesses are created in an attempt to replicate the real for the purposes of exploring and disclosing further characteristics. Semblances, on the other hand, are taken for the real and thus mistake mere facsimiles for the real. This division within images supports Plato's division of true images, icons (*eikones*), from false, fantasy (*phantasia*). In addition, this affords Plato the opportunity to reintegrate images and imagistic thinking, myths and geometry, into his ideal state, but only on the condition that any reference made by images or imagistic thinking are in the promotion of the Form(s).

⁵⁶ Cf. Brann, pp. 35-40; Cocking, p. 13; Kearney, pp. 87-105; Sallis (1995), p. 13; Sallis (2000), pp. 46-51.

⁵⁷ Thayer, H.S. "Plato on the Morality of the Imagination" *The Review of Metaphysics* (30: 594-618) p. 594-595. Also in Sallis (2000), p. 46-47; Cocking, p. 13.

Robert Brumbaugh presents a notable work describing how mathematical schemata provide just such semblances that can abrogate Plato's often difficult mathematical analogies.⁵⁸ Brumbaugh's stated goal is to provide a "new primary source material for the study of Plato" by describing diagrams which "were intended to accompany and clarify [Plato's] text."⁵⁹ Laudable as this project is, unfortunately, Brumbaugh does little in the clarification of imagination in Plato. Rather, he focuses on providing mathematical diagrams for esoteric references in Plato's corpus. The upshot of Brumbaugh's work is to show that the discursive mathematical examples Plato employs are indeed imagistic and these images do indeed aid in dialectic by which human cognition approaches noetic thinking. Images do have a beneficial place in Plato's hierarchy. It is in the *eikastic* representation of diagrams by which humans represent mathematical truths that propels the dialectic forward to "pure knowing." *Eikastic* images are, in the final analysis, at the level of discursive thinking, a propaedeutic encouraging the dialectic to continue.⁶⁰ As a propaedeutic it is "a matter of seeing the truth instead of an image... that is, in that appearance that [the image] offers."⁶¹ The knowledge obtained even at this level of thinking is still knowledge of particulars⁶² that are beginning to be generalized over groups according

⁵⁸ Brumbaugh, Robert S. *Plato's Mathematical Imagination* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1954).

⁵⁹ Brumbaugh, p. 3.

⁶⁰ Sallis (2000), p.49.

⁶¹ Sallis (1995), p. 14.

⁶² Particulars in this case is an extraordinary usage. Plato clearly says knowledge of particulars does not obtain, because particulars are in the flux of becoming and are constantly changing. The knowledge of particulars here is knowledge of particular kinds i.e. geometrical figure e.g. circles etc. "Plato's ultimate purpose in introducing mathematical Forms is, of course, to show that mathematics is propaedeutic to dialectic." from D.W. Hamlyn's article "Eikasia in Plato's Republic" in *The Philosophical Quarterly* Vol. 8, No. 30 (Jan., 1958), pp. 14-23.

to hypotheses.⁶³ Knowledge of kinds begins to obtain and from this initial propaedeutic, images, at last, must be left behind in order to obtain true knowledge, *episteme*. Thus particular images perceived through sensation may be legitimated, so long as they are of mathematic, or moral, edification. In a strange reversal from the standard Platonic interpretation concerning the images and the beneficence of such entities, images may be employed to advance human understanding to the level of knowledge.

It is by precisely distinguishing these beneficial images, *eikones*, from mere illusion; it is by dividing educational images from those that compel humans to immoral behavior, and it is the demarcation of true images from those that lay claim to the truth, mere fictions, that Plato bequeaths a legacy to Western philosophy. In the words of Richard Kearney:

the human imagination is only deemed legitimate to the extent that it acknowledges the three following conditions: i) that it is an imitation rather than an original; ii) that it is ultimately subordinate to reason; and iii) that it serves the interests of the divine Good as absolute origin of the truth.⁶⁴

Such constraints emphasize the subordinate position of imagination to reason and/or noetic vision in Plato's hierarchy. Furthermore, because the imagination found itself in no philosophical discussions before Plato, and after the systematization of philosophy found in his works, the imagination is indelibly marked. The first two criteria are to have long standing influence on conceptualizations of imagination, and

⁶³ Chambliss, J.J. *Imagination and Reason in Plato, Aristotle, Vico, Rousseau and Keats* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1974), p. 9.

⁶⁴ Kearney, 105.

the third occupies a playful situation of disappearing and re-appearing in the course of Western thought.

In summary of Plato's ambivalence to the imagination, we can enumerate prohibitions and exceptions of the use of the imagination and image making that will reverberate through the history of philosophy. By and large, artistic representations are to be condemned:

- 1) on epistemic grounds. Artistic images are not real, do not represent the real, and are mere facsimiles, three removes from reality, yet are often depicted as truth.*
- 2) because they are non-didactic. Artistic images teach us nothing of the reality of things.*
- 3) because they are irrational. Artistic representations prey upon extremes of desire, *eros*. They introduce conflict and contradiction, which directly oppose reason, which unites.
- 4) because they are immoral. Artistic representations often depict immoral actions of the gods and heroes.
- 5) because of the propensity to idolatry. Taking the superficial depiction as truth amounts to elevating an *eikon* to the level of permanent being.⁶⁵

Plato's condemnation is grounded on a fusion of any, and often all, the five explanations. Any image production that runs afoul these objections, violates Plato's programmatic for knowledge and knowledge acquisition. Proscriptions three through five are strict censure and typical image making is usually in violation of them. Condemnations one and two however, are mitigated. If an image is not taken for the real, but merely a representation of the truth and the image's purpose is to guide the maker of images to the Form(s), such employment is acceptable. With these two exceptions, images may find some place in veritative cognition, thus becoming

⁶⁵ Kearney, 90-95.

integral to human understanding. So long as images faithfully depict, schematically, make no pretence to the final truth of the object, and can be employed in the upward movement of discursive thinking, then images may be of some use in knowing. Likewise, when artistic representations make no pretence to depict reality, they may be deemed acceptable. Provided humans concede the inferiority of visible representations to the Form(s) and avoid mistaking visible, material, changing images with the eternal, immaterial permanent truth of the Form(s), representation in any form is deemed acceptable. “What distinguishes this legitimate function of images from the normal practices of artists and sophists is that they are never treated as *ends in themselves*. They serve rather as instrumental means for mediating between our sensible experience and our rational intelligence.”⁶⁶ By conceding the superficial nature of visible representation, humans can then employ images, though discursive thinking, in the pursuit of truth.

As an inheritor of Western philosophy and these expansive legacies, Kant will reject the first of these criteria. The latter two will be affirmed, as I intend to argue. In his employment of imagination, Kant will be influenced by the concern that images and imagination is subordinate to reason, but not in the way Plato imagines. It is not the case that the imagination is governed by reason in determining its role in true judgments—Kant does not express belief in a world of pure Form(s) that is accessible only by reason. Rather, reason aids in the use of imagination by providing parameters. Nevertheless, reason and imagination are working in conjunction to provide the basis for epistemic claims. The last criterion will find implicit expression

⁶⁶ Kearney, 99-101.

in Kant's moral philosophy and the ability to formalize maxims and employ them in the concreta of particular actions, always in the furtherance of morality. Despite the temporal and philosophic differences, we find the very first suggestions of imagination and its proper function in human cognition in Plato, a legacy to be found in Kant's philosophy.

Aristotle

Aristotle states: "Imagination (*phantasia*) is different from either perceiving (*aisthesis*) or discursive thinking (*dianoia*)⁶⁷, though it [imagination] is not found without sensation, or judgment (*hypolepsis*) without it."⁶⁸ With this concise formulation, Aristotle gives us the key to unlock his philosophy of the human mind.⁶⁹ Because the imagination is a name traditionally given to one of the capacities of the *psyche* and because the human mind (*nous*) is atop a hierarchy of possible kinds of *psyche*,⁷⁰ if we wish to comprehend his role for imagination in cognition, we must see

⁶⁷ For Aristotle, the term *dianoia* can easily be seen as the discriminative function of the general capacity *nous*. By employing the term *dianoia* here, Aristotle does not preclude that imagination may be operative in *nous poietikos* from that of *nous pathetikos*, whose implementation of images in *dianoia* will be made clear- although there is some doubt whether *nous poietikos* needs images. Cf. W.D Ross.

⁶⁸ DeAnima 427b15-16, also 403a8.

⁶⁹ If the human mind affects all other facets of human operation, perhaps this quote holds the key to his entire philosophy.

⁷⁰ DeAnima 414b30-35.

its place within the larger setting of Aristotle's faculty psychology. It is within his text *De Anima*, that we find Aristotle's full exposition of the possible types of living beings, the possible types of souls, living beings. It is here that Aristotle demarcates living beings into three different groups- plants, animals, and humans, according to the type of soul each possesses- vegetative, sensitive, and rational respectively.

Vegetative (or, often, reproductive) souls possess only the capacities to obtain nutrients, grow, decay and reproduce.⁷¹ Their marked lack of locomotion, according to Aristotle, precludes any movement, which is based upon appetite and desire, and thus any real interaction with the environment. In the middle of his hierarchy, Aristotle places the sensitive soul. In addition to the capacities of the lower life forms (yet altered by a higher capacity) the sensitive soul possesses sense perception. It is sense perception and the ability to respond to the environment, according to painful and pleasurable stimuli, that separates animal souls from those of the vegetative life forms.⁷² In contrast to the vegetative soul, the sensitive soul indicates a certain awareness and interaction with its environment. But this immediate awareness found at the sensitive level does not imply intellection or thinking,⁷³ merely the capacity to exercise mechanical reaction, not deliberate action. To the immediacy of sense perception, the rational soul adds the possibility of mediated awareness, one that

⁷¹ DeAnima 416b20-29.

⁷² DeAnima 413b1-10.

⁷³ But is also not so far removed to say that animals do not acquire the ability to learn from their environment- modestly, mammals (for Aristotle denies imagination to ants, bees and grubs at 428a10, but concedes that all animals that are moved by appetite also have imagination at 433b28-29) seem to make discriminations from pleasant and painful encounter with their environment that allow them to find food, shelter and reproduce more effectively. This proto-memory, or perhaps we should call it an instinctual memory, we will come to find is dependant upon precisely a unique kind of imagination found in animals, a perceptive (opposed to deliberative) imagination.

allows for multiple, repeated re-presentations, which in turn allow for possibility of discursive thinking.⁷⁴ The awareness attributed to sensitive souls is merely of particulars and is a reaction to pain or pleasure. The rational, thinking, soul, however, operates at a level re-presentation⁷⁵ that allows for discursive thinking and the possibility of universals, abstraction, and generalization that typify the most advanced living beings.⁷⁶

Aristotle's faculty psychology, and consequently his divisions among the souls, is predicated upon the existence of forms in substances. Aristotle suggests two distinctive types of forms: sensuous forms and essential forms, that is, those perceivable by the distinguishing faculties of animals and thinking beings, by sensation the former and thinking the latter.⁷⁷ The sensitive faculty perceives the sensible form in objects of experience, which determine the various sensible qualities of the things we see. The rational faculty perceives the essential form, which characterizes the nature of the thing and makes it what it is. Hence the sensitive faculty perceives the particular form, the rational the universal form.⁷⁸

If we follow Aristotle's assertion, concerning the distinction between thinking, imagination and sensation, and the order of descending necessity for the capacity above it, we find the imagination lodged between the key faculties that differentiate rational beings from animals, and also between the two different types of

⁷⁴ According to Aristotle's hierarchy each successive level possesses the capacities of the lower levels, but their functions are modified by the dominant entelechy of the soul type.

⁷⁵ DeAnima 424b24-31.

⁷⁶ DeAnima 414a12-14.

⁷⁷ DeAnima 414a4-13; 424a18-22; 427b7-8.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

forms these faculties perceive. This unique position allows Aristotle to employ the imagination when discussing both sense perception and rational thinking. In fact, with proper understanding we can come to see the imagination as the faculty that allows for the conversion of sensuous forms into the essential forms. (*And possibly the other way around.*)

In depicting the sensitive powers, Aristotle claims:

every sense is receptive of the forms of the sensible objects without their matter, and in the sort of way in which wax receives the impression of a signet ring without the iron or gold, for the wax receives the impression.⁷⁹

When the senses are affected by an object in the environment, the sense organs are affected in a way that responds to their proper function e.g. the eye sees color, hearing sounds etc. The organs receive the particular, determinate form of the object perceived i.e. when seeing red the eye is imprinted with the form red or hearing middle C the ear it impressed with the form middle C. The sensitive powers are not limited, however, to the standard five senses of touch, taste, sight, smell and hearing. To the standard canon Aristotle adds the ability to perceive information that is not administered by any one particular sense, i.e. motion, rest, magnitude, number and figure.⁸⁰ These common sensibles are conveyed through various different senses and are not the specific intuition of any particular organ i.e. both sight and touch can convey the figure of an object. In addition to the particularity of sensuous forms perceived by the various senses, their determinate qualification owing to the

⁷⁹ DeAnima 424a17-20.

⁸⁰ DeAnima 425a16. Time is added at 451a17, at 452b7-9 as a magnitude

singularity of the object, Aristotle adds that “sensations are always true.”⁸¹ What our body receives from its environment by means of the sense organs is always accurate.⁸²

What we have at the end of the process of sensation is a disparate group of perceptions, each according to the special organ or the tandem operation of several organs in the case of common sensibles. But what the sensitive faculty does not provide is a cohesive unity that combines these various perceptions. This is the domain of the imagination. Imagination, as its name suggests, is, for Aristotle, the power or habit “by virtue of which images are formed for us.”⁸³ Imagination is the faculty in which the sensuous forms, particular sense impressions, presented by sensation are unified into a singular presentation. Imagination combines the black and white patches received by my eyes, the smell of animal dander received through my olfactory sense, the sound of barking and the figure of a canine to produce the image of a dog- a particular image of a particular dog, a dalmatian.

This initial level of imagination, one which Aristotle describes as the sensitive/perceptual, is found in all animals. This explains how animals, essentially sensitive according to their defining faculty, the sensitive *entelecheia*, receive information from their environment, process it into a unified field and pursue or avoid the phenomenon according to the pleasure or pain it engenders. Aristotle asserts that the sensitive imagination is immediately operative when sensation occurs, for it is the means by which animals unify the various sensations presented in experience. As an

⁸¹DeAnima 428a11.

⁸² Barring any diseased or aberrant organ.

⁸³ DeAnima 428a1

advanced form of animal, humans also possess this ability to perceive a unified field to which they can react according to the pleasure or pain it causes, (but this too will be altered by *nous*, the defining faculty, *entelechia*, of rational beings.)⁸⁴

If the imagination was limited to just this unifying aspect, it could be considered merely another operation of the faculty of sensation. But, as Aristotle points out, rational beings can present images to themselves that are no longer present e.g. I can remember the dalmatian I saw as an eleven year child. This second function of the imagination, the one most salient to rational beings, Aristotle entitles the deliberative/rational imagination. In the sensitive soul, one governed by appetite and sensation, imagination only performs an operation that allows for immediate discrimination of objects in the environment, that they may be pursued or avoided. In the most complex soul, the rational, one which possesses all the faculties of the lower and *nous*, imagination performs the same function, but also adds another role, a representative role, to its repertoire. As this second function of imagination suggests, rational beings can present images of sensation long past- that is, imagination is the

⁸⁴ In this regard Aristotle describes imagination as “a movement resulting from the actual exercise of the power of sense.” DeAnima 429a2. This is to say, the imagination, in unifying our sensation presents the organism, the image to which we are either adverse or inclined and avoid or pursue as befits its taste. This is also the place at which error may enter the system. Sensation is always true, but images, Aristotle adds, “are for the most part false” DeAnima 428a11 or, in a less condemning tone, “can be true or false” 428b16. The possibility of false images resonates through the entire system at this point, and accounts for why the product of discursive thinking is not infallible. One plausible suggestion here is the notion of optimal conditions for image making- i.e. when one sees a color under a black light the eye sees the color with which it is presented, and can thus make an image of this sensation or seeing a square building at a distance too great to notice its angular corners, we must admit that we *do* see a round figure- our eyes do not betray us in this sense. As these examples illustrate we put provisos on what we consider non-optimal conditions, a black light is not normal light, the one to which we confer veracity, a distance too far to be seen definitively is not optimal. In these instances the imagination may present faithful images, but it need not. The only recourse we have at this point is repeated experience and the ability of discursive thought to regulate what is considered optimal conditions.

faculty that allows for memory and the awareness of the passing of time, according to Aristotle.⁸⁵ Souls of this type now have the capacity to re-present objects and events past for contemplation and deliberation in the present. This second function illustrates how imagination is transformed by the defining faculty/entelechy of a thinking/rational being.⁸⁶

In order to understand how discursive thinking employs the imagination, Aristotle offers us a telling analogy. “To the thinking soul,” he writes, “images serve as if they were the contents of perception (and when it asserts or denies them to be good or bad it avoids or pursues them).”⁸⁷ Imagination and the images it produces are thus at the very heart of the capacity to think—as the opening quote of this section suggests, there is no thinking without images, according to Aristotle. *Nous* employs the images afforded by the imagination to evaluate, discriminate and judge the forms it perceives. As the name of the second feature of imagination suggests, the images are to be employed for deliberative purposes. By Aristotle’s analysis, discursive thinking perceives the form offered in the image, and is afforded the opportunity of evaluating, comparing and cataloguing these forms.

It is at this point in Aristotle’s faculty psychology that a subtle, yet informative distinction is made. Much like the sense organs receive an imprint of the object of experience—that is, it receives the form (sensuous) of the object perceived; thinking, Aristotle asserts, perceives the form (essential) of the image presented by the imagination. Thinking does not intuit the particularities of the image, but rather

⁸⁵ DeAnima 449b29-30. Although at 451a17 Aristotle ascribes time to the sensitive faculty.

⁸⁶ Ross, 52.

⁸⁷ DeAnima 432a15-16.

perceives those forms without which the image would not be what it is—“the faculty of thinking thinks the forms in the images.”⁸⁸ Deliberative imagination provides thinking the opportunity of doing so, by what will come to be known later as the function of recombinant imagining. This function allows discursive thought to remove, add, unify, divide and discriminate certain particular qualities in the images, in order to see if the object still remains what it is. We can remove the spots from the dalmatian and it will remain a dog- it will certainly no longer be a Dalmatian, but it will remain a dog. By adding or removing particularities to the image, thinking compiles a list of essential requirements for a thing to be what it is, the essential form. Systematic knowledge of universals (*scientia*) is the final product of this protracted activity.

By the process of evaluative thinking, Aristotle completes the movement that began with the perception of a particular, with all its variety and contingency, and arrives at the essential knowledge concerning the subject at hand. Thus Aristotle can say “actual sensation apprehends individuals, while what knowledge apprehends is universals.”⁸⁹

At the universal level, thinking is disconnected from the world and operates in the realm of *theoria*, but it is not necessarily removed from the world. The most important function for (calculative) thinking, in Aristotle, is the ability to re-enter the world with the judgments obtained in discursive thinking. It is here that imagination re-surfaces, in the form we most often recognize it today. One concrete realm where

⁸⁸ DeAnima 431b2.

⁸⁹ DeAnima 417b23.

imagination is employed in our engagement with the world is when we deliberate on a course of action. Unlike the sensitive souls, rational animals have a calculative ability that can imagine various scenarios, determine the probable consequences and decide on actions accordingly. After providing a compendium of knowledge concerning concrete situations in the world, the imagination provides the means by which we can envision how possible scenarios might come about (that is based upon this volume of knowledge and the particularities of the specific situation).

Thus we can see that imagination is both an internalizing process by which we move from sensation to thinking, as well as one by which we think and then act in the world. Not only does it provide us the contents of thought, it lends itself to rational deliberation with the purpose of acting in the world. Imagination, it turns out, is the medium through which we engage with the world, it is the link between the world of experience/sensation and our understanding of this world.

Because Aristotle distinguishes these two types of imagination, sensitive and deliberative; because Aristotle's analysis is scattered throughout many different texts; and because Aristotle's own analysis is seemingly inconsistent and incomplete, there has been a good deal of commentary and even more dissent among Aristotle scholars regarding the status of this vital process. The place and role of imagination has led some commentators to conclude the "imagination has an unsatisfactory halfway status between perception and the intellect and its exact position is never made clear."⁹⁰ It

⁹⁰ Hamlyn (1968), xiv.

is to this discussion that I now wish to turn, in hope that the ongoing debate may enhance the preliminary view sketched above.

Commentators on Aristotle depict his imagination in a wide variety of different possibilities. Standard interpretations, like the one expressed above, define the imagination as an image making faculty, a distinct faculty by itself (*phantasia*)- one that involves an imaginative state (*phantasma*), that by which imagination takes place (*phantastikon*), an imagined object (*phantasmaton*) and imagining (*phanezesthai*).⁹¹ This standard interpretation is represented in the literature by such notable characters as R.D. Hicks⁹², W.D. Ross and, to some extent, D.W. Hamlyn. And while these figures were instrumental to provide a canonical theory of the imagination, they are not without their critics- in fact they split a median between two extreme and polemical positions.

Martha Nussbaum represents one faction in the current polemic regarding Aristotle's *phantasia*. Her interpretation involves imagination in a hermeneutic process that attends to certain features of sensation in order to provide a familiar "seeing as" that can then be employed by discursive thinking. Nussbaum does not limit the imagination to an image producing capacity, for this locution, driven by its ocular metaphor, overlooks imagination's discrimination in the other senses. Nussbaum does not deny the image producing function of the imagination, but,

⁹¹ Conspicuously lacking here, as Wedin points out, is the organ for imagining, *phantaserion*. Cf Wedin 58. However, if the original translation in this paper is correct and the imagination unifies the various material given by sensibility (special, common, and incidental), then the heart may be given as the organ for the imagination, as that is the purported place wherein the various sensibles are united. Another interesting note is the conspicuous lack of an organ for thinking. This standard formulation and its corresponding ingredients for a distinct faculty follows sensation as the model that enumerates the requirements for a complete faculty.

⁹² Cf Hicks, 1965, 461

rather, wishes to expand its role to an overall discriminating faculty that attends to, orders, and focuses sensation into something employable. According to Nussbaum's account, the imagination is a distinct faculty, but one whose role is greater than just image production.

On the other side of the polemic is Michael Wedin. Contra Nussbaum's interpretation, Wedin affirms the image making function of the canonical theory, but denies the imagination any independent status as a faculty. The imagination, he claims, "is not a full faculty" but "is surely involved in the actual use of such [complete] faculties."⁹³

The disagreement between the two polarized factions is owing to the source material from which each commentator draws their central theory. Wedin claims *DeAnima* 3.3 to be the definitive and complete account of Aristotle's imagination, to which any disagreement, inconsistency or confusion in auxiliary passages must conform. On the other hand, Nussbaum, while recognizing the importance of the *DeAnima* 3.3, emphasizes passages found in the *Parva Naturalia De Motu Animalium* and even the *Posterior Analytics*. Her approach is "not to try to read the inconsistencies away, or to try to make everything fit with what seems the most technical passage, but to allow Aristotelian *phantasia* the broad scope... that it evidently has... and recognize the diversity of the phenomena in question."⁹⁴ The

⁹³ Wedin 57.

⁹⁴ Nussbaum, 252. In depicting Nussbaum and Wedin as the chief proponents in the current debate over Aristotle's imagination I do not wish to suggest they are the only commentators nor express the only positions. There are other commentators like Malcolm Schofield and Dorothea Frede who provide illumination on the topic. However, I believe, these other players can be placed, along with the standard interpretation represented by Hicks, Hamlyn and Ross, within a spectrum whose ends are the positions of Nussbaum and Wedin. The skeptical imagination, as Schofield calls it, allies itself

fundamental disagreement between the two factions centers around two basic issues; whether the imagination is a separate and complete faculty, and of what does the nature of its activity consist. However they may be argued separately, I find both issues spiraling around a unifying, but as yet unnamed issue- the fullness and completeness of a faculty being based upon an exclusive, active capacity for which no other faculty can account. In conjunction with this issue is the concern whether the imagination as preparation and presentation of the unified sensations can fulfill Aristotle's criterion of an independent faculty and as such entitle historians to trace the use of imagination in his corpus.

On the first issue, the disagreement is more tacit than explicit. Integral to Wedin's formulation is the "functional incompleteness of imagination." According to his analysis, "faculties are certain potentialities... which must be capable of actual use" and thus the "imagination can hardly be a genuine faculty if it has no actual use."⁹⁵ In other words, Wedin argues if there is not actual, presumably active, use of a purported faculty, then the so-called faculty is not complete and distinct to itself. Modestly, and wisely I think, Nussbaum does not posit such a strict definition of faculty based solely upon this single criterion. She may even be willing to grant Wedin this premise, but will add further criterion for the definition of a faculty. (But,

with Nussbaum's hermeneutic understanding of *phantasia*. He seems to recognize that it is a faculty, but emends Nussbaum's interpretation and relegates the imagination to an activity that possesses little epistemic veracity. Schofield, it may be said, represents the middle ground between Nussbaum and Ross, as Ross once claimed Aristotle "claimed it [imagination] not as a valuable faculty but as a disability" because of its preponderance to falsity. Cf. DeAnima 428a11 and Ross (196, 39) Frede, it might be said, represents the middle ground between Wedin and the standard interpretation. Although Frede concedes the imagination as a faculty complete in itself and with its own activity, she allies herself with Wedin. Cf. Frede's article *The Cognitive Role of Phantasia*, 295fn.

⁹⁵ Wedin 45.

if so, perception might not be a faculty—depending upon the weight you give the *sensus communis*)

Following his premise concerning the status of faculties in regard to their activity, Wedin continues and attempts to show that the activity of the imagination occurs simultaneously with sensation, as in the case of the sensitive imagination found in animals or with thinking, as in deliberative imagination. This second issue reflects back on the first and is rallying point of either faction in the debate. He contends that the unification of the sensibles occurs in sensation, in the *sensus communis*, and that imagination is merely a passive re-presentation of the initial presentation afforded by common sense.⁹⁶ Nussbaum suggests this interpretation likens the imagination to a mirror, which reflects what is given to it, but without actively creating any images itself.⁹⁷

Furthermore, Wedin denies *phantasia* the power of movement. He reinterprets *DeAnima* 3.10 433a20-21 to say that movement in an animal that is the product of an imagination and desire, is not the activity of imagination, but the activity of the animal, not any specific faculty. To support this view Wedin adds that it is either the sensitive faculty (the *sensus communis* located firmly within the faculty of sensation) that unifies the sensations, to which animals immediately respond, or the thinking faculty that demands/conjures bygone images⁹⁸ that they may be the

⁹⁶ Wedin, 58.

⁹⁷ Nussbaum, 225.

⁹⁸ Wedin continues even further suggesting that “since it is absurd to suppose that the image is the object of desire, the image must figure in a secondary role as a device for [re]presenting the true pretender.” p. 50.

inspiration for action. It is desire, either immediate or mediated, he concludes, that creates movement, not the imagination.

The imagination, Wedin contends, has no role found outside the operations of other faculties. This interpretation does not deny the imagination, in either role, “has no occurrent or episodic employment but only that it will not be the actual employment of a *full faculty*.” To this he adds, “in reading the imagination as a general [re]presentational capability subserving other faculties, the it will... occur in the course of another faculty’s operation.”⁹⁹ Thus without any active, exclusive employment Wedin concludes the imagination to be an incomplete faculty, one that acts only at the behest of another, that is it only acts passively upon command and never at its own initiation or actualization.¹⁰⁰

Nussbaum, more than any other commentator, takes exception to Wedin’s final pronouncement about the independent activity, or lack thereof, of the imagination. In her analysis she approaches the issue much the same as most commentators, but her emphasis on *De Motu Animalium* and the *Parva Naturalia* set her apart from many contemporaries. While she employs the main texts, Nussbaum’s orientation to the faculty of phenomenon is not one of standard faculty analysis, but, rather, from action. She approaches the imagination from a passage Wedin has

⁹⁹ Wedin, 51.

¹⁰⁰ It is interesting to note here that perception might also be construed as an incomplete faculty. If, as most commentators agree, sensation is a capacity to receive the form of the object, then sensation might also be accused of being only passive. Wedin will try to avoid this conclusion by suggesting the *sensus communis* does indeed create a unification, (although one wonders whether creating a collage of impressions is creating in any meaningful sense of the term, that is without commenting on attending to/”seeing as”) of sensations.

explicitly tried to explain away/denied.¹⁰¹ Following Aristotle's analysis in *DeAnima*, Nussbaum encourages caution regarding the completeness of chapter 3 and purported inconsistencies in the other works.

Nussbaum's attempts to establish the activity of *phantasia* by pointing out the standard interpretation, that the imagination produces images of the data of sensation, which will then be employed in thinking, entails several requirements overlooked by most commentators. Nussbaum suggests that the mirror analogy contains a naïve and flawed understanding about how likenesses are created, viewed, and understood. In her words; "we can never copy an object in all the ways it is; we are always representing it *as* something."¹⁰² Implicitly involved in this process of "seeing as", according to Nussbaum, is the activity of discriminating, of focusing our attention on certain features of the image. If the imagination is a process of reproducing and representing what we perceive through sensation, the imagination must determine what features are more salient to our seeing. This is to say that the imagination selects background and foreground information when depicting any given image—certain features are more readily available e.g. the visual is usually given priority over the olfactory. Nussbaum's claim is that if the imagination were merely a mirror, all the features would be represented according to how they are received by sensation, without particular focus.

¹⁰¹ The passage cited above, *DeAnima* III.10 433a20-21.

¹⁰² Nussbaum, 227

Nussbaum goes even further to claim that sensation is a passive faculty.¹⁰³ “We are always,” she writes, “passively receiving perceptual stimuli...” If sensation is passive, the discriminating, distinguishing and unifying- the activity- required to produce an image must take place elsewhere. Nussbaum continues saying, “... but when we actively focus on some object in our environment, separating it out from its context and seeing it as a certain thing, the faculty of *phantasia*, or the phantasia- aspect of *aisthesis*, is called into play.”¹⁰⁴ Imagination, thus, is a capacity above the mere re-presentation of the data of sensation. It is more than even mere unification in image production.¹⁰⁵ It underlies, according to Nussbaum, our very ability to discriminate object from background. It is our ability to *see* the data *as* something intelligible. “The phantasia is just our interpretation of the data presented to us.”¹⁰⁶

To support the use of imagination outside of sensation Nussbaum cites *DeAnima* III.3 which tells us sensation is always present, but not imagination is not. Nussbaum interprets this passage as saying that while we are always receiving sensation, we are not always attending to it, that is we are not always seeing the data as intelligible.¹⁰⁷ In a related issue Aristotle presents us with a surprising turnabout. In *De Somno*, 455b10-13, Aristotle describes the faculty operative in sleeping.

¹⁰³ She notes that in *DeAnima* 2.5 sensation is not treated as a passive faculty, “but,” she asserts, “the passive conception still remains central in the *DeAnima* and *Parva Naturalia*.” 258.

¹⁰⁴ Nussbaum, 259.

¹⁰⁵ She seems to be denying here the interpretation of the common sensibles providing a unification of sensation for the production of an image. Rather, she seems to be suggesting that the imagination performs something in this aspect that cannot be accounted for even in the doctrine of *sensus communis* or anywhere in the faculty of sensation. Cf. 240.

¹⁰⁶ Nussbaum, 248.

¹⁰⁷ Nussbaum, 256.

During sleep, Aristotle contends, sensation is incapacitated,¹⁰⁸ and yet there is still a re-presentation of images. Sensation accounts for these images. As wakefulness is necessary for thinking (reflecting) as well, neither can thinking be the operative faculty.¹⁰⁹ In dreaming, then, Aristotle provides one case in which imagination is operative without sensation or thinking.

Even according to Wedin's criteria, Nussbaum's interpretation accounts for the imagination as a separate and distinct faculty. While it does not occur independently of another faculty, it meets the fundamental criterion of performing an active function not accounted for by another faculty. A point might be made here about the overzealous restrictions Wedin places on the definition of faculty here. If his premise holds, locomotion will be subsumed under either sensation or thinking just as imagination is, for locomotion never occurs without either desire operating immediately on the data of sensation or the manifest order of thinking, which is the rational mediation of the data of sensation. Because it may have ramifications that expressly contradict Aristotle's text,¹¹⁰ perhaps, Wedin's restrictions are too severe. Thus we can see that Nussbaum's analysis, despite its broadening of the imagination's sphere and influence- to an extent that the imagination acquires powers not explicit in Aristotle's works; is more both more plausible and more generous to the texts and the standard interpretation. Imagination is, minimally, a faculty in its own right, one that is responsible for the activity of making images, and, perhaps, our

¹⁰⁸ De Insomniis, 458b8-9.

¹⁰⁹ De Insomniis, 459a8-9 and De Anima, 412a23-25.

¹¹⁰ De Anima II.3 414a30-31.

attending to and understanding these images as intelligible (at least distinct from their background, that is making an image rather than just a blooming, buzzing confusion.)

The use Aristotle makes of the imagination in his corpus can now be correlated with the programmatic questions established for this historical inquiry. When discussing the nature of the imagination in Aristotle, one must be careful to distinguish between the imagination as it is elucidated in terms of sensitive souls from the function it performs in rational souls. In sensitive souls, the function is to collate the deliverances of the senses into a single image entity, to which the organism responds according to appetite, pleasure and pain. This production of images from the immediate deliverances of the senses allows for Aristotle to expound what the senses are and the role they perform in the interaction animals have with their environment. The immediate production of images allows animals to perceive as a single entity that which is presented in perception. When we turn to rational souls, this basic image making function of the imagination continues, but owing to a change in the superlative faculty, *nous*, in the case of the rational soul, a corresponding change in the functions of the imagination. As the complexity of the soul increases, so will the functions of the imagination. The changes to imagination highlight the chasm between appetitive souls and the rational soul Aristotle explains for our distinctly finite, human existence.

In the rational soul, just as in the sensitive soul, the imagination performs the function of collating the deliverances of the senses for the presentation of objects

immediately before the perceiver. The additional function is the ability to re-present these objects when they are absent. This reproductive capacity allows for discursive thinking, which in turn allows for the determination of essential forms, intellectual knowledge of objects, as well as the production of fictions. This re-productive capacity coupled with variation found in discursive thinking affords a curious note of productivity. Strictly speaking the imagination is reproducing images for employment in discursive thinking, but the variation found in discursive thinking, the addition and removal of qualities or features must surely be coordinated with the imagination in the presentation of a new image. Thus there is even in the earliest framing of imagination as a component in abstract thinking an allowance for a creative or productive feature. The coordination of imagination and discursive thinking present new material for further employment. Hence the imagination is integral in the production of knowledge, but also, when discursive thinking goes awry, the production of fictions.

This re-presentative ability of the imagination as found in rational souls elicits the epistemic and metaphysical questions cited earlier as threads of thematic continuity throughout this historical section. Aristotle is adamant about the truth of perception in normal, non-diseased, sense apparatus. Combining this article with the simplistic function of imagination found in sensitive souls, Aristotle can affirm that animals have immediate perception of their environment, one which is inherently faithful to the circumstances of the given situation. Judgment and error do not occur in sensitive souls and hence Aristotle deems that animals may have a faithful

presentation of their environment. When turning to the rational soul, however, the epistemic status of images becomes more specious. One might contend, that if a rational soul merely operates at the level of sensibility thus employing the imagination as the collation of sense data, human might never err. This evaluation seems to fit with the general suggestion that, if humans never make judgments, they can never err. But this is not the case for the rational soul in Aristotle. Because the imagination is governed by *nous* rather than sensation in the rational soul, the reproductive capacity and the employment of this capacity in discursive thinking alters the fidelity once ascribed to an animalistic imagination. Error may occur in the hermeneutic component of imagination as well as in the fidelity of the memories produced by imagination. Aristotle even goes so far as to say that that images are “for the most part false” or “can be “true or false” in human reproduction. This error is owing to the lack of immediate experience found in the primitive imagination. Because of a temporal remove—that is, because of the mediated nature of images presented by rational imagination—Aristotle cannot ensure the faithfulness of images presented by the imagination in memory. Furthermore, because of the role imagination performs in discursive thinking itself, the adding or deleting of certain qualities in the presentation of images to *dianoia*, the creations of this discursive imagination may not be faithful to any objects in the world e.g. we can create images in thinking of chimeras, satyrs, etc. In order to mitigate this inherently fictional ability of discursive imagination Aristotle recommends recourse to logical forms and the justificatory presentation of our memory and perceptions working at optimal or, at

least normal, levels. In conceding the fallibility of images through the role of imagination in discursive thinking Aristotle bespeaks the phenomenological difficulties found in human experience itself. Aristotle wishes not to explain away the problem of error, but to account for how it is possible, and this possibility centers around the presentations available to human thinking—that is to the presentation of the imagination itself.¹¹¹

The development and distinctions of types of imagination found in Aristotle are to have profound implications for the history of philosophy. Not only will Medieval thinkers appropriate and refine these distinctions, but, moreover, their legacy extends to modern philosophy. The appetitive imagination found in animals and its ability to provide sense-collation and presentation of environment finds echoes in the reproductive imagination in Descartes and Kant. Furthermore, the distinction of an imaginative process unique and definitive of rational beings, a discursive imagination, will find a correlate in the productive imagination of Kant. This primitive version of imagination establishes the precedent of two modes of imagination, one at the sensorial level, and another, at the level of discursive thinking, while introducing another concern—that of the connection between sensation and thinking. This heritage that questions the connectivity of thought and sensation becomes a central issue in epistemic concerns, one which Kant will take up, but also nearly every philosopher in the interim. Although definitions of empirically real objects will differ amongst the various figures in philosophy, this concern will loom large for the remainder of philosophical concerns.

¹¹¹ This is not to deny error due to formal considerations.

Chapter 3: Imagination in Medieval Philosophy

Transition from Ancient to Medieval

In the development of historical progression, the medieval philosophers find themselves the inheritors of the concepts of Greek philosophers. They are not, however, mere imitators of Greek thinking. Medieval philosophers¹¹² acquire the concepts of Greek philosophy and blend them with biblical theology. The combination of Greek ontology with Judeo-Christian theology “reached most explicit expression in the famous ‘Christian synthesis’ of medieval philosophy.”¹¹³ The synthesis of ontology and theology prescribes a new type of philosophical inquiry, that of onto-theology, which equates the ontological-philosophical concept of being, found in Greek philosophy, with Christian theology’s belief in God. The expression and systematization of onto-theology finds its apex in the philosophical writings of Thomas Aquinas.¹¹⁴ Central to this paradigm of reasoning is the identity of static being with a divine creator, while becoming is associated with the physical world. Following Platonic and neo-Platonic thinking, being is characterized as eternal, unchanging and true. Objects of the physical world in which we humans find

¹¹² This roughly defined as those authors and scholars inhabiting the time between the collapse of the Roman Empire, 5th century CE and the fall of Constantinople in the 15th century. A notable exception here is St. Augustine.

¹¹³ Kearney, 114.

¹¹⁴ Copleston, 181.

ourselves, however, come into existence and decay until they no longer are, literally they have gone out of being, they are no more, they are non-existent. Objects in this world, while seemingly acquiring the status of being, do not or cannot maintain the eternal, unchanging status identified with Being/God. Rather they are transient objects that seem to come into being and eventually ebb out of existence, they are the objects of becoming and decay. The Medieval philosophers incorporate this conceptual apparatus into their theology and identify God and Being.¹¹⁵ Hence the Medieval philosophers describe an absolute, true order that never alters, now identified with the Christian god that is the author of the universe, and the physical world with the Greek conception of becoming and finite, human understanding. The relegation of human knowledge to a lower stature in onto-theology emphasizes the subservience of finite, human knowledge, philosophical though it may be, to religious questions that support faith in a specified type of divine creator.

Inherent in the medieval schema is the conceptual framework established in Hellenic culture—that of a natural order of things of which humans possess only a finite perspective and thus fallible knowledge. All human knowledge (better said opinion) is an attempt to parallel and duplicate God’s infinite understanding. The role of imagination in this process finds original expression in the founding fables of their worldview, much like in Greek culture. For the Judeo-Christian medieval, the

¹¹⁵ It has often been argued that, in an effort to align themselves more broadly, early Christian thinkers conceded the “unknown god” of the Greeks and neo-Platonists may have been a pagan presage to the creator god of Christian faith. Furthermore, the divine demiurge found in Plato’s *Timaeus* is characteristically identified with Yahweh in the Genesis account of creation. Even the means by which the demiurge creates, Logos, is identified with the Christ figure as the means by which the Christian god carries out its project. Cf. Kearney p. 115; also E. Gilson, *Le Thomisme*, Paris 1942, p.120; F. Copleston, *A History of Medieval Philosophy*, p. 19 fn; J Marenboom (1988), p. 14.

exemplification of imagination is found in the Adamic myth and the expulsion of humankind from the Garden of Eden. Both Adam and Eve succumb to the temptation to possess the knowledge of God, to know good and evil and to become like Him.¹¹⁶ By eating the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil, humans have aspired to knowledge possessed only by the divine. To such emulation and theft humans are forever cast out of paradisiacal glory. As punishment for duplication of God's knowledge Adam and Eve are expelled from the garden and, parallel to the Promethean story, a stigma is attached to humankind's ability to create and employ the imagination in the process of representation, both artistic and epistemic. The ability for abstract representation and the knowledge obtained by such processes are relegated to mere duplicity of higher order, divine knowledge. Thus any processes by which such knowledge obtains, the imagination in our case, will be infused with suspicion and questions concerning its legitimacy and use. Yet, neither Greek nor medieval Judeo-Christian understanding of the imagination is left exclusively to the myths of their cultures. Employment, evaluation and often condemnation of the imagination are found explicitly in archetypal thinkers of their respective times. In Greece we find explicit treatment of the imagination, however incomplete, in Plato and Aristotle. Continuing this treatment in the Medieval period, authors such as St. Augustine of Hippo and St. Thomas Aquinas loom large in the development of cognitive capacities and their role in both human and divine ordering.

Contrary to common opinion, the medieval period is not a barren landscape concerning philosophical questions concerning human cognition and the status of

¹¹⁶ Genesis, 3:4

capacities of the mind. Rather than the “dark” ages as they are often described, the medieval period was an excess of riches in these respects, and in so doing will provide a deeper exploration of developments of cognitive capacities. Eva Brann describes the Medieval period as “rich in acute and interesting distinctions, the kind brought about by a subtle and steadfast application to the matter and by a reverently refined reading of the received texts.”¹¹⁷ What we find in the medieval period is a careful development of the Greek concepts found in the works of Plato and Aristotle. As Brann continues she notes that, despite its excellent exegesis and explanation of Greek thinking concerning the imagination, along with its incorporation into Judeo-Christian theology, the medieval treatment of the imagination is “poor in revolutionary new departures.”¹¹⁸ Thus, while the Medievals refine and expand conceptual understanding of imagination, they are, to a great extent, mere inheritors and imitators of Greek concepts, within a newly established theology of course, and can be viewed as extensions of Plato and Aristotle.

Aristotle’s influence in the medieval period is not insignificant. His elaboration of the processes of cognition and expression of these processes in terms of faculty psychology pervades medieval literature. In the accounts of these processes, two dominant schools become prevalent in the transition from Greek to Medieval thinking. The first group that describes the processes of human understanding lays claim to the imagination as a faculty open to divine, spiritual or

¹¹⁷ Brann, 57.

¹¹⁸ Brann, 57. Cf. also Murray Bundy’s *The Theory of Imagination in Classic and Mediaeval Thought* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1927), p. 158, 161, 164. Bundy argues that the Medievals originality lies in “new syntheses of existing materials” found in Plato and Aristotle.

intellectual influences. This “top down” school of thought, found most typically in neo-Platonic thinking, draws from the obscure passages in Plato’s *Republic*, and suggests images in dianoetic thinking, encountered and elaborated in geometric and moral reasoning, can faithfully represent the Form(s). Because the images employed in geometric and moral reasoning are employed as hypotheses that pure thinking, noetic intellection, confirm as first principles, the imagination may have a role in knowledge acquisition in even the harshest of neo-Platonic critics. These critics will caution against most employments of images, but, in exceptional cases, when the images may be received from noetic thinking itself, the images enjoy an epistemically privileged position. The “top down” schools argues that those faithful representations employed in the inherently imagistic thinking at the lower level must have been originated from the Form(s) or, in Medieval thinking, God Himself. Without eternal truth as the source for the images employed, the processes of geometric and moral thinking cannot serve as a propaedeutic for dialectic and consequently pure intellection.¹¹⁹ Without a source from above, “a downward mirroring of intellectual objects,”¹²⁰ the veracity of these images can never be confirmed and Plato’s general critique of imagistic thinking still obtains. Images, because of their imitative and

¹¹⁹ It may be noted here an inherently circular reasoning; God ensures the forms employable in dianoetic thinking, which in turn allows a platform from which pure thinking can “see” the form(s) as true, thus affirming the guarantee of God’s imparting the forms to human thinking. However, this epistemic circle, though it may be, is mitigated by the belief that God’s knowledge, an ontological fact/article of faith, is the guarantor of the veracity of human thinking. When attempting to determine the epistemic status of imagistic thinking in human cognition, the ontological fact of God’s knowledge is not an epistemic not priority, but, rather, an ontological concern. The justification of human knowledge is the noetic vision involved in intellection, which happens to affirm the belief of God’s omniscience. The circle is simply epistemic and highlights the faith involved in onto-theological considerations.

¹²⁰ Brann, 61.

often duplicitous nature, cannot serve to determine axioms nor first principles— a problem Plato clearly foresaw.

A second trend in medieval philosophy, one that follows Aristotle more closely, presents a “bottom up” model. It is this second school of thinking that characterizes most medieval philosophers. According to the “bottom up” model, nothing comes to the imagination nor is any image produced that does not first come from, up through, the senses. The imagination is typically found next to sense perception and memory in a hierarchical order of the faculties. These hierarchies are significant because they are “an ordering, which while assigning to each element [of cognition] a lower and higher place, also gives each its proper dignity.”¹²¹

The cornerstone to both approaches is the blending of Greek concepts within Christian theology. Much as we find in Greek philosophy, all the hierarchical, medieval systems claim the imagination plays a significant role in cognition, but, in order to satisfy epistemic concerns, must be properly subordinated to reason.¹²² Following the guiding influence of the Greek philosophers, the imagination does play a vital role in human cognition, but it must be placed properly in the hierarchy and, lest it succumb to the same fallibility found in those Greek thinkers, imagination must be governed by higher order faculties. And while the Medievals seem to acknowledge the difficulties of image making and image employment in finite cognition, they attempt to ameliorate the problematic nature by allowing reason and/or revelation to guide the use of images in seeking truth and epistemic verity of

¹²¹ Brann, 58.

¹²² Minnis, 1981. Bundy, 223

objects of experience—the very same task Kant will perform in his fundamental formulation of imagination (although Kant depends upon reason alone). To exemplify how the imagination as found in Plato and Aristotle is incorporated in the onto-theology of the medieval period and the subsequent developments we shall turn attention to Augustine, Richard of St. Victor and Thomas Aquinas.

St. Augustine of Hippo

Augustine typifies the early medieval ingenuity of “conscripting theology and ontology as joint allies in the pursuit of truth.”¹²³ He promotes the use of philosophical concepts to articulate the Christian faith and theology surrounding the Bible. Faith, which is of paramount importance, Augustine argues, can be maintained by one of two possible ways. One way faith can be maintained is by trust in authority. Trust in patristic order—priests, cardinals and popes—and the messages, doctrine and recommendations from positions in authority can guide faith and aid in the contest between belief and doubt. John Marenboom notes that

in the earliest days of the Church, zealots had little need for abstract speculation in order to preach the commands of the Gospels and elaborate their obvious moral consequences. [And yet] as Christianity became first the leading, and then the official, religion of the Empire,

¹²³ Kearney, 116.

it gained more and more followers who would not so easily sacrifice the rational and humane values of a classical education.¹²⁴

Augustine finds himself in this pivotal period where the Church has recently become the official religion of the Roman Empire, and he himself sympathizes with classical education.

The second way faith can be maintained, the one Augustine recommends, attempts to reconcile classical teaching with biblical faith and is a faith based not upon dogmatic authority, but reasoned argumentation and synthesis with already obtained knowledge. To accomplish this synthesis, Augustine recommends the inquirer utilize a metaphysical understanding of the categories of Being to explain and understand the descriptions provided by belief. By this prescription, Augustine is an important forerunner of the famous doctrine of “faith seeking understanding” (*fides quaerens intellectus*). He himself establishes a route to and through faith that seeks understanding, not merely dogmatic obedience. Rather than obediently comply with dictates of authority on issues relating to the faith, Augustine suggests that humankind may equate Yahweh, the god of creation, to Being. According to this formulation, the Christian god is not only the source of being/existence (*ousia, on*) we find in this world, but also the very Being that exemplifies the permanence of that concept.¹²⁵ Surely, this onto-theological alliance was “to have a profound and

¹²⁴ Marenboom (1988) p. 13.

¹²⁵ Augustine, *De Trinitate* Book V (1), 3, from *The Trinity* trans. Edmund Hill, O.P. (New York, New City Press, 1991) p. 190; also Augustine, *Confessions* Book VII (9), from *Confessions* trans. William Watts (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1950) p. 265-66.

enduring impact on the subsequent evolution of medieval thinking about imagination.”¹²⁶

From the influence of Plato and neo-Platonism, Augustine draws the correlate of God with Being, and any being of lesser status is equated somewhere on Plato’s divided line, as physical objects of doxastic appearance, or, further down, as reproduced images. Augustine’s chain of being exemplifies the hierarchical order, placing God atop the chain with facsimiles and illusion at the lowest levels.¹²⁷ In addition, Augustine is “the first Latin author to use the term imagination in a consistent philosophical manner, combining biblical distrust of images with the Greek and neo-Platonic view of *phantasia* as a hindrance to spiritual contemplation.”¹²⁸

Because of humankind’s inability to claim the products of the imagination as real or permanent, imaginative thinking, while perhaps practically useful, such products and subsequent knowledge claims find themselves placed at the margins of Augustine’s chain of being. The imagination is treated according to the standard, classical mimetic model, and the stigma attached to imitation, such as that found in Plato, translates directly into Augustine’s philosophical treatments. The epistemic difficulties classically attached to images and their ontological status plagues human employment and necessitates a role as unreal and illusory creation. Once again, we find human creation, those images fastened by the mimesis of sensation in a mental

¹²⁶ Kearney, 116.

¹²⁷ Copleston, 32-34.

¹²⁸ Kearney, 117. Bundy attributes the purposive shift from *phantasia* to *imaginatio* as a signal moment in the terminological evolution of the faculty we now consider the imagination. Transition from the Greek to the Latin marks a shift from the influence of *eikasia* and *phantasia* to the more straightforwardly common image making function we understand as the imagination today. Cf. Bundy p. 158.

process, subordinated to God's creation. Only one can be univocally real, thus human creation and expression must be a mere incomplete reproduction of God's eternal knowledge.¹²⁹

The ethical prescription found in Plato also works its way into Augustinian philosophy, with a characteristic theological innovation. Demonic possession is often attributed to anyone who claims to be able to depict, in representative form, the truth of God. Early mystics become denounced as heretics and infidels for attempting to summon a mere representation or image of the divine, tantamount to idolatry,¹³⁰ and are often accused of trafficking with the devil. Satan himself is often described as the master of illusion and carries this effect by imposing on human thinking the mistaken identification of the image with the real. In his *Confessions*, Augustine will move away from the Manichean heresy and will suggest that it is not the entitival character Satan, but distraction from, or movement away from contemplation of God that is the very nature of sin and evil. By denying Satan, or at least the Manichean version of the source for evil and error,¹³¹ Augustine shifts the burden of sin, heresy and evil onto individuals, and in so doing, levels more criticism against the imagination for its role in diverting humans away from the contemplation of God. This theological innovation resonates with the human use of imagination already established—echoing Plato's caution against taking the image, a superficial and impermanent being and elevating it to the level of permanent being. In short, Augustine cautions against

¹²⁹ Augustine acknowledges the difficulty of discussing knowledge of God and God's knowledge in the opening of Book V of *De Trinitate* ceding that he is "attempting to say things that cannot altogether be said as they are thought by man."

¹³⁰ Augustine, *Confessions* Book VII, (IX), p. 369.

¹³¹ Augustine, *Confessions* Book III, (VII), p. 121-127; also Book V, (X) p. 247.

images found in idolatry.¹³² With such serious indictment of images and human imagination, there seems little hope for redemption for such a problematic element of human cognition and representation, indeed little hope for any use of images in human thinking that gives the divine its due respect.

However, the imagination can prove useful provided it is guided by illumination, the direct intellection of eternal truth(s). Much like in Plato, Augustine does leave a positive account for image making and images in the depiction of his theology. Augustine himself employs metaphor and imaging in his philosophical discussion of the Trinity found in his *De Trinitate*, by likening parts of the Trinity to parts of the human soul.¹³³ This complicated work introduces series of triads in various different aspects of human experience, but its overall theme is to provide a working analogy of man made in the image of God—an ironic and provocative suggestion for some redemptive use of the imagination.

Like the Christian divine trinity, Augustine argues that the human soul can be divided into three main parts. The first division, the “outer man” represents the world of immediate perceptual experience. Outer man is “endowed with sensation, and with it perceives bodies.”¹³⁴ “Inner man” is “endowed with understanding” and concerns itself with mental representations provided by memory.¹³⁵ The final third of Augustine’s trinity metaphor is found in an extraordinary function of the rational, inner man, that of contemplation. Unlike the outer man or lower, inner man, which

¹³² Augustine, *Confessions*, Book VII, (IX), p. 369.

¹³³ Marenboom (1988), 15.

¹³⁴ Augustine, *De Trinitate* Book XI: 1, p. 304.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.* Book XI: 6, p. 308.

both deal with temporal matters and objects, this superior function is “engaged in contemplating eternal things and terminates in awareness alone.”¹³⁶ This tripartite structure is equated with sensation, understanding and contemplation, respectively. Accompanying each division is a mode of understanding unique to each level. The possible modes of “vision”, as Augustine calls them, further elaborate the distinction between these three different levels of human experience.

The first and lowest level of vision is “composed of the thing visible, the act of vision (*visio*) and the desire for vision” and roughly corresponds to Aristotle’s animalistic imagination or *sensus communis*—a place for the collation of the deliverances of the senses for a unifies “picture” of the environment.¹³⁷ Augustine, however, does not wish to term this lowest level as image or imagination. Rather, Augustine employs the term “*visio*,” “*impressio*” or “*sensus*” to indicate the means by which human perception encounters the outward object. This sense-image is a bodily manifestation, in which a body “begets a form as a likeness of itself, which occurs in the sense when we sense anything by seeing it.”¹³⁸ This sense-image will become the material of representation for the corporeal image found in memory in the workings of the “inner man”, the second level in Augustine’s hierarchy, wherein we will find the imagination proper.

At this second level of images the movement from outer to inner occurs and the imagination proper, the *imaginatio*, is addressed. Corporeal images, the objects of the imagination proper, are the reproduction of the sense-image of objects no longer

¹³⁶ Ibid. Book XIII: 1, p. 342.

¹³⁷ Ibid. Book X: 11, p. 295.

¹³⁸ Ibid. Book XI: 3, p. 305

present.¹³⁹ At any given stage of his analysis Augustine adheres to an architectonic of triples. At the level of sensation, he describes the object e.g. a stone, the actual seeing, and the power that holds the sense of the eyes on the thing being seen, the conscious intention. For sensation and sense-images this triple structure appears non-controversial, but at the level of inner man the newfound threesome is quite informative. When dealing with the corporeal images of inner man, Augustine denotes the image stored in memory, the attention to the objects of thought in the mind, and intention of the will that unifies the two. The production of sense-image at the level of “outer man” provides the image stored in memory (or we might think the representation or object of representation), but the ability to recall and to use these images, one might say the ability to use imagination, is integrally connected with the attentiveness to the objects of thought, thus dependant upon the human will to conjure the images and hold the attention on the objects.¹⁴⁰ But the will’s capacities are not merely to capture and hold, but also alter. As Bundy notes:

This faculty of internal vision... may only reproduce the pictures stored in the memory, and then it differs from memory only in function; but, in virtue of the freedom of the will, it may become a faculty of ‘diminution and addition... By the exercise of this faculty, if the image of a crow, for example which is very familiar to the eye, be set before the eye of the mind, as it were, it may be brought, by the taking away of some features and the addition of others, to almost any image such as never was seen by the eye.’¹⁴¹

By diminution and addition the inner image, the spiritual image, may be varied to produce an object that has no corresponding object in the world. These phantasies

¹³⁹ Augustine DeTrinitate Book XIV: 5, p. 373.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid. Book XI: 7, p. 309.

¹⁴¹ Bundy, p. 163.

brought about by willing and imagining are one sort of object that finds condemnation in Augustine.

By elaborating the imagination of “inner man” as a tripartite structure of image, attention and will, Augustine can discuss the possibility of error entering into his system, of which there are many kinds. In terms of corporeal images and human knowledge, the single most egregious error to be made is the “misshapen kind of life” a rational soul lives “when it lives according to the trinity of the outer man.”¹⁴² As rational souls, the worst error we can commit is to concern ourselves with the corporeal images of the temporal world. As being made in the image of God, we have, according to Augustine, the capacity to contemplate “eternal things” and, possibly, to obtain knowledge of permanence, i.e. the kind of knowledge God enjoys. If one spends her entire time concerned with impermanent objects, the corporeal images of the objects of this material world, she falls short of actualizing this highest potential of a rational being. Literally, one sins by the willful distraction from the contemplation of eternal truths.

Important as the moral imperative to pursue contemplation may be, Augustine does not wish to ignore the many ways of falling into error when dealing with corporeal images and knowledge of the temporal world. Simple mechanical errors can account for some mistakes when judging human perception. Sometimes the flame of a candle can seem to be doubled when we stop focusing our eyes. And while there is one object we judge there to be two.¹⁴³ Yet mechanical failure is not

¹⁴² Augustine De Trinitate Book XI: 6, p. 307.

¹⁴³ Ibid. Book XI: 4, p. 306.

the worst of errors for corporeal images. Because of the power of diminution and addition, because we can willfully alter the image employed in representations, we can create new corporeal images, that are then stored in memory. The main force that may motivate this kind of recombinant variation is desire, either for knowledge or as curiosity. Often, Augustine suggests, this desire can overwhelm the passive storage unit that is memory and we can willfully supplant the sense-image of perception with that the created-image of variation. Furthermore, with the span of time and the forgetfulness of our variation, either because of lack of attentiveness or because desire assists in forgetting, we often replace sense-images with these newly created phantasies.¹⁴⁴ These phantasies are deemed real, and for Augustine, this is tantamount to willful sinning. It is, very much in the platonic sense, mistaking the illusory for the real. If humans either vary the content of the images found in corporeal imagination or attribute permanence to the objects of corporeal imagination, they have exceeded the bounds by which they may safely judge their experience, and thus may fall into error.¹⁴⁵

However, should corporeal images be guided by reason and intellectual vision, the possibility for error is removed. According to Augustine, the inner life of humans, as noted above, is divided into two functions. The lower portion of inner life concerns itself with corporeal images, with knowledge of the world of perception. The higher function of inner life contemplates eternal being. While the lower half of inner life “is carried on with sensible things and with what the consciousness has

¹⁴⁴ Augustine De Trinitate Book XI: 7, p.307.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid. Book XI: 1, p. 303.

imbibed from them through the senses,” it “is nonetheless not without its share of reason.”¹⁴⁶ Reason guides the cataloguing, variation and experimentation of corporeal images. However, reason finds a higher vocation in examination of “non-bodily and everlasting meanings.” The use of this reason is to “make judgments on these bodily things according to non-bodily and everlasting meanings; and unless these were above human mind they would certainly not be unchanging, and unless something of ours were subjoined to them we would not be able to make judgments according to them about bodily things.”¹⁴⁷ In contemplation, human reason is illuminated by divine grace, that we may then see the metaphysical status of bodily objects and images. In intellectual vision one “sees”, much like in Plato, the truth of the objects under contemplation.

In addition, the judgments we pass on the corporeal level are remonstrated and corrected by the truth divined in illumination. The highest level of vision, the intellectual, is the very aspect of Augustine’s trinity that confirms the “top-down” model which mitigates against error in human judgment when employing images in cognition. Provided that intellectual vision has provided the content of non-bodily and eternal meanin—thus employed, often by use of metaphor, to the level of imagistic representation—Augustine will vouchsafe the veracity of images and judgments made determining corporeal images. It is intellectual vision alone and not corporeal vision that allows one to see the world in its “essence,” and it is the application of the eternal truths to corporeal images that will allow for any knowledge

¹⁴⁶ Ibid. Book XII: 2, p. 323.

¹⁴⁷ Augustine De Trinitate Book XII: 2, p.323.

of the material world to be guaranteed.¹⁴⁸ Augustine's version of intellectual vision is one that depends upon the grace of a divine creator in allowing, often through a retrograde use of discursive/dianoetic thinking, true, corporeal representations to be made.¹⁴⁹ Although, at the highest level of vision, contemplation, Augustine implies that no images whatsoever are at work, he does allow for intellectual vision to countenance corporeal images and a body of knowledge of the material world.¹⁵⁰ It is at this point that Kearney's evaluation of medieval imagination becomes apparent: it is the author of the universe alone who can guarantee the veracity of thought. Humans are left, once again, to be merely the imitators and supplicants to a higher order that determines the truth of their expressions.

Augustine's understanding of images and imagination presents an early and interesting case to characterize the Medieval period. While *prima facie* Augustine seems to present the "top down" model for understanding where the imagination fits into a schema of human understanding, this misrepresents Augustine's description of

¹⁴⁸ In a passage from his *De Genesi* Augustine employs the story of Joseph and his dream interpretation of Pharaoh, to concretize his claims concerning intellectual and corporeal vision. It was Pharaoh who possessed the dream of the seven kine and the seven ears of corn. But by corporeal vision alone the dream was meaningless to Pharaoh. It was only Joseph, guided by divine, intellectual insight, who is able to decipher what the dream meant. Images, such as those found in dreams, may be useful and a part of human knowledge, but only under the strict guidance of intellectual vision. Cf. *De Genesi* (34)

¹⁴⁹ There are interesting passages in the *De Trinitate* that suggest a fine distinction between the images that come to human cognition from outside, those from sense perception, and a second level of imagination, the inner—often called spiritual imagination/vision, which rearranges the images received from outside, in the process of discursive thinking to establish truth. The former imagination is a passive recipient of the forms of sense perception, the latter possesses the ability to rearrange these form to aid in reasoning. This recombinant imagination that assists in reasoning seems to follow the Platonic doctrine of images use in discursive thinking as well as continues philosophical precedent that solicits discussion of imagination as a recombinant faculty for the creation of patently false objects e.g. four legged birds, Cf. Augustine's *Eighty-Three Different Questions* trans. Bourke, 1964, pp. 62-63; also q. 46, 1-2; **Kearney, 420 fn. 8**; Marenboom (1987), p 95.

¹⁵⁰ This implies some sort of translation from mystical vision and understanding found divine illumination into the world of spiritual vision, and thus leaves further room for error, in the translation itself.

the source of corporeal images. Images that are found in human cognition inevitably have their source in sense perception. Even those images found in dreams can be traced to and are derived from sense perception.¹⁵¹ The corporeal imagination is an organizing faculty, one necessary to collate sense perception that a transition from outer objects of sensation to be evaluation in the inner processes of representation and judging to occur. Knowledge amounts to organizing the data provided by sensation and ordered “in the light of intelligible forms”- form essentially dependent upon a divine order.¹⁵² Upon scrutiny, we find that Augustine’s understanding and role of imagination in human cognition and corporeal knowledge, is fundamentally that derived from Aristotle, the “bottom up” model, but with the rider that human knowledge, if there is to be any true knowledge, must depend upon superhuman intercession in the form of divine illumination. The mediating capacity of the imagination in the generation of corporeal images, Augustine maintains, detracts from the process of spiritual light that is the source of true knowledge. Augustine’s use of an Aristotelian model for sense perception and faculty psychology in combination with a Platonic understanding of metaphysical hierarchy, combined with his theological commitments represents the difficulties with which the early Church dealt in attempting to synthesize classical education and biblical theology.

It should be noted that Augustine is not the only early Church father to read and analyze Platonic and neo-Platonic writings. Augustine knew no Greek and had to

¹⁵¹ Brann, 60. One exception to this almost categorical claim is memory. Augustine seems to indicate that there may be some memories that are directly connected with intellectual vision. And hence remembering a moment of true clarity sponsored by God through divine illumination may present an extreme exception to a generalized formula for image production.

¹⁵² Boler, “Intuitive and abstractive cognition” from *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy*, pp. 461-462.

rely upon the available translations within the Empire for his insight. Eastern Fathers of the Church, those native Greek speakers had privilege access to original text and were closer to the sources of the Greek heritage, and exhibited greater influence than those of the West, and thus might be considered truer inheritors of Platonism and neo-Platonism, who integrate Greek philosophy into Christian theology. However, owing to the popularity of Augustine's early writing and his devotion to rigorous logical argument that consequently always upheld his faith and theological commitments, Augustine's popularity was unparalleled in the early Medieval period, a legacy that proves formative in the subsequent middle and late stages of philosophical development in the Medieval period.¹⁵³

One such character who is familiar with Augustine's philosophical and theological writings, along with the traditions of the Eastern Orthodox writings and Arabic interpretations is Richard of St. Victor. Echoing Augustine's understanding of the need for imagination and highlighting Augustine's mistrust, Richard of St. Victor continues medieval skepticism of the imagination in his work, *Benjamin Minor*, cautioning his readers against "the corruptive influence which imagination may exert on the practices of spiritual *contemplation*."¹⁵⁴ Richard of St. Victor, a late twelfth century mystic (?-1173) and prior of the Augustinian abbey and school St. Victor in Paris, presents a further elaboration of Augustine's considerations on the imagination.¹⁵⁵ In looking to Richard's work, we are provided an exegesis and

¹⁵³ Marenboom (1988), 16.

¹⁵⁴ Kearney, 119

¹⁵⁵ Haren, Michael *Medieval Thought: The Western Intellectual Tradition from Antiquity to the Thirteenth Century* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 114.

development of Augustine's philosophical themes, demonstrating Augustine's connection to Plato, while, at the same time, providing a vivid metaphor illustrating the paradoxical nature of imagination found in medieval thought.

Continuing the hierarchy of Augustine, Richard of St. Victor establishes spiritual contemplation at the apex of human activities, sense perception at the lowest level, and places imagination as a mediator between the two. Spiritual contemplation resembles Augustine's intellection or intellectual vision in virtue of contemplation's absolute separation from the corporeal world. Sense perception, now properly named, is the correlate of Augustine's corporeal vision. Circumscribed by this dynamic antithesis is an analogous movement found in Augustine, that of the inner versus the outer.

Contemplation is a wholly internal event, one developed by spirit, perhaps with supplication to divine, that is spiritual, aid and enables one to grasp "a Supreme Being which exists of necessity in itself."¹⁵⁶ Sense perception, on the other hand, deals only with the contingency presented through the transient perceptions given to human experience through sensation. Richard contends that the imagination is the means by which sense experience, received from the outer, corporeal world, can be translated into a form which can be employed by reason (*ratio*). For Richard, Augustine's tripartite hierarchy appears to be refined into a four tiered system, affording contemplation the highest position, in which reason plays a signature role; followed by reason itself (often applied to the images and sense perception); then

¹⁵⁶ Kearney, 122.

imagination; and finally sense perception.¹⁵⁷ To demonstrate this very position and to elaborate the respective role and dignity afforded to each faculty, Richard employs a colorful, biblical allegory, the story of Rachel and Bilhah.

Rachel, mother of Joseph and the rightful transmitter of the line of Israel, was the first and favored wife of Jacob. In Richard's description, she is likened to a mistress, "reason illumined by divine revelation," contemplation, who inhabits the holy of holies, and employs reason.¹⁵⁸ Owing to her exclusive status inside the holy of holies, interaction with the unclean is beneath her station, lest the purity of the temple become defiled. Yet as first wife and mistress of the house, Rachel must execute her duties in the maintenance of the house, while at the same time separating herself from the menial and debasing projects that elicit corruption. Rachel must prevent a servant such as one of the senses from being in the habit of "break[ing] irreverently into the inner secret chamber of her mistress," lest the purity of contemplation become sullied.¹⁵⁹ In order to discharge her duties Rachel hires a handmaid, Bilhah, to serve as intermediary between herself and the despoiling outer world. And so Rachel can discharge her duties pertaining to daily maintenance and yet secure a privileged position at a distance from the mundanity and contingency of the corporeal life. Bilhah serves as an intermediary to communicate between the

¹⁵⁷ Richard of St. Victor "Benjamin Minor" from *Selected Readings on Contemplation* trans. Clare Kirchberger (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1957) pp. 78-9. The complete works of Richard are found in **Migne's Patrologia Latina vol. 196.**

¹⁵⁸ Ibid. p. 82. In Richard's allegory there is a parallel movement with the story of Leah, representing desire for righteousness, reason in the employment of virtue, "the affection enflamed by divine inspiration." But for Richard contemplation is the highest function of the human mind, and thus the story of Rachel exemplifies purity in comparison with the outer world.

¹⁵⁹ Richard of St. Victor *Benjamin Minor* p. 83.

higher and lower, while preventing the necessity of any direct contact.¹⁶⁰ Reason—in the form of contemplation—can discharge its duties in maintenance of the individual, without sullyng itself with the uncertainty and contingency of sense perception, by utilizing the imagination as a liaison, thus leaving itself available in the purity of inner reason to seek an understanding of God.

And yet Richard cautions Rachel against placing too much trust in Bilhah, and consequently us against trusting too much in the imagination. By frequenting the impure, outer world of the servants, Bilhah’s loyalty becomes divided, by serving two masters simultaneously. For maintenance of the home, Bilhah is forced to interact with the outside world and conform to the demands established by the parameters of the servants’ abilities. At the same time, Bilhah is expected to convey and enforce the desires and recommendations of Rachel in order to best harmonize the structure of the home. By executing the demands of both masters, Bilhah understands the pivotal role she occupies, which subsequently results in Bilhah’s own overestimation of her powers. In Richard’s words, Bilhah becomes garrulous and loquacious.¹⁶¹ Rachel finds herself in a curious predicament: she cannot command the fortunes of her own home by herself, but owing to her dependence on Bilhah “nor can Rachel rule in her own house; with such persistence does Bilhah din in the ears of the heart that Rachel cannot live without her.”¹⁶² The imagination, in its pivotal role as liaison, assumes the role of master, determining what information reason receives as well as

¹⁶⁰ Kearney, 119.

¹⁶¹ Richard of St. Victor, *Benjamin Minor*, p. 84-5.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*.

performing reason's dictates in the corporeal world.¹⁶³ Should such a situation arise, reason can be corrupted away from its primary consideration, contemplation of the divine, being forced to return from such lofty pursuits to attempt to regain mastery of her house. Because of the imagination's frequenting the corporeal realm, and the subsequent contamination, and by restricting and controlling the information reason receives, reason can be corrupted away from its primary consideration, contemplation of the divine.

This analysis and caution against trust in and overuse of the imagination exemplifies, again, the onto-theological commitments of the medieval period. Contemplation of the divine, the execution of reason, remains the single most important goal of philosophical reasoning, to justify and illustrate the truth of biblical revelation. The condition of human finitude and the necessity to interact with the contingent, and thus less real, world of the corporeal demands a liaison between contemplation for truth and sense perception. Richard claims the imagination as just such an intermediary, yet admonishes a strict reservation in the translation of the corporeal into contemplation.¹⁶⁴ In Richard of St. Victor we find, however, an early formulation that the imagination plays a two-fold, paradoxical role, one of transmitting the outer world of sensation to the inner world of reason, but also an inversion, the imagination also communicates the dictates of reason for execution in

¹⁶³ Furthermore, Richard notes that reason is never without the aid of imagination, for even when the object of sensation is not present, the imagination presents the absent object. Even when no corporeal image is present e.g. when the eyes are closed or in sleep, the imagination continues to present images. Hence, the ubiquitous garrulity that prevents Rachel from being complete mistress of her own house.

¹⁶⁴ Invariably, Richard suggests that pure contemplation is devoid of any image use whatsoever, arguing for divine illumination as the guarantor of contemplations truth, thus distancing the corporeal world from any bearing on true knowledge.

the outer world of sense experience. The caution is that the imagination has no bearing on truth, just maintenance of our corporeal bodies. For the purposes of transmitting information from sense perception to reason the imagination is indispensable, but for contemplation, the imagination is merely a distraction.

Augustine's explanations of the tripartite soul of man in conjunction with the analogy provided by Richard of St. Victor provides yet another connection with the imagination Kant inherits. The Augustinian characterization of the human soul into a tripartite structure bears striking resemblance to Kant's tripartite division of sensibility, understanding and reason. Unlike Augustine, Kant does not describe explicitly describe imagination at work at these various levels, rather, he argues for the independence of the imagination. And yet, even with a separate faculty for the imagination, Kant manages to import much of the epistemic considerations, most saliently the need for a liaison between sensibility and understanding. One further parallel between Kant and Augustine is the role the imagination plays in discharging the duties of reason, particularly in the practical domain. That the imagination is garrulous and finds itself at various levels of human cognition, Kant is willing to concede, but whether the imagination is subservient to reason or whether it plays an active role in reason itself is yet to be determined.

St. Thomas Aquinas

St. Thomas Aquinas is hailed by most as the culmination and apotheosis of medieval thinking. He “represents what many consider to be the crowning achievement of the medieval synthesis of Greek and biblical learning, rehearsing and rearranging the principle stages of Western ontology and theology in a magisterial system or *summa*.”¹⁶⁵

Eva Brann states:

“In regards to the imagination, as in much else, Thomas presents a summation of previous thought in such a way as to revivify subtle internal problems and to broach deep ultimate questions. The subtlest and most difficult problem is the function of the imagination’s ‘phantasm’ in cognition, and the deepest question concerns the significance of the fact that the human being is imaginative.”¹⁶⁶

In few words, Brann captures the very spirit of Aquinas’ project. Aquinas is not merely concerned with a rational explanation, following Augustine, of his theology, but also humanity’s place within the onto-theological framework. His *Summa Theologica* intends not only to define and defend key issues concerning his religious perspective, Aquinas’ works also reports to explain and defend the workings of human activity within this religious perspective. Central to his explanation of humanity is a description of human knowing and the elements of cognition necessary to accomplish this feat. Inherently, imagination becomes a central, albeit a still ambiguous issue. In so doing, Aquinas will bring Medieval onto-theology into a

¹⁶⁵ Kearney, p. 128

¹⁶⁶ Brann, p. 62.

systematic whole, describing a hierarchical structure wherein the roles and positions of God, angels, humans and animals will find their place. To satisfy this goal, Aquinas must provide exacting divisions and distinctions that explain the descriptions he provides.

St. Augustine was deeply influenced by Plato and neo-Platonic philosophy. Aquinas, on the other hand, was influenced by Aristotle and the Aristotelian tradition assumed by the catholic Christianity of his time. Just as an understanding of Augustine's philosophy depends to a great extent on understanding the Platonic themes resonating in his onto-theology, so, too, does an understanding of Aquinas depend largely on reference to Aristotle. Aquinas further refines the hierarchical systems developed by his predecessors, eventually concluding a five-part faculty psychology: namely intellect, reason, imagination, common sense, and sense perception. The order and epistemic veracity of knowledge acquisition descends, from the highest, intellect, to the lowest, sense perception.

Aquinas' philosophy assumes much of Aristotle's faculty psychology, only further elaborating it. And, in order to provide divisions among beings, Aquinas makes direct appeal to Aristotle's explanation of souls. John Marenboom notes that "despite these obvious and admitted debts, Aquinas did far more than merely follow Aristotle in his account of the intellect. The Aristotelian elements in his discussion belong to a fuller, theological theory, which depends on a hierarchical view of intelligent being."¹⁶⁷ The commitment to Aristotle's divisions of vegetative, animal and human souls works well for Aquinas to explain objects of empirical experience,

¹⁶⁷ Marenboom (1987) p. 117.

but presents trouble when explaining the nature of angels and God. Yet it is precisely these last two that Aquinas' theological commitments add to Aristotle's already well-established philosophy. It is precisely along the line discussing intelligence and intellectual properties that Aquinas will add God and angels to Aristotle's hierarchy of beings and provide the distinctions necessary to defend his theology. It is also in this context that Aquinas proves illuminative of human cognition. One chief difficulty in Aquinas' explanations is the inconsistency with which he treats human cognition. Because of his commitment to explaining the differences between angels, humans and animals, Aquinas' treatment is not always linear. In order to gain insight into human cognition in Aquinas, it is necessary to look at those types of souls against which Aquinas puts humans in relief.

Angels and disembodied souls, Aquinas informs us, are created beings endowed with the forms that are the sources for their knowledge.¹⁶⁸ These immaterial beings are dependent upon God for the forms that are the objects of knowledge. But what they grasp is the immediate, immaterial forms which comprise intellectual knowledge. Knowledge, according to Aquinas, is always general, as opposed to particular; a form, a species, that accounts for all particulars that lay claim to the forms.¹⁶⁹ Intellectual knowledge knows no particulars, only the forms. And while angels or disembodied souls have access to these immaterial forms, embodied human souls cannot have direct access to these forms. Humans, it turns out, experience

¹⁶⁸ Aquinas, *Questiones de Anima*, 8,9; *Summa* 1, 55, 2; 1, 89, 1.

¹⁶⁹ McCabe, Herbert "Categories" from *Aquinas: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1969) p. 320; Kenny, Anthony "Intellection and Imagination in Aquinas" from *Aquinas: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1969), p. 293.

material particulars and their knowledge is dependant upon the particular experiences afforded by the senses. Yet Aquinas insists that human knowledge is possible. What knowledge humans can possess amounts to intellectual determination of the “quiddities” of material things.

One distinction in currency during the Middle Ages, with which Aquinas was familiar, that may prove instructive in distinguishing between the knowledge of humans and disembodied beings, is the one made by the twelfth century Dominic Gunisalvi, Archbishop of Segovia, between *intellegentia* and *intellectus*. The former is knowledge dependant upon mystical communication; the latter is knowledge achieved through “science”.¹⁷⁰ The former illustrates the dependency of disembodied beings upon their creator to provide objects of knowledge through either innateness during creation or mystical transference and constant dependency. In Aquinas’ view, the former, *intelligentia*, is the species of knowledge afforded to beings that cannot or do not experience material particulars, yet still obtain/possess knowledge. Whether or not humans are bestowed this direct knowledge of immaterial forms is highly disputed among Aquinas scholars.¹⁷¹ Those that favor immediate, mystical insight follow the Augustinian tradition of divine illumination as a possible understanding of the process. Prophecy is often cited as one direct example of this possible deliverance of knowledge.¹⁷² Thus there may still be room for a top-down model of

¹⁷⁰ Cocking, p. 141.

¹⁷¹ Mahoney, Edward P. “Sense, intellect and imagination in Albert, Thomas and Siger” from *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy* eds. Kretzman, Kenny and Pinborg (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992) p. 608; Kenny (1969), p. 130.

¹⁷² One difficulty, a relevant difficulty at that, is that prophecy most often comes in the form of images. Hence images may be pertinent in the explanation of prophecy, which then may include error. The solution to this problem is that prophecy as direct and dependant upon God, transmitted to humans,

knowledge acquisition in Aquinas, one which affords infallibility to intellectual knowledge.¹⁷³ Possible or not, these cases would be extraordinary and rare. Human knowledge typically, if not exclusively, involves sense perception of immediate particulars and a transformative process by which these particulars are transformed through abstraction into generalities (species in Aquinas) of material forms. Human knowledge, independent of direct mystical intervention, employs a more scientific approach, often called reason/reasoning, to determining the intelligible species available to human *intellectus*. In the fullest sense of *intellegentia*, angels are intellectual, Aquinas tells us. In comparison, humans are merely rational.¹⁷⁴ Since the nature of a being's intellectual knowledge depends upon the nature of the being, humans, it would seem, need another explanatory mechanism to determine knowledge.¹⁷⁵

Furthermore, human pursuit of quiddity needs parameters in which it operates. But first a note about quiddity. "A thing's 'quiddity' is its whatness," its essence or its being.¹⁷⁶ This is not, however, to be confused with its form or substance. It is not the single core constituent, such as substance or matter, nor all of its constituents together in a single form. Rather, "quiddity" is the definition or essence of a thing. Quiddity cannot be the mere form of something, as form does not contain matter. Neither can it be the matter of any object, as matter may change, while form remains.

will afford correct interpretation, based on God's assurance. But this does not seem entirely adequate, for prophecies often seem to be misinterpreted. But such prophecies are dismissed as not true prophecies. Thus prophecy and image use does not fit any explanation offered.

¹⁷³ Kenny (1969) p. 130.

¹⁷⁴ Aquinas, *Questiones de Veritate*, 15,1; *Summa* 1, 58, 3.

¹⁷⁵ Marenboom (1987) p. 118.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.* p. 118.

In apprehending what a thing is, humans experience the particular, material object and exercise the process of abstraction. Integral in this process is the material and the form of the object perceived. If one wishes to apprehend the quiddity of man, one must abstract from the flesh and bones of any particular human. But any definition of man would be misleading if it suggested a man can exist without flesh and bone.¹⁷⁷ Hence what humans apprehend in cognition can be definitive for any species/generalality, but human knowledge usually (if not always) comes from a particular to a generality. In Aquinas, this is the essence of cognition. This movement from particular to universal and back again, is one that employs imagination as a liaison from material particulars to immaterial ideas.

Following Aristotle's empirical model, human cognition necessarily begins with sense perception. Expanding upon Aristotle's understanding of sensation, Aquinas develops further refinements. Perception, often cited as outer sense, is divisible into the five main modes of sensation i.e. sight, touch, smell etc. This process of receiving information from the object of perception is primarily a passive experience.¹⁷⁸ For each sensation there is a particular organ receptive to the kind of stimuli offered. For color there is sight; for odor, the sense of smell. "A sense is the power to undergo" the change caused by the object of sensation. This change is not a physical one, eyes do not become red when seeing a red object, rather, it is an intentional change. Intentional change is likeness (*similitudo*) of the sensible object. And sensation accomplishes this by taking in the form, not physically but

¹⁷⁷ Ibid. p., 119.

¹⁷⁸ Mahoney, p. 605. Primarily passive because Aquinas allows that each sense organ has the power to discriminate between objects proper to its domain e.g. sight can discern between green and white.

intentionally, of the object. Kenny provides a helpful example to demonstrate the meaning of this cryptic doctrine. He writes:

The sweetness of a piece of sugar, something which can be tasted, is a sensible object; my ability to taste is a sense-faculty; and the operation of the sense of taste upon the sensible object is the same thing as the action of the sensible object upon my sense.¹⁷⁹

The sweet of the sugar is the ability to effect the taste faculty in an organism. The intentional awareness of tasting sweet is the quality of sugar that the taste faculty affords the tasting organism, the person tasting sugar. But the tongue does not become sweet with the tasting of sugar. Rather, it transmits the “sweet information” to another faculty to be processed and collated with other sensations that might accompany other senses in the consumption of sugar. The five sense faculties are discreet and perform an operation to provide particular data from the material object to the intentional mind that determines the properties and quiddities of objects.

As the five faculties are separate and provide disparate forms of objects to the organism, Aquinas, following Aristotle, accounts for the collation and subsequent further discrimination to a single faculty, the *sensus communis*, common sense. With a shift in faculty, a shift in the object also obtains. Aquinas informs us that “each power is defined in reference to that thing to which it is directed and which is its object.”¹⁸⁰ The sense faculties were defined by their ability to perceive a material object and their disparate properties, the common sense is the faculty that directs its attention to the intentional forms provided by the separate senses, in order to collate

¹⁷⁹ Kenny, (1969), p. 37.

¹⁸⁰ Aquinas, *Summa* 79, 7.

them into a single entity.¹⁸¹ This shift in faculties, also solicits a shift in Aquinas' terminology. The common sense is not one among the outer senses. It is, rather, the lowest level of a group of faculties Aquinas identifies as "inner sense."

Inner sense might better be described as the imagination complex, a series of faculties at work in translating the deliverances of the senses into materials for rational thought. That it is sensorial is suggested because the images produced at this stage still resemble the perception afforded by sensation, most specifically in its spatial aspect. But images are not sense perceptions, rather, they resemble the deliverances of the senses, and no organ can be determined by which these "senses" are received.¹⁸² Simultaneous with collation and discrimination in the *sensus communis*, the imagination proper in Aquinas, that is the image-making process of the imagination complex, forms images, likenesses (*similitudo*) according to the spatial form, quite often the shape, of the sense perceptions. Aquinas tells us that;

For the reception of sensible forms the proper and common sense is appointed; but for the retention and preservation of these forms, the phantasy or imagination (phantasia sive imagination) is appointed, which are the same, for phantasy or imagination is, as it were, a storehouse of forms received through the senses.¹⁸³

The imagination, in its capacity to create images, gives form to the deliverances of the senses, a form usually based upon the spatial shape of the object of sensation, but a

¹⁸¹ Mahoney, p. 606.

¹⁸² There remains some dispute among scholars regarding the organ debate for inner sense. Kenny cites Aquinas' belief that inner sense, like outer sense, must have a bodily organ; in this case "the middle cell of the head" and a demonstration for this is the case of injury in seizure and coma. And, yet contemporary commentators versed in brain topology cannot locate just such an organ. As Kenny rightly notes, "Aquinas treatment of the inner senses is not one of the more satisfactory parts of his philosophy of mind." Cf. Kenny (1993), p. 39; Brann, p. 63.

¹⁸³ Aquinas, *Summa* 1, 78, 4.

form which can be utilized by the mind, an intentional form.¹⁸⁴ To this special function Aquinas gives the name imagination-*formalis*, and distinguishes it from the retentive power, imagination-*thesaurus*. The generation of images in the imagination-*formalis* is distinguished from the imagination-*thesaurus*, the latter being merely a storehouse of the images created. Both apprehension and retention are, at this fundamental level of cognition, attributed to the imagination. Yet the imagination complex is not complete even with this mediating function accounted for.

Once mentalistic images have been formed and placed in the store-house of imagination, Aquinas accounts for reminiscence of these forms by appealing to the faculty of memory proper. The memory, in close conjunction with imagination-*thesaurus*, is the ability to recall, to bring forward, to present in human cognition, what is no longer present. Memory is the active process that allows access of the forms of past sensation, those stored in the imagination-*thesaurus*, to be presented in the absence of the object of sensation. At this level of cognition, Aquinas is willing, albeit begrudgingly, to admit as much of animals. Following Aristotle's description of souls, sensitive souls must have some means by which to engage with their environment, a reproductive imagination that permits of basic memory. Animals do seem to have the ability to perceive, react, and even remember aspects of their environments. Under ordinary conditions, animals do not run into walls, find nourishment, and even do so based upon a rudimentary memory. It is not until the

¹⁸⁴ This transition from sensation to image supports Aquinas general claim of sensation's direct access of material particulars, but intellection's indirect knowledge of species. Cf. John F. Boler's "Intuitive and Abstractive Cognition" in *The Cambridge Companion to Later Medieval Philosophy* ed. Kretzman, Kenny and Pinborg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 477.

cogitative or estimative power, the next element of the imagination complex, that Aquinas draws stark demarcation between animals and humans.

The cogitative or estimative power in the imagination complex adds feelings to images to create something contemporary philosophy calls ideas. Initially, the emotive contribution may be simple as joy or grief, utility or danger. To a mouth-foaming canine representation given by the senses, is added the feeling of danger, and, thus, an idea of the danger of rabies comes about. According to Aquinas to this emotive attribution the cogitative power provides a general judgment, often the product of trial/error and associations. Once again, Aquinas allows room for animals to present something akin to emotive attachment to image presentation, but falls short of attributing ideas to animals, describing the estimative power in animals a matter of mere instinct. It is this cogitative power, a general judging, not limited to mere visceral reaction, that truly distinguishes animal from human cognition. Important to note at this point in Aquinas' hierarchy of faculties is the inability to perform the higher without the lower, and yet the supervening importance that each phase has as it approaches intellection, *intellectus*.

The final faculty Aquinas attributed to the imagination complex is often called phantasy by commentators. This phantasy is not the reproductive process attributed to the imagination proper. Rather, it is the recombinant capacity solicited by the term phantasy in its common usage. Phantasy resembles what some previous philosophers termed discursive-comparative thinking. By adding, deleting and transforming characteristics of images, phantasy compares and contrasts the deliverances of the

senses translated into image/idea in order determine the quiddity of objects. In its appropriate measure, phantasy is guided by reason. Often phantasy is attributed with the active intellect engaged in discerning universals in the act of knowing; that is, determining the quiddity of any object.¹⁸⁵ Unlike the passive intellect responsible for image production—or, rather, reproduction from the senses—the active intellect found in phantasy employs the images of the imagination complex to discern essences. Error production in human cognition is typically attributed to this function in Aquinas’ faculty psychology. Although the reproductive function of imagination proper in Aquinas’ imagination complex will lead to error production, under normal conditions the passive, reproductive image-making faculty is faithful to the deliverances of sensation. It is in the discursive process, by which one begins to modify the faithful images, that error is typically found. Aquinas’ solution to error production is the prescription that phantasy be subservient to reason. With reason guiding recombinant permutations of images, quiddities can be faithfully discerned.¹⁸⁶ But the possibility and commonality of error production or misuse of phantasy leads to an inevitable mistrust of this faculty. While phantasy is necessary, the possibility that it can leave the auspices of reason and produce fantastic creations,

¹⁸⁵ One important distinction, one that sets Aquinas apart from most medieval contemporaries is his commitment to a human form of active intellect that is guided by reason. His contemporaries, following the Augustinian and Islamic traditions, attribute active intellect to the divine. The active intellect is

God’s presence in human thinking according to this top-down model, one which presents the divine as the guarantor of knowledge. Aquinas radically disagrees and follows Aristotle in claiming that human knowledge is not provided by divine intercession. Rather, all human knowledge is afforded by the senses in combination with scientific thinking; that is a combination of sensation and reason.

¹⁸⁶ It is difficult to determine just what “guidance” reason provides here. Although logic might be a likely candidate, Aquinas remains unclear on this issue, preferring merely to repeat that reason guides thinking.

which leads to misinformation and error in judgment concerning the reality of these creations, elicits caution. But since reason is given the place of privilege in Aquinas' hierarchy, such concerns he assures us can be ameliorated. Moreover, it is only under the guidance of reason that this creative process in imagination can have legitimate use, and hence any extraneous activities ought to be dismissed. Thus imagination is subordinated to reason.

In Aquinas, the process by which human cognition and human knowledge operates, following Aristotle, is one that involves objects and sensory deliverances. Between sense perception of particular, material substances and universal, immaterial species (knowledge) the imagination plays an integral role. "As always, the imagination, or rather its images, have a middle status between the being proper to a form in matter and the being proper to a form that has come into the intellect through abstraction from matter."¹⁸⁷ This is to say, images produced by the imagination remain at an ambiguous level of being representative of the form found in matter and the form found in intellectual activity. An image is without matter yet not without material conditions.¹⁸⁸ The imagination and its products, images, are the integral liaison necessary for human cognition. The faculty of the imagination is responsible for communication of the so-called "outer" object, delivered by the senses, and its apprehension and determination by the mind, *intellectus*. Images at the reproductive level characteristic of the *sensus communis* and the imagination-*formalis* and *thesaurus* allows Aquinas to affirm the Aristotelian doctrine that, under normal

¹⁸⁷ Brann, 62.

¹⁸⁸ Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* I, Question 55, 3.

parameters, the senses represent faithfully. Images are indeed real and present the deliverances of the senses when the object is both immediately before the subject and when the object is absent. Certainly, Aquinas concedes the possibility of error in memory, when the storehouse of images is actively called upon in the service of reason. The image that is recalled in phantasy may have certain additions or deletions accompanying the process of recall. Furthermore, in the discursive process of phantasy, error often occurs. Thus Aquinas' censure of phantasy and his strict prescription that phantasy be regulated by reason. Without reason's guidance phantasy may add or delete various qualities of the object presented to create new and untoward phantasms e.g. chimera and satyrs. But, with the guidance of reason, knowledge of the "outer" world, science, is possible.

It is important to note here that the "outer" world of the objects of sense perception is never called into question. The world in which humans find themselves, is not a question of epistemic uncertainty. This leads Kearney to make the ascription that the ancient and medieval conceptualization of the imagination as theocentric. Without calling the existence of the world into question, no proof the external world is necessary, a proof that will become quite consuming in the modern period. The objects discovered in the experience are indeed real, ensured by the cosmological article of faith *deus sive natura*. What is deemed philosophically important is to explain how it is that humans can have knowledge—that is, general knowledge—of the object, the particulars, they perceive. The imagination, it turns out, is mostly reproductive in its capacity. The function attributed to the imagination is to re-

present the data received by the senses in an attempt to coordinate the “outer” world of objects with the inner world of mental representations. But owing to the ability to distort the presentations of the senses by recombinant imagining, Medievals, like Aquinas, are forced to subordinate the imagination, lest it create illusions, to reason. Hence the imagination, while necessary for *scientia*, is met with mistrust and stigmatized as an often unruly faculty of cognition.

From the work of Aquinas Western philosophy is to inherit the formal element of images. In its most mundane form, imagination today produces resemblances based upon shape and form. And yet this formal requirement of explanation is to have a deep impact on Kant’s understanding. As I argue later, it is upon the forms of intuition that we find imagination at work in Kant at its most basic and fundamental level. Furthermore, the guidance of reason that Aquinas suggests, while incomplete, also finds resonance in the Kantian formulation. If one understands the guidance of reason to be logical forms, the connection becomes even more pronounced. As I intend to demonstrate later, these elements—form, logic, imagination—are at the very heart of Kant’s critical enterprise and Aquinas’ characterization is an important precedent. One important innovation of Aquinas, that is to have a lasting impact on the history of imagination is the explicit discussion of the intentional nature of image and image production. Improving upon Aristotle, Aquinas’ intentionality regarding images as well as representations in thought will provide endless discussion between the connection(s) between representations in thought and objects in the world. This, too, will become a central concern of Kant.

Chapter 4: Modern Philosophy

Transition from Medieval to Modern

From the Medieval period through the early Renaissance and into 17th and 18th Century philosophy, a remarkable transformation in philosophical thinking transpires. No longer is philosophy entirely subservient to onto-theological justification (if it ever was). Rather, by the period of Descartes' writings, philosophy begins to extricate itself from nearly 1500 years of theologically driven inquiry. Whereas philosophy was once a handmaiden to the royalty of theology, with the advent of modernity, philosophy resumes its role as an independent organ for inquiry. While this transformation is, in part, attributed to economic improvements, humanistic concerns and a resurgence of once-lost philosophical texts; more importantly, this revival owes a debt to the reclamation of scientific observation, once started by Aristotle and resumed by figures like Francis Bacon and Thomas Hobbes.¹⁸⁹ Reliance on the deliverances of the senses, and the cataloguing of this data into a scientific compendium brings the epistemic question of the reliability of the senses and the transition from "outer" objects to the "inner" objects of mental functions to the fore once again.

¹⁸⁹ Even though it was never entirely abandoned, as is evidenced in Aquinas, science and philosophy did take a back seat the theological inquiry.

The spirit of modernity is a resurgence of independently-minded individuals who center scientific research and philosophic inquiry on matters answerable by human interrogation, not on the speculative dependencies of theology.¹⁹⁰ Bacon's celebrated proto-scientific method proves exemplary in re-orienting inquiry away from religious concerns to those regarding observable nature. Accompanying this new inquiry is a turn away from Scholasticism and scholastic explanations. No longer will appeals to final causes, implanted by God according to design, suffice to answer whether, why and how operations of the terrestrial sphere obtain. Rather, investigations concern themselves with nature and attribute mechanical causes to phenomena witnessed by human observers. Descartes assumes this mantle of Enlightenment and modern ideals—he is willing to explore the nature of himself, his soul, God, and the world—by appealing only to human reason and returning from the lofty dependence upon theologically centered explanations for objects of human experience.¹⁹¹

However, as in any change—social, theological, or scientific—new regimes inherit the legacies of their former times. Brann notes that it is impossible to specify one peculiarly modern result, except to observe that the old questions re-emerge in new contexts, driven by new motives and methods.¹⁹² In other words, the transformation is gradual rather than immediate, and vestiges of medieval thinking find their way into much of the thinking of early modern philosophy. Chief among

¹⁹⁰ Kearney, 156.

¹⁹¹ Of course, Descartes does not deviate too greatly from a theo-centric justification for the veracity of possible judgments of human knowledge when he argues for and depends upon the cornerstone of a veracious God, who ensures the faculties and abilities humans possess that allow for judgments to be made in the first place.

¹⁹² Brann, 69.

the remnants of medieval philosophy is the faculty psychology developed by scholastic figures such as Aquinas and Augustine and their earlier predecessors Plato and Aristotle. The preeminent philosophers of early modernity retain the semantic connotation of terms such as ‘intellect/intellection’, ‘understanding’, ‘sensation’ and ‘imagination’. Theological considerations also still loom large. The debate, however, shifts from the nature, essence and epistemic access humans have to God to questions concerning its existence; that is from God’s comprehensibility or lack thereof to whether such a being exists at all. Atheists like Hobbes unapologetically deny the existence of God, while others, like Bacon, leave the question available for further inquiry, more appropriately left to theologians than philosophers concerned with “natural science”.¹⁹³ But even this idea, science, springs from medieval and ancient sources. *Scientia*, the compendium of knowledge as it has long occupied philosophers, and even onto-theological philosophers, remains the central concern of modernity. Modern philosophy, like ancient and medieval, concerns itself with describing the parameters of human knowledge about the world. In modernity, however, a new consideration is added to the debate. Figures like Bacon and Descartes focus not just on the content of *scientia*, but also in the manner, the methodology, by which it is known. This preoccupation with methodology characterizes not just how humans know, but will also have a profound impact on

¹⁹³ Unapologetically may be a bit strong here, and yet his ontology of material substances and mechanical causality imply just such a position. It is his shrewdness in writing that permits a vast discussion of God while maintaining the ability to deny such a being exists. For more on Hobbes’ atheism cf. Edwin Curley’s “‘I Durst Not Write So Boldly’ or, How to read Hobbes’ Theological-Political Treatise.” in *Hobbes e Spinoza*, *Atti de Convegno Internazionale, Urbino 14-17 ottobre 1988* ed. Daniela Bostrenghi, (Naples: Bibliopolis) pp. 497-593. Also Douglas Jesseph’s “Hobbes’s Atheism” in *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* XXVI (2002) pp. 140-166.

what is omitted and added to the list. One further legacy, one that converges on the central inquiry in this historical section, is position of the imagination as a liaison between sensation and intellection, and the subsequent mistrust bequeathed to a servant that serves two masters.

Rene Descartes finds himself the inheritor of this medieval patrimony. His philosophical inquiry centers around the upsurge of humanistic thinking that marks the *scientia* of early modernity. In rejecting Scholasticism, most markedly Aristotelian metaphysics and the notion of substantial form as well as Aristotelian teleological explanations for causation, Descartes breaks with the Jesuit tradition imparted to him during his formative schooldays. In advocating matter in motion as the explanation for causal interaction among physical substances, regarding both change of form, place and inertial states, Descartes breaks with the entrenched philosophy of 1500 years. This significant breach will inevitably land Descartes under the scrutiny of Church censors, and unless protected by anonymity and a benevolent patron, he may have found himself in considerably less desirable circumstances. Nevertheless, Descartes did break from the metaphysical tradition, yet still maintained many of the concerns of medieval thinking. In other words, Descartes' break was, just as his philosophy, radical in spirit, but gradual in practice—although it was radical, it was not apparently violently so, the root his discord was quite pronounced even if his presentation was gradual. In order to more clearly see the transformation inculcated in modern philosophy, one can turn to the understanding of the imagination found in Renaissance thinking. In Pico della

Mirandola, we find a summary of the Medieval positions out of which modernity will emerge.

Renaissance- Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola

“Renaissance writers do not, by and large, expend the same theoretical ingenuity on the imagination as do their predecessors. Instead they attend to its practice.”¹⁹⁴ With this glib statement, Brann summarizes the consensus of scholars regarding the imagination in Renaissance thought. Generally, Renaissance thinkers, like most, do not address the imagination in direct terms. They prefer to make oblique references and maintain the “missing mystery” while employing its use. One exception to this trend is Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola’s work *On the Imagination* published in 1500. Innovative as a single work on the imagination was for its time, Pico’s contribution to literature concerning the imagination is not, however, innovative in its treatment of the theme. Rather, “this text, standing on the threshold of modern thought, at the same time gathers up virtually the entire ancient and medieval reflection on the imagination.”¹⁹⁵ By attending to Pico’s work, an

¹⁹⁴ Brann, p. 64-65.

¹⁹⁵ Sallis (1995), p. 4.

elegant summary of the major themes regarding the imagination and the motivating themes entering modernity may be obtained.

One immediate benefit of examining Pico's work is to clarify the shifting terminology that has beleaguered earlier works. His theme is the power of the soul which the Greeks called *phantasia* and the Latins *imaginatio*. He collapses the distinction found in works like Aquinas and declares them one and the same. Moreover, he favors the Latin terminology because of the resemblance to its activity.

¹⁹⁶ This power is responsible for images which it forms, images which are linked to likenesses of things that are delivered through the senses.

The comprehensiveness of Pico's treatment combines the themes of both the Platonic-Augustinian tradition with that of Aristotle-Aquinas. John Sallis notes that the Platonic understanding of image as *eikasia* is present in Pico's work.¹⁹⁷ According to Sallis, Pico's religious views commit him to allocating the original, veritative image in God and subsequent images, both objects of the world and in human cognition are but replications of the image-original. Pico suggests a Platonic *eikastic* model, asserting that through the beneficence of God's plan humans possess the ability to know through senses, imagination and reason, and that ultimately all human knowledge is guaranteed and dependant upon this beneficence. But, just as quickly as Pico suggests such Platonic themes, he dismisses them as tangential to his purported project of discussing human imagination, *imaginatio*.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁶ Although on occasion he makes interchangeable use of *phantasia* and *imaginatio*.

¹⁹⁷ Sallis, John in *Delimitations* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995) p. 7-8.

¹⁹⁸ By ultimately denying the role of the top-down model Pico seems to suggest, following Aristotle and Aquinas, all human knowledge is knowledge of human experience and no appeal can be made to

To address human imagination, Pico appeals, not to Plato, but to Aristotle. In following both Aristotle's and Aquinas' lead, Pico summarizes the imagination as a power of the soul:

- a) that produces forms
- b) that is a motion generated by sensation, but with its own productivity
- c) that is a force related to all powers
- d) that fashions likenesses and transmutes impressions
- e) that is a power of assimilating all things
- f) that enables the power of retention
- g) without which no knowledge, not even opinion is possible¹⁹⁹

A more apt summary of the historical record could not be afforded in a single work. It is from such a summary list that the overture of the early modern period may be seen. Image production, power of retention and the transmuting of impressions, takes precedence in the early modern period, especially in the Cartesian doctrine that ideas must have a cause. We find in an introspective inventory of our minds an overwhelming concern with the sources of our ideas. Unlike the ancients and Medievals, who commonly understand the source of ideas to be the material, physical, world, one part of the early moderns' project will be to prove the "outer" world is the source for many of our ideas rather than taking such a presupposition for granted. As a summary and transitional figure, Pico's account of the imagination still obtains the purchase of a given natural world, but indicates the transformation that is

divine illumination. By dismissing divine emanation Pico may have been jailed for heresy. Cf. Cocking, p. 170.

¹⁹⁹ Summary provided by John Sallis in *The Force of the Imagination* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000) p. 63.

to take place in the modern period. However, it is Pico's invective against the imagination that is his true legacy to much of the modern period.

In addition to summarizing the views of his predecessors, Pico admonishes caution against trust in the imagination. That the imagination is necessary for the efficacy of all the other powers of the soul is without doubt, Pico affirms, stating; "nor could the soul, fettered as it is to the body, opine, know, or comprehend at all, if phantasy were not constantly to supply it with the images themselves."²⁰⁰ But the imagination is also the great distorter and is at the origin of most sins and the source of heresies. To this invective against the imagination Pico devotes an entire chapter of his work.²⁰¹ To the origin of sin and heresy Pico adds further condemnation by identifying imagination as the mother and nurse of ambition. The imagination nourishes wrath, cruelty and passion, and it encourages the insatiable thirst for gold and the ardor of lust.²⁰² The imagination is even responsible for "all monstrous opinions and the defects of all judgment." This caution against sin, illusions and deceptions in judgment are ultimately cautions against the imagination.

For Pico, like much of the ancients and medievals, there is a strong sense of the necessity of imagination in cognition, yet also the mistrust of image-making. "Since the imagination itself is midway between incorporeal and corporeal nature and is the medium thought which they are joined," it is essential to knowledge of human experience. And yet, because the "imagination is for the most part vain and

²⁰⁰ Pico della Mirandola, Gianfranco *On the Imagination* trans. Harry Caplan, *Cornell Studies in English* vol. 16 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930) p. 33.

²⁰¹ Chapter 7.

²⁰² Pico *On the Imagination* p. 29.

wandering”, one needs be cautious. In Pico, one gains a strong sense of both the dependency humans have on imagination, and also the mistrust one must have if one is to so dependant upon a single faculty. In his own words, “since the imagination is itself midway between incorporeal and corporeal nature and is the medium through which they are joined, it is difficult to grasp its nature.”²⁰³ Humans are both empowered and corrupted by this curious faculty. Humans should then both embrace and distance themselves from such, a paradoxical doctrine that seems pervasive in Medieval and Renaissance thought.

This final thought brings into focus one central issue repeatedly mentioned by previous authors: to what is the imagination accountable. The two responses available at this point have been reason or the objects themselves. Despite the difficulties, or perhaps owing to the difficulties of these two answers, Kant will be forced to address this very issue, and prove central to the his formulation and radicalization of the imagination found in the Transcendental Deduction. The position of the imagination becomes transformed along the lines Pico suggests; the imagination is necessary for cognition, but to what structures and normative responsibilities does it respond?

²⁰³ Ibid. 37.

Rene Descartes

Rene Descartes and his philosophy herald a new era in the methodology and concerns of philosophical inquiry. By distancing himself from the Scholastic tradition of his Jesuit education, Descartes ushers in a new era of philosophical inquiry, terminology, concerns and, subsequently, problems. As stated above, Descartes was not an innovator who presented a radical break from the established mode of philosophy. Descartes employs much of the vocabulary and begins with a chief concern of Medieval philosophy, a compilation of human knowledge, *scientia*.²⁰⁴ Descartes is a philosopher of his times and educational background. However, once presented with difficulties of the Scholastic tradition, notable amongst others, the miracle of the Eucharist and transubstantiation, Descartes rethinks philosophical inquiry, according to a new, mechanical understanding of the world of material bodies. Descartes employs the vernacular and cognitive hierarchy of the medieval period, but reformulates these standards to accord with a material mechanism of corporeal bodies and differentiates the essence of human thinking activities from the theological presuppositions of his forebears. Because of the clumsy and often untenable positions set forth by Medieval philosophy—in his own words: “a large number of falsehoods that I had accepted as true in my childhood”—Descartes undertakes a new project that starts “again right from the foundations,” a

²⁰⁴ For more on the connection between Descartes and the Scholastics, particularly the way Descartes shrewdly presented himself as continuing the Scholastic tradition of science while undermining the Aristotelian basis for Medieval philosophy cf. Roger Ariew’s “Descartes and scholasticism: the intellectual background to Descartes’ thought” in *The Cambridge Companion to Descartes* pp. 58-90.

requirement necessary, he believes, if he wants to “establish anything at all in the sciences that [is] stable and likely to last.”²⁰⁵ The goal of human knowledge and a compilation of such is still the goal of Descartes’ aspirations, which may include knowledge of God’s existence, but which is, more chiefly, concerned with the world of the natural sciences. He transforms the medieval inquiry concerning *scientia*, however, when he explicitly occupies himself with a methodology that he claims will ensure the accuracy and verity of a newly grounded sciences.

In his mature writings, here typified by the *Meditations on First Philosophy*, Descartes proposes a foundational approach to the claims of knowledge. This foundational approach, and the subsequent need for an explicit methodology in order to assure the “certificate of believability” for knowledge claims, is one that marks Descartes foremost among the early modern philosophers. Rather than acquiring the systems and assumptions of his predecessors, Descartes undergoes a systematic destruction of his beliefs, knowledge and judgments, that he may acquire certainty that will provide the bedrock for the edifice of human knowledge. Signal to Descartes’ project is the suggestion that anyone can and should in fact proceed through his methodological doubt in order to obtain for themselves certain indubitable knowledge that it can provide. Descartes recognizes the need to pursue this radical doubt at least once in his own life, *semel in vita*, that he may be content with sound judgments and be able to construct a compendium of human knowledge, and, through the voice of the meditator, Descartes invites the reader to accompany

²⁰⁵ Descartes, Rene *Meditations on First Philosophy* ed. John Cottingham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) p. 12. Adam and Tannery notation (hereafter AT), 17.

him along a personal quest for certainty, to proceed through the same inquiry for themselves.

As is well known, in order to most efficiently dispel himself from possible illusion, Descartes reminds the reader that so-called knowledge from the senses have deceived, sometimes too often, and will, if left unchecked, most likely deceive again.

²⁰⁶ The promise is that, with a proper foundation for knowledge, these can be/are dismissed. But in order to determine this foundation, Descartes finds it incumbent, in the meantime, to avoid making knowledge claims based upon the senses. To supplement his argument against the standard illusions of sensation, Descartes continues by recounting how dreams often present us with the data of waking life e.g. sitting by a fire in a dressing gown.²⁰⁷ Ordinarily, we rely upon our sensation to provide us with an account of what it is that we are doing, but in the case of dreams and correlate activities, we are deceived, because we are in fact not sitting by a fire in a dressing gown, but, rather, asleep in our bed, yet are presented with the lively images typically provided veraciously by sensation. Whether awake or dreaming, Descartes determines the deliverances of the senses, or the perceptions afforded by such, are not to be considered the foundation for knowledge.

Descartes continues by addressing a more considerable obstacle, those mental perceptions, that seemingly are independent of the senses in any way e.g. geometry.

Yet, Descartes can also dispense with these objects of mental perception by presenting two possible arguments against the operations of the mind. The first

²⁰⁶ Descartes, *Discourse on Method* trans. Donald Cress (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1980), AT 3, p. 2.

²⁰⁷ Descartes, *Meditations* AT 19.

amounts to an evolutionary argument against the indubitability of geometric perceptions.²⁰⁸ Descartes also presents his famous malevolent demon/genie argument, his second argument against the seeming certainty of geometric, mathematical, knowledge. Descartes suggests that it could be the case, when one doubts the beneficence of a creator, that humans might very well be under the misdirected tutelage of an evil creator who has perversely misguided our thinking.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁸ Descartes, *Meditations* AT 21. The ongoing nature of evolution implies that our functions can, and in all likelihood will, change, and cites the improbability that all our mental perceptions are correct. If we have changed, then our perceptions were not infallible as we now have different perceptions than we once did, and when we do evolve, our mental landscape will likely change and so too will our mental perceptions. The unlikelihood that we have found certainty merely from perceptions not dependent upon sensation, belies Descartes need to convince those less imaginative of his time, perhaps those more scientifically oriented (atheists), that on biological grounds alone, we cannot trust mental perceptions.

²⁰⁹ The evil demon argument, or malign genius argument as it is also known, for doubting mental perception presents the close reader of the *Meditations* with an unusual difficulty. Descartes presents the evil demon as a heuristic device to provide an argument against the so-called a priori certainties of mathematics. So Descartes suggests, if there is such a malevolent figure, then it is possible that two plus three does not equal five (cf. AT 21), and it is merely the case that we have been assembled in such a way as to believe that two plus three equals five despite the fact that it does not obtain. This argument can prove productive in the dismantling of this last level of knowledge claims. However, in his references to the evil demon, Descartes constantly makes reference to the destruction of belief in the “sky, the air, the earth, colours, shapes, sounds, and all external things are merely the delusions of dreams which he has devised to ensnare my judgment” (AT 23). The evil demon argument is one that Descartes elaborates to the satisfaction of doubting the external world, not the realm of mathematical ideas. There is a separate, but similar argument to the evil demon: Descartes says a god may have made him in such a way that mathematical truths are not in fact true. Such a god would have to be something akin to an evil demon, as it would require the privative volition to create subordinate beings which it willingly deceives even in seemingly a priori, mathematical truths. One further consequence of this line of reasoning is the confirmation that even though an evil demon may present reasons to doubt the external world, and some kind of deceptive creator provides occasion to doubt mathematical truths, Descartes never abandons a certain type of reasoning, the one upon which he will build his foundational epistemology, logical or self-evident truths. The paradigmatic truth, the Cogito, presents a truth that is even simpler and more clear and distinct and known by “the natural light” than truths of mathematics which also present themselves as simple and clear and distinct. Even though Descartes provides reasons to doubt the truth of several types of knowledge claims, those of external objects and those mathematics propositions, both these concern objects not identical to the inquiring meditator, both types are of objects different than the doubting inquirer herself. Thus it is only ideas of things not identical to the doubter that Descartes has provided reasons to doubt, but he never abandons, never doubts rational thinking, identified with the kind of object that inquires after its own epistemic states and its own existence. In short, Descartes abandons many types of ideas by providing demons, dreams and non-benevolent gods, but he never abandons reason itself, merely the object of sensation and the objects of mathematical reason.

In short, what we conceive as necessary truths, not dependent upon sensation but upon thinking alone, might not correspond with the truth of reality.

After such a systematic destruction of the contents of thought Descartes is left to ask: “So what remains? Perhaps just the one fact that nothing is certain.” However, from this existential performance of doubt, Descartes does find solace. Despite the content of his knowledge and the inability to determine truth and falsity, illusion from reality, Descartes’ process can admit of one thing: that thinking is taking place. Regardless of truth or falsity concerning reliability of senses or a priori geometry; regardless of whether he is awake, mad, dreaming or under the influence of a deceiving power, Descartes can in this moment of radical doubt affirm that some(thing) must indeed be performing this activity. From this immediate understanding Descartes “must conclude that that this proposition, *I am, I exist*, is necessarily true whenever it is put forward by me or conceived in my mind.”²¹⁰ This certain, essential declaration, *cogito sum*, provides Descartes the key to continue his project. In short, what Descartes believes himself to be at the foundation of his experience, his thinking Cogito, is a thinking subject, a mind.

To elaborate what a thinking thing, a mind, is, Descartes pauses to take inventory of the possible modes of thinking, of which doubt is but one. Descartes concludes that a thinking thing is “a thing that doubts, understands, affirms, denies, is willing, is unwilling, and also imagines and has sensory perceptions.”²¹¹ The enumeration of the first six modes of thinking are all attributable to Descartes’

²¹⁰ Descartes, *Meditations*, 17, AT 25.

²¹¹ *Ibid*, 19, AT 28.

methodology of doubt. In doubting all that he has previously thought to exist, Descartes has denied, and has been unwilling to affirm anything as true that he does not know with certainty. Upon the arrival of the certainty of the cogito, Descartes can then make an affirmation of understanding and is willing to affirm the indubitable truth of his existence. Early in his meditations, Descartes has provided examples of the first three-quarters of his list. But, whence the last two, imagining and sensing, on his list of characteristics of a thinking thing?

To answer this question Descartes turns to the contents of thought. He discovers a variety of ideas that are the objects of his thinking. Concisely summarizing these various thoughts, Descartes discovers three species of ideas; 1) ideas not sponsored by himself, and seemingly coming from outside of himself, adventitious ideas e.g. heat and cold, 2) ideas sponsored by himself by a recombination of other ideas, with varying permutations of the contents already found, factitious ideas e.g. sirens and hippogriffs, and 3) ideas that he could not himself create, but that are not found in the world of sensation outside of himself, innate ideas e.g. infinity, the nature of the soul, extension and, perhaps, triangles.²¹² These types of thought are reminiscent of the modes enumerated by earlier philosophers, sense perception and thinking. Of course, at this point of his meditative process, Descartes has no “outside” world from which to infer that some of his ideas are caused by external relations, and this problem has been duly noted in the

²¹² Descartes, *Meditations*, 26, AT 38.

literature.²¹³ Nevertheless, Descartes postulates that he cannot be the source of innate ideas, the single most important of these ideas being the idea of infinity/perfection²¹⁴ The idea of infinity, Descartes claims, cannot be caused or created by a finite subject.²¹⁵ Thus, Descartes concludes, God must exist, apart from finite beings and is the cause of the idea of infinity/perfection the meditator finds within herself.²¹⁶ Just what these ideas are and what is responsible for these representations is still in question.

Employing the idea of God, infinity and perfection, Descartes then begins to rehabilitate the world of the senses and provide exacting measure for the avoidance of error in judgments. Because God is an infinite, perfect being, to which no privation can be predicated, Descartes concludes that, as the creator of the universe, God's beneficence assures that the object of creation itself is indeed a perfect creation. As one of these objects of creation, the meditator concludes the capacities with which she has been endowed by the creator must themselves be perfect abilities. And yet, Descartes is faced with his original problem—humans make errors in judgment. To explain the ability to err, Descartes continues his survey of the mind and its abilities,

²¹³ This argumentative strategy dubbed the “Cartesian circle” has been well documented. Yet, Descartes does provide some argumentation for why ideas may be caused by “external” objects, by reminding the reader that often and even unwillingly, we possess ideas e.g. heat or cold. This does not dispense with the objection that there may be capacities of the cogito that have gone undocumented at this point in the *Meditations* and thus provide a plausible counter-argument for why these ideas may indeed be sponsored by himself.

²¹⁴ I conflate these two ideas here, not because they are identical, but because Descartes often uses them interchangeably in his arguments for the existence of God.

²¹⁵ Finite and hence imperfect because of error and the ability to doubt. Cf. Descartes, *Meditations*, 28-35 AT 40-51.

²¹⁶ Descartes, *Meditations*, 32, AT 46

and must separate indubitable ideas from the more specious representations, most of which involve some indistinct idea/imagery.

In addition to ideas and understanding, humans possess the capacity to make judgments. Hence Descartes continues to affirm his original position that affirmation and denial, judgments themselves, are essential capacities of human beings. To this capacity Descartes gives the name *willing*. At this point Descartes now has in place explanatory mechanisms that will allow him to affirm the reliability of the faculties, yet provide an explanation for error production. “It is only the will, or freedom of choice,” Descartes writes, “which I experience within me to be so great that the idea of any greater faculty is beyond my grasp...”²¹⁷ Through introspection, Descartes finds that humans possess the ability to affirm or deny, an inexhaustible expression of volition that contains no boundaries. Problems in judgment arise whenever this boundless capacity affirms or denies without the guidance of understanding. Judging rampantly without reason or methodological considerations proves the greatest source of error.

To correct for error and/or avoid error production, Descartes prescribes that one “refrain from making a judgment in cases where [one] does not perceive the truth with sufficient clarity and distinctness.”²¹⁸ In order to understand clarity and distinctness of perception, Descartes returns to the first step in his methodological consideration. Clarity and distinctness are exemplified in the indubitable presentation that if doubting occurs, thinking occurs and one must exist. Likewise, Descartes cites

²¹⁷ Descartes, *Meditations*, 40, AT 57.

²¹⁸ *Ibid*, 41, AT 59.

the immediacy with which one realizes, upon introspection, a definitive idea of perfection not caused by oneself. To avoid error in judgment, Descartes concludes, one must withhold judgment until one can see the simple nature of the object of judgment to such a degree that no ambiguity remains. For this inquiry the corresponding question appears to be: must one abstain from judgment provided one does not possess a clear and distinct image?

It is here that Descartes philosophical ingenuity and methodological innovation become manifest. By employing the term “perception” ambiguously, Descartes can affirm the traditional model that holds intellection as the arbiter of truth, while rehabilitating and emending the physical sciences, delivered by the senses, to conform with his mechanical model of the universe. The ambiguity permits Descartes to discuss deliverances of the senses without providing detailed exegesis on the connection between them and ideas available to inspection by the mind—a question for which he will inevitably be forced to provide some account. Perception, properly speaking is under the auspices of mental activity and the guidance of understanding. In other words, the mind is locus proper of perception, and thus Descartes continues the dialogue of inner and outer. That is, he must explain how objects of the senses are translated to the mental realm of perception. To begin such an explanation and to describe the proper way to eliminate error, Descartes observes that it is only through reflection that one can divest perception from the detritus of ordinary experience and determine judgments based upon his criteria of clarity and distinctness. However, Descartes maintains, humans also receive

perceptions from the deliverances of the senses. It would seem that Descartes has introduced two concerns of perceptions that need elaboration. The first concern is the issue regarding what a perception is, a metaphysical question. The second, concerns the origins of perceptions, a question of causal source. For Descartes, the answer to the first question lends a partial answer to the second and the remainder of the second actually derives from the methodological order and determinations conducted thus far in his *Meditations*.

Perceptions, as Descartes perceives them, are truly in the domain of the intellect/understanding. The mind, according to Descartes, deals only with ideas, and yet, in reflective deliberation, the mind represents first order ideas, the content of those ideas being recognized albeit the ideas themselves not being so. In the reflective process Descartes entitles the presentation of ideas to the mind as perceptions. The mind may thus clearly and distinctly perceive the ideas, representations, that constitute its objects. Inspection of the content of the mind, perceiving ideas, leads Descartes to determine several different types of ideas e.g. simple, complex, clear, confused, distinct etc.²¹⁹ Perceptions are ultimately ideas, the only object with which the intellect can work/operate/deal.

This answer leads to the second question, the question regarding the source of perceptions. One half of the answer to this question is the mind itself- perceptions are material and thus the product of reflection. According to Descartes, when we inspect the contents of our mind, we simply find ideas already there. The function of the understanding is to evaluate the degree of clarity and distinctness these perceptions

²¹⁹ Descartes, *Meditations*, 50, AT 72.

possess, and to make judgments accordingly. This answer seems to explain factitious ideas (those recombinant ideas/images found in earlier philosophers) we find in the examination of the contents of reflective perception. However, this answer will inevitably prove unsatisfactory, for ideas we have innate ideas and ideas of corporeal objects, the source of which we can claim no credit. When Descartes simply affirms that we have innate and adventitious ideas, it does little in the way of explaining their source(s).

Descartes, however, does have one recourse to provide an explanation for and the verity of other sources of our ideas; he has provided one perception, one idea, of which he is certain. The perception of his existing and the necessity of his existence from his ability to doubt provides the paradigm by which he can determine other sources of ideas. Descartes will employ the criterion of clarity and distinctness to determine the other sources of his ideas. One objection may immediately arise: the certainty of one's existence, it might be claimed, appears to be generated from oneself and the activities of one's own thinking. But one thing is of extreme importance here—with this particular example, the generation of the clear and distinct idea that we find with the Cogito is not the generation alluded to in factitious ideas, we do not create the idea of the Cogito by recombining other ideas. The recombinant ideas we label factitious do not have the foundational grounds attributed to the Cogito. The point of importance Descartes finds in the perception of the Cogito, also called the intuition of the perception of the Cogito, according to Descartes, is the source and criterion for judging the perception, that is the self and the “natural light” of reason.

The Cogito presents one type of perception, the certain perception which bases its truth upon a logical, simple idea, although its criteria for truth will continue into all forms, both simple and complex ideas. The mind as the source of the perception that it inspects demands an answer regarding the objective validity of the judgment. But the concern with objective validity will take us too broadly afield at this point. Suffice it to say that the logical rigor and the objective validity attributed to the Cogito depends upon the clarity and distinctness of the perception, and ultimately, on a veracious God as guarantor of the clear and distinct ideas—a concern Kant will take up while providing a different answer.

Other sources for perceptions, those that can represent both innate and adventitious ideas, are those that come from outside ourselves. Using the criteria established in the Cogito, Descartes can analyze the innate idea of infinity/God and determine the truth of its content as well as the source for its idea, a God existing and external to the meditator herself—another clear, distinct, simple idea. The final genera of perception, adventitious ideas, is employed when the mind meditates upon the nature of body. Perceptions, properly speaking, are the objects of minds, and adventitious ideas, represent ideas not caused by either the self, the activity of self-reflection or by an infinite and perfect being. In order to present how the mind deals with perception from so foreign a source, bodily substance, Descartes will have to appeal to the mediating faculty of the imagination and its role in the conversion of sense data into ideas that can then be perceived by the mind. It is at this juncture that Descartes' theory of imagination and images becomes operative. What are we to

make of images in relation to perception, and to what degree of veracity do they obtain?

Throughout the *Meditations*, Descartes discusses perception, assuming his audience conforms to his ideation of perception. Perceptions are after all properly the ideas one finds in the theatre of the mind for Descartes. After determining the Cogito to be the ground for and exemplar by which we may judge human experience, Descartes affirms that with due conscientiousness and fastidious adherence to the criteria asserted to arrive at indubitable truths, any further ideas that obtain clarity and distinctness may also be affirmed as unshakeable knowledge. Coupling these criteria with the assurance of a benevolent deity who created the universe, humans included, and the perfection of His creation, Descartes determines, with clarity and distinctness, the ability for humans to rely upon sense data to make knowledge claims about the world around them.²²⁰ The deliverances of the senses, both in immediate perception and memory, however, must still conform to the criteria of clarity and distinctness.

Without deviating from Scholastic traditions too greatly, Descartes is willing to affirm that, when surveying the theatre of the mind, one finds not only ideas, but also images caused by the external world via the deliverances of the senses; that is images that are ideas that can be perceived by the mind.²²¹ Furthermore, memory itself is an integral function that permits cataloguing and judging the world of the senses. To determine the role of the imagination in veritative cognition and also to properly subordinate the imagination to intellection-reason, Descartes compares

²²⁰ Descartes, *Meditations* 50, AT 71.

²²¹ Ibid. 51, AT 73.

imagining with understanding. Descartes qualifies the imagination as a faculty “of which I am aware when I turn my mind to material objects” and as “nothing else but an application of the cognitive faculty to a body which is intimately present to it”²²² Just what intimate presence involves and how one can ascertain intimacy as opposed to simple familiarity, Descartes leaves to the reader’s imagination. But Descartes does provide examples to help discern how the imagination differs from understanding. When imagining a triangle, Descartes claims, one literally presents a figure bounded by three lines the mind’s eye for inspection “as if they were present before me.” Here we must assume the “me” to which Descartes refers is only the mind, and presentation of images corresponds to the perception of images by the understanding. The understanding can utilize the image of a triangle in determining the properties of three-sided objects. Moreover, the imagination presents a specific image, scalene, right, obtuse acute etc. for inspection by the understanding, often presenting an image of a particular figure encountered before and recalled through memory. The understanding, however, does not require any particular image in order to understand clearly and distinctly the properties of geometric figures we call triangles. To highlight the difference between employing images as a propaedeutic for the understanding’s clear and distinct perceptions of triangles and the understanding’s function itself, Descartes presents the case of the chiliagon. The imagination cannot present a clear image of a thousand-sided figure. In this instance the imagination presents not a clear image but, rather, a “confused representation of

²²² Descartes *Meditations*. 50, AT 72.

some figure.”²²³ It is true, Descartes continues, that we are in the habit of presenting images to the mind for inspection, but, it would seem, image presentation has its limitations. The understanding, on the other hand, can clearly and distinctly perceive the properties of a chiliagon.²²⁴ This in turn leads Descartes to claim that although the understanding very often employs images, the imagination “is not a necessary constituent of my own essence, that is, of the essence of my mind.”²²⁵ It is rather one mode, among many, of the intellect/understanding.

This distinction between understanding, the proper activity of mind, and imagination, an often useful tool, but inessential to the mind, is reminiscent of the cognitive hierarchy of the medieval period. The imagination is clearly not one of the five basic senses as enumerated by Descartes,²²⁶ but also is not an essential part of the mind itself. Descartes writes: “when the mind understands, it in some way turns towards itself and inspects one of the ideas which are within it; but when it imagines, it turns towards the body and looks at something in the body which conforms to an idea understood by the mind or perceived by the senses.”²²⁷ The imagination is not a part of the world of material bodies, and yet it also does not belong essentially to the world of the mind. The mind turns to the body through the imagination when the

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ This may in fact be too strong a claim by Descartes. Whether one can clearly perceive the properties of a chiliagon is difficult to determine. What Descartes’ claim really amounts to is that one can intuit the formula determining the interior angles of a polygon and subsequently applying this formula deductively to any specific polygon. This employment seems to leave open the question of whether the initial intuition of the formula for the sum of the interior angles of a polygon = $180(n-2)$ or the degree measurement for each individual angle in a regular polygon = $180(n-2)/n$ relies upon images or whether the understanding simply intuits these formula without the aid of figures.

²²⁵ Descartes *Meditations* 51, AT 73.

²²⁶ As Descartes does in *Principles of Philosophy*.

²²⁷ Descartes *Meditations* 51, AT 73.

mind contemplates material bodies, but the objects proper for consideration of the mind are not the images themselves. Descartes' account here becomes somewhat confused, for, while he makes assertions about the mind's use of the imagination to mediate between understanding and sensible bodies, he does not properly describe the contents of the understanding's contemplation/intuition other than referring to them as "ideas". Just what is the ontology of Descartes' imagination? if it is neither material-body nor mental-mind?

In terms of Descartes' programmatic, his use of the imagination at such a stage in his meditations is in fact to prove the external world, and not to delineate the proper use of the imagination in cognition.²²⁸ In reference to the argument that the mind understands ideas and the imagination deals with images not caused by the mind, Descartes is led to affirm the existence of external objects that cause sensation and collation/image production by the imagination.²²⁹ Descartes continues to argue for the existence of an external, material world, citing the vividness and distinctness of the images produced by the perception of sensation in imagination, claiming this ensures that the images could not be caused the understanding alone and that the "use of the senses had come first, while the use of my reason came only later." In addition

²²⁸ Martial Gueroult notes that the argument from imagination is merely a probabilistic argument for the external world, and that the stronger argument for the existence of external bodies is a combination of the perceptions intuited by means of the senses combined with a veracious God that guarantees the proper functioning of our sense faculties. In brief, the argument claims that we are created by a veracious God and that as such our faculties present faithfully the contents of the world. Since our sensorial faculty informs us there are objects external to ourselves, and our faculties are reliable, these objects must exist. The role of images in translating the data of sensation to the mind for scrutiny by the understanding is the very question in contention at this point in Descartes' work. Cf. Martial Gueroult's *Descartes' Philosophy Interpreted According to the Order of Reasons* vol. II "The Soul and the Body" p. 3. Cf also AT 72.

²²⁹ Descartes, *Meditations*, 52, AT 75.

Descartes notes the “the ideas which I formed myself, were less vivid than those which I perceived with the senses and were, for the most part, made up of elements of sensory ideas.”²³⁰ Our natural attitude regarding the objects of sensation as real and the images and/or ideas of them as less real led Descartes to affirm common sense, but doing so by establishing a hierarchy of the mind employing clear and distinct ideas as the arbiter/determiner of truth.

At this point in his argument Descartes’ locution plays, once again, on the ambiguity of the term ‘perception’. Descartes, it would seem, employs the use of sensory ideas without describing what a “sensory idea” is or what perception of sensory ideas amounts to. The vividness of these ideas implies that the presentation of these data for inspection by the mind be of such a kind that the corporeal nature of sensation is manifest, and yet not be corporeal, as they are ideas. These “ideas” as Descartes often calls the deliverances of the senses in their use by understanding are precisely the images afforded by imagination. By image production and the employment of particular figures by the mind, the extension of corporeal bodies is mitigated to a level at which point in time the understanding can intuit the nature of corporeal bodies, as pure extension. Descartes’ celebrated wax example demonstrates how the particularities of the many manifestations of a body, through physical change, and presentation of each particular image of the changing body is used discursively by the understanding to intuit the singular nature of physical bodies according to Descartes. The movement from particular(s) to general understanding of objects, say physical bodies, brings suspicion of his claim that imagination is not

²³⁰ Descartes *Meditations* 52, AT 75.

essential to the understanding. It is most certainly essential when dealing with the presentation material objects, even if it is not required to determine the clear and distinct perception of them to determine qualities. Thus Descartes, like the Medievals before him, wants to present a clear separation of understanding as an activity that needs no involvement of the senses, from understanding of the material world, the so-called sciences and human experience.

The imaginative variation employed by Descartes—to move from particular instances and the images afforded through the imagination’s collation of the deliverances of the senses to clearly and distinctly intuiting by the understanding about the nature of bodies generally and to any specific field of natural philosophy, the physical sciences—has led to contentious debate among commentators regarding the role, importance and use of imagination in Descartes’ methodology. It even leads, as Descartes himself notes, to a belief “that I had nothing at all in the intellect which I had not previously had in sensation”²³¹—a position assumed and vigorously argued for by empiricists, most notably John Locke and David Hume. Certainly, Descartes does not believe this tenet of empiricism, as it runs counter to his doctrine of innate ideas. He merely cites this as a common conception considered plausible by the argument he mounts to distinguish between imagination and understanding and what is afforded by sensation, but one that needs to be dispelled.

Among commentators one divisive issue, one that cites the centrality, or lack thereof, of the imagination in Descartes, is whether Descartes maintains a certain mathematical project established by Descartes in his earliest writings, the *Regulae*,

²³¹ Ibid, 52, AT 76.

and whether he abandons such ambitions in his mature writings of the *Meditations*, *Principles and Passions*. In short, this divisive issue concerns whether Descartes' project is inherently epistemological or metaphysical.

In the *Rules for the Direction of the Mind (Regulae)*, an early and unpublished work (abandoned by 1629), Descartes presents a methodology to determine the simple truths upon which any physical science depends. This clearly epistemological treatise concerns itself with decomposing complex ideas to the simples at which time the mind can intuit the basic principles upon which any particular problem of physical science deductively depends. Dennis Sepper, in his work *Descartes' Imagination*, advocates an interpretation of Descartes' corpus that places the *Regulae* at the heart of Descartes' philosophical project and cites the explicit references to methodology in the *Discourse on Method* and the implicit considerations of methodology in the *Meditations* as proof that Descartes' chief concern is with the compendium of knowledge humans can obtain, *scientia*. Because the physical sciences are the concern of the *Regulae* and the bulk of knowledge that may obtain for humans concerns the world of material objects, Sepper concludes that Descartes struggles with the role the imagination plays mediating between the world of material objects and the perception of the idea of bodies as extension, that is knowledge of the world of material objects, and that this concern pervades his entire lifetime and published works. Boldly, Sepper claims, the

imagination can indeed serve as an index of Descartes' deeper concerns and of the transformations of his thought—not because there are remote and obscure connections between them, but rather, because imagination was at the heart of his earliest philosophizing, and because

his prolonged effort to establish the practical relevance and cognitive importance of imagination led him into a network of problems that defeated his initial hopes.²³²

What Sepper concedes in this affirmation is that Descartes' philosophical considerations do seem to change over the course of his writings. The explicit methodological considerations of the *Regulae*, one in which the "primacy of imaginative techniques in the process of knowing" is apparent, are abbreviated in *Discourse in Method* and only implicit in the metaphysical treatise *Meditations*, in which Descartes appears "to teach the near-irrelevance of the imagination to the most profound philosophical tasks."²³³ In his estimation, Sepper is even willing to concede the general consensus among Descartes scholars, that imagination plays little role in the *Meditations*. The imagination is necessary for the translation of the deliverances of the senses into perceptions, but insufficient to provide any judgment regarding those objects of the senses. Sepper's claim amounts to an emphasis on the early (and unpublished)²³⁴ writings of Descartes and an insistence that Descartes' main project is a compendium of human knowledge, knowledge of the natural sciences.

While Sepper's claim appears plausible—Descartes himself discusses the limitations and proper topics of human knowledge—his thesis oversimplifies Descartes' growing awareness that even his system of intuition and deduction, as laid out in the *Regulae*, and continued in attenuated form through the *Discourse*, *Meditations*, and even into *Principles of Philosophy* and *On the Passions of the Soul*,

²³² Sepper, Dennis L. *Descartes's Imagination: Proportion, Images and the Activity of Thinking* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996) p. 5.

²³³ Sepper, 255.

²³⁴ The *Regulae ad directionem ingenii* was only published posthumously in 1701.

itself needs a metaphysical justification, the one Descartes provides in the *Meditations* and continues restating in all the subsequent works. In short, Sepper relies too much attributing a single project to Descartes' corpus—the compilation of empirical knowledge. Certainly, Descartes is an early modern philosopher concerned with supplanting Aristotelian metaphysics with one that emphasizes matter and motion, thus eliminating final causality, and the subsequent reworking of natural sciences according to this model, but this is just what Sepper misses in his analysis. Descartes must provide a metaphysical justification for his new system before work in the physical sciences can begin properly. This metaphysical justification places priority on the nature and workings of the mind and the veracity one can claim of clear and distinct ideas assured of truth by a veracious God. The imagination, as a faculty that presents confused and obscure images for scrutiny by a thinking substance that demands clarity and distinctness in order to affirm with certainty any science, will inevitably prove insufficient as the motivating force behind Descartes' philosophizing. Descartes is concerned with the physical sciences and implicitly the faculties that attend to corporeal bodies and images, but this consideration is only secondary to establishing a firm foundation, one devoid of imagistic thinking, in order to ensure that investigations of these sciences are secure.

The standard interpretation of Descartes' corpus, represented by Dan Garber and Martial Gueroult, approaches the issue historically and developmentally. Garber references the importance of Descartes' concern with physical sciences, notably physics, optics and harmonics, but emphasizes the possibility of such sciences upon a

firm metaphysical basis. Garber determines that the methodology of the *Regulae* is not present in the *Meditations* because the epistemic instruction provided in the early work needed a metaphysical foundation. In fact, while clear and distinct ideas may appear to be the same as intuitions found in the *Regulae*, this is where the methodological similarities cease. In the *Meditations*, Descartes is looking for simple ideas known immediately by the mind, much like Descartes affirms the truth of simple intuitions of the *Regulae*, but the difference is that the work of the *Meditations* does not apply itself to the concrete problems of physics or optics, but to the foundation from which the solution to concrete, that is, material, problems can be resolved.

Martial Gueroult, in his work *Descartes' Philosophy Interpreted According to the Order of Reasons*, is unapologetic in affirming the lack of a role of imagination in the first five meditations. The concern in this portion of the *Meditations* focuses on answering basic questions; that something is (quod) and what it might be (quid). These questions are limited in the first five meditations, Gueroult claims, to the nature of the self, both body and mind, and the existence of God. Existence of any external object of meditation is secondary to these central questions and is only properly addressed in the last, the sixth, meditation. Without determining that the mind is and what the nature of the mind amounts to along with the distinction between mind and body, discussion of material objects is moot. Once Descartes determines that he is a thinking thing, and what the essence of this thinking thing is, he can determine the difference between mind and body to determine the essence of body. Determination

of the existence of material bodies can only obtain with the guarantee of faithful faculties achieved by a veracious God. Hence the questions concerning imagination as the mediator between existing, external, material bodies and the inner world of ideas can only be addressed after the metaphysical foundations are in place. How the imagination transforms the deliverances of the senses into images that can then be perceived, thus enabling natural sciences, is merely the last consideration in Descartes' order of reasoning. In his final analysis, Gueroult determines that the imagination is, by and large, a faculty that presents confused and obscure images for inspection (perception) by the mind.

Gueroult continues, claiming that when dealing the specific treatment of the imagination in Descartes' *Meditations* one needs to remember that

Descartes understands two very different things by imagination: imagination as mental faculty, which is the soul exercising an action on the brain, and corporeal imagination, which consists of the capacity of the body to preserve the traces of actions exercised on it, either from within or without. This capacity resides in the pineal gland, but also in each organ of the body, and finally in the body as a whole.²³⁵

Thus it would seem that there are two imaginations at work in the *Meditations*, one which is operative in the translation of sensibility into perception, and a second species that concerns itself with the manipulation of ideas themselves. This two-fold imagination parallels the ambiguous use of perception found in Descartes, one which applies to the objects of sensation in translation to ideas, the other which applies to the ideas themselves.

²³⁵ Gueroult, vol. II, p. 29.

Moreover, with this dual split of imagination, the passage betrays that there are not only two types of imagination, but rather five. The first four imaginations, merely reproductive in their functions, are present as either intellectual or sensible, not residing in the body, or residing therein. Thus there is an 1) intellectual imagination responsible for memory of the activities of the mind located nowhere in the body, 2) a sensible memory that catalogues the traces of sense perception, but also not located in the body (what we might call images proper) 3) a corporeal imagination that is responsible for memory located in the brain, and 4) a corporeal imagination that provides for the memory of muscle. The fifth species of imagination is presented as the creative force that is responsible for the recombinant productions, given to the interplay of any of these memories, which produces factitious, or better yet fictitious, ideas. This last species of imagination is simply a mental faculty, one that provides for the allowances of imaginative interplay with ideas, either mental or representations of the sensible, found in speculative or creative thinking. The first four species enumerated here, highlight the role the imagination inherently plays in memory production and storage.

By reconnoitering the Scholastic tradition, it becomes apparent that, while Descartes' epistemologically oriented methodology and concluding metaphysics of substance deviates from his medieval predecessors, when it comes to the imagination, Descartes closely inherits the cognitive hierarchy found in Aquinas. Descartes' corporeal imaginations are reminiscent of the image collation and production found in the "common sense" of Aquinas. Just as Aquinas had before him, Descartes locates

this faculty in the brain. Descartes does, however, provide an emendation to the Scholastic tradition by allowing for a “memory” of muscle not located in the brain, but, rather, as some residual trace found in the body at large. Also, Descartes’ mental images, and the storehouse of these images coincides with Aquinas’ doctrine of the intentional shift, from sensation to intellection, found in his explication of the imagination proper, both imagination *formalis* and *thesaurus*. Even the creative power of the recombinant imagination has precedence in Aquinas’ *phantasy*.

Also inherited from his scholastic upbringing is Descartes’ clear mistrust for the imagination. The imagination provides not only confused and obscure images from sensation for inspection by the intellect, thus privileging the intellect, understanding, over either imagination or sensation. But, also, Descartes’ entire metaphysical foundation, as he presents it in the *Meditations*, bespeaks the priority given to the pure intellect, untrammelled by traces of sensation given through images. The imagination is still subordinate to the single faculty, pure intellect, that can determine the foundation for subsequent claims pertaining to images delivered from sensation.

There are, however, two major innovations concerning the imagination intertwined in Descartes’ foundationalist enterprise. The first concerns a need to prove the external world and its relation to the ideas humans may possess of it, which follows from the inherently imaginative enterprise of Descartes’ methodology. Descartes’ method of radical doubt solicits a need to prove the existence of the external world, a concern with which Scholastic philosophy did not need to deal

directly. Because of the hypothesis of the evil demon, and its employment to discard both sensible objects as well as the a priori truths of mathematics in order to ground knowledge claims, Descartes believes that once the groundwork of the Cogito is accomplished there is still an outstanding debt to prove the existence of an external world, the one which sensations delivers. In the course of his proof, Descartes will argue for the existence of a veracious creator, one who cannot deceive, thus refuting the evil demon hypothesis. In order to prove the existence of the external world, Descartes cannot rely exclusively on the contents of pure thinking. In order to prove the external world, Descartes has recourse to both the imagination, which only proves the external world's possibility, and finally and definitively to the deliverances of the senses. There is, however, one obstacle to Descartes' argument for the existence of the external world by proof of the perceptions of sensation, and that obstacle is how the deliverances of the senses, explicitly bodily, can be transformed to an object of thought, explicitly and exclusively mental. Descartes' only recourse is to employ the imagination as the faculty that produces images and which, in the production of images, transforms the bodily nature of sensation into the mental nature of ideas. Unfortunately, however, Descartes provides no clear explanation of how this process unfolds.

In summary, the use and nature of imagination is subtly transformed in Descartes' philosophy: the imagination is an organ for use in creative, speculative and scientific thinking, and, moreover, the imagination is slowly conceded a place in the process of world generation/constitution, or for Descartes, proof of the world. The

change in theories of imagination does not extend explicitly to the function of imagination itself; after all, the imagination is still a mediating faculty between the “outer” world of the senses and the “inner” world of understanding. But the use of the imagination in justifying an external world and the subsequent orientation we as humans find in relation to the world is transformed into a quasi-creative mould. In Descartes’ philosophy, much like in antiquity and the medieval period, the imagination is found to be a real and necessary faculty for coordination/comprehension of an external world. We also find that the veracity of the images presented by imagination is ultimately under the auspices of the understanding. The metaphysical question concerning whether the products of the imagination are real, is still answered in the affirmative, provided the epistemological caveat concerning its veracity still emends the process. Images produced by the imagination from the deliverances of the senses are indeed real, but the truth contained in them is still under the guidance of image free understanding, a function which can determine the veracity of the image based upon Descartes newfound criteria.

With this step into modernity one gains a clearer picture of the issues and concerns Kant will have about the imagination. At first glance, Descartes appears to affirm the Platonic doctrine that imagination is not required for knowledge—only the powers of the mind ensured by God’s benevolence. One also finds Descartes’ prescription for reason, in his words clarity and distinctness, to govern any presentation of empirical knowledge. However, Descartes’ ambiguity concerning

perception and just what faculties are at work in perceiving empirical objects also belies his dependence upon a faculty to mediate between sensation and thought. The question concerning where perception belongs, and just what role the imagination plays in perception will become a pressing matter for Kant. Descartes appears to leave the question open, something Kant will find inherently unsatisfying, thus he will attempt to provide an explanation for this Cartesian aporia. Just as Descartes does with perception, Kant will find an ambiguous tension of the imagination, being unable to definitively locate just where the imagination belongs, in sensibility or understanding. Kant will begin to unravel this question by distinguishing between a pure and applied imagination, just as commentators have for Descartes' use of perception.

John Locke/David Hume

I would like to treat in this last historical section the philosophies of John Locke and David Hume together. These two thinkers can justifiably be treated together, I believe, as representative of the empiricist development of modern philosophy following Descartes' innovations. These empiricist philosophers continue the modern programmatic and concern themselves with the nature of ideas and

cognitive faculty psychology, despite presenting refutations of specific doctrines of Descartes. Because of their focus on subjective conditions of perception and knowledge, both Locke and Hume are considered Cartesian in their outlook and approach, despite the British/Scottish distancing from the tenets advanced by Descartes himself. Locke presents a concerted effort to refute the doctrine of innate ideas found in Descartes, and Hume assumes the empiricist framework, punctuating it with his skeptical philosophy, thereby undermining Descartes' promotion of foundational epistemology and metaphysics.

John Locke begins his work, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, by drawing an analogy between the “seeing eye” and the functioning understanding. Both, he suggests, allow us to “see and perceive all other things” while taking “no notice of itself.”²³⁶ Locke’s proposed project is to pursue the “art and pains” required “to set it [the understanding] at a distance and make it its own object” of inquiry.²³⁷ In doing so, Locke hopes to discover the contents of the mind and determine whether the Cartesian legacy of innate ideas obtains by inquiring about the “original of those ideas, notions or whatever else you please to call them, which a man observes, and is conscious of to himself he has in his mind; and the ways whereby the understanding comes to be furnished with them.”²³⁸ In addition, Locke wishes to determine the veracity with which one can know the contents of the mind, “to shew what knowledge the understanding hath by those ideas, and the certainty, evidence, and

²³⁶ Locke, *Essay*, Bk. 1, Ch.1, Sec.1,

²³⁷ Ibid.

²³⁸ Ibid, Bk. 1, Ch. 1, Sec. 3.

extent of it.”²³⁹ Locke endeavors to enumerate the contents of the human mind, its source(s) and the role they place in knowledge claims. By pursuing such an inquiry, Locke proposes to delimit the bounds of human knowledge, that we can “discover the powers thereof; how far they reach and... to be more cautious in meddling with things exceeding its comprehension; to stop when it is at the utmost extent of its tether; and to sit down in a quiet ignorance of those things which, upon examination, are found beyond the reach of our capacities.”²⁴⁰ This critical enterprise delimiting the scope of human knowledge and placing limitations on those ideas of inquiry to be found outside the parameter of human cognition, a tradition begun by Descartes, will find its apogee in Kant’s “critical” philosophy. Such an enterprise is beneficial to the conduct of human action because, as Locke states, “we can find those measures, whereby a rational creature, put in that state in which man is in this world, may and ought to govern his opinions, and actions depending thereon” and “we need not to be troubled that some other things escape our knowledge.”²⁴¹ By discovering the contents, source(s) and justification of the contents of the mind, humans can govern their thoughts and actions effectively to the improvement of themselves and humankind.

Locke continues in the Cartesian tradition by suggesting that we should avoid judgment about those items in the index of human ideas that are not clear or distinct perceptions. By idea, Locke means, “whatever is meant by phantasms (Aristotle), notions, species (Aquinas) or whatever it is which can be employed about in

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Locke, *Essay*, Bk. 1, Ch. 1, Sec. 4.

²⁴¹ Ibid, Bk. 1, Ch. 1, Sec. 6.

thinking.”²⁴² Upon reviewing the contents of mental perceptions, ideas, Locke decries the theory of innate ideas stating “men, barely by the use of their natural faculties, may attain to all the knowledge they have, without the help of any innate ideas” and declaring how “unreasonable would it be to attribute several truths the impressions of nature,²⁴³ and innate ideas, when we may observe in ourselves faculties, fit to attain as easy and certain knowledge of them, as if they were originally imprinted on the mind” by experience.²⁴⁴

Developmentally, Locke speculates the mind to be entirely void of content at the moment of birth. In his words, if we consider “the mind to be, as we say, white paper, void of all characters, without any ideas” we must entertain the question; “Whence has it all the materials of reason and knowledge?”²⁴⁵ To this Locke answers “in one word, from experience.”²⁴⁶ Elaborating this one word answer, Locke continues noting “our observation employed either about external sensible objects, or about the internal operations of our minds, perceived and reflected on by ourselves, is that which supplies our understanding with *all* the materials of thinking.”²⁴⁷ From the *tabula rasa* state of infancy, we have only two sources to account for our ideas, sensible perceptions and the operations of the mind, and these two alone, account for all the material from which we draw when surveying the content of our minds.

²⁴² Ibid. Bk. 1, Ch. 1, Sec. 8. Parentheses my addition.

²⁴³ Final causes, or substantial forms.

²⁴⁴ Locke, Bk. 1, Ch. 2, Sec. 1.

²⁴⁵ Ibid. Bk. 1, Ch. 2, Sec. 2.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Ibid, emphasis added.

The source for “most of the ideas we have” depend on the deliverances of the senses and by this Locke names sensation as the chief source of our ideas.²⁴⁸ The second source Locke names under the appellation of internal senses, elaborated as “perception, thinking, doubting, believing, reasoning, knowing, willing, and all the different acts of our own minds.”²⁴⁹ Summarizing his account, Locke writes;

The understanding seems to me not to have the least glimmer of any ideas, which it doth not receive from one of these two. External objects furnish the mind with the ideas of sensible qualities, which are different from perceptions they produce in us: And the mind furnishes the understanding with ideas of its own operations.²⁵⁰

Unfortunately, this is where Locke’s analysis ends. Certainly, he does continue to discuss memory and “images” lodged in the “great mass of knowledge” humans report. However, his analysis of memory merely repeats the earlier claim that the material of one of the two sources “imprint” themselves on the mind, some to such an extent that they remain as memories. Also conspicuously lacking is any explanation about the process by which either source of knowledge is transformed into ideas available by inspection of the mind. At this point in his analysis Locke turns to a developmental narrative to explain how memory is often not the object of explicit awareness and he employs this heuristic to aid in arguing against the innate ideas of Descartes. But just how sensation, or even the operations of our own mind, can become ideas for employment by the mind is unaccounted. This conspicuous lack of explanation Kant will find an egregious error in the empirical position, and

²⁴⁸ Ibid. Bk. 1, Ch. 2, Sec. 3.

²⁴⁹ Locke, *Essay*, Bk. 1. Ch. 2, Sec. 4.

²⁵⁰ Ibid. Bk. 1, Ch. 2, Sec. 5.

will work to explain the means by which the deliverances of the senses are first collated and then transformed for application with the concepts of the understanding. Locke is not, however without a successor, who defends the empirical model. To assist in determining how the empiricist position explains this process we must turn to the philosophy of Hume.

David Hume assumes the mantle of empiricist philosophy, elaborating and narrowing the role of experience in concept/idea formation, while carrying the empiricists' doctrine of experience as the sole sponsor of concepts to its logical and skeptical conclusion.²⁵¹ In *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* and *Treatise on Human Nature*, Hume, following Locke, concedes the ordinary distinction between awareness of X in perception (sensation) and awareness of Y in thought, but denies any actual difference between the two. The difference between these two representations is a matter of degree and not of kind. Both forms of representation are attending to the objects of consciousness, thus sense perception is really no immediate sensation, but, rather, attending to the representation presented by sensation for scrutiny by the mind. Hume's concession to the perceived difference

²⁵¹ Cambridge Companion to Hume, p.5. David Fate Norton prefers to characterize Hume as a post-skeptical philosopher. His argument suggests that Hume's skepticism is the continuation of the kind found in Berkeley and Locke. His claim is that Hume is not concerned with the existence of an "outer" world, and by beginning his inquiry with the objects of consciousness, perceptions, he concedes an already established skepticism, and circumvents discussion of the causes of ideas. This interpretation may possess some historical merit, but it overlooks Hume's claim we must be able to account for the source of impressions that will subsequently be the causes of ideas. In Norton's favor is Hume's distinction between an understanding of human cognition as it functions and the resources for its functioning. Hume himself suggests that the question concerning the deliverances of the senses and how these come about be left to "anatomy and natural philosophy." Cf. Norton in *Cambridge Companion to Hume*; also *Treatise* Bk. 2, Part 2, Sec. 2, p. 275-276.

regards the force and vivacity that typifies either kind of perception.²⁵² “The less forcible and lively are commonly denominated *Thoughts* or *Ideas*.”²⁵³ The more forceful and lively representations want for a name, but Hume proposes we call them impressions. “By the term *impression*, then, I mean all our more lively perceptions, when we hear, or see, or feel, or love, or hate, or *desire*, will.”²⁵⁴ According to his groupings, Hume affords both “internal” as well as “external” perceptions, objects of consciousness like emotion and pain, or sensations, respectively, to the status of perception. But, moreover, ideas, presumably the objects of “internal” perceptions, must also be included in the set of objects designated as perception, as humans can attend to either lively internal/external states as well as insensible ideas. Hume agrees with Locke’s affirmation that: “To ask at what time a man first has any ideas is to ask when he begins to perceive; having ideas and perception being the same thing.”²⁵⁵

The unification of these two seemingly different objects of consciousness, however, is not limited to merely the difference of degree. In his opening discussion of impressions and ideas, Hume remarks that, “there is another division of our perceptions which it will be convenient to observe,” the division is into simple and complex [perceptions].²⁵⁶ Explaining this distinction, Hume continues stating;

“Simple perceptions or impressions and ideas are such that admit of no distinction or

²⁵² Hume here is again employing the ambiguity of the term perception, but is denying the ambiguity makes any substantial difference, rather, one merely of degree. Cf. David Hume *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* ed. Flew (LaSalle, IL: Open Court, 1993) p. 63. Hume also concedes that the liveliest of ideas is still inferior to the dullest sensation. Cf. also Cambridge, p. 6.

²⁵³ Hume, *Enquiry*, p. 64; also *A Treatise on Human Nature* ed. L.A. Selby-Bigge 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978) Bk. 1, Part 1, Sec. 1, p. 1.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁵ Locke, Bk. 2, Ch. 1, Sec. 9.

²⁵⁶ Hume, *Treatise* Bk. 1, Part 1, Sec. 1, p. 2.

separation. The complex are contrary to these, and may be distinguished into parts.”²⁵⁷ Historically, we have already experienced this distinction with the medieval doctrine of discreet sensibles and common sensibles. If one were to focus on only the color of sugar, one encounters a simple impression—the white of refined, the brown of unrefined sugar. But if one attends to the various qualities that make up sugar, color, granularity, sweetness—sugar with its multivarious qualities attributed to such—one receives a complex impression. Simple impressions are the deliverances of a single sense datum through the medium of a particular sense faculty, complex impressions are the combination/collation of multiple sense data through multiple sense faculties. Ideas, will likewise follow this characterization. When one is aware of one’s perception of the color of sugar (especially if sugar is not immediately present) one will attend to a simple idea, and so for the combination of qualities that one attributes to the idea of sugar, a complex idea. Furthermore, Hume claims that “all simple ideas and impressions resemble each other.”²⁵⁸ Complex ideas and impressions, however, seem to vary considerably in resemblance. While it is possible for impressions and ideas to resemble one another, often other faculties intercede to prevent perfect correspondence. Faculties such as memory, imagination, attentiveness and abstract conceptualization (discursive thinking) may prevent the translation of complex impressions into representative ideas with the veracity found at the level of simples. This observation leads Hume to consider the connection between the two.

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ Hume, *Treatise* Bk. 1, Part 1, Sec. 1, p. 4; also *Enquiry* Sec. 2, p. 64

Because every impression, simple or complex, has a correspondent idea, and not every idea has a correspondent impression e.g. gold mountains, Hume concludes that “impressions are the causes of our ideas, not our ideas of our impressions.”²⁵⁹ In another formulation, Hume states: Ideas are “derived either from our outward or inward sentiment.”²⁶⁰ And the source for these outward or inward sentiments is experience.²⁶¹ The terminological difference allows Hume to discuss not merely ideas of “outer” objects, but, also, passions and moral sentiments one may experience. The work Hume’s distinctions, a difference of degree yet similarity in kind, perform is to note the similarity and connection as well as the source for all impressions and ideas. Regardless of the force or vivacity found in any impression or idea, experience is the true source, foundation in Hume’s words, for either species of representation. If one gains impressions from sense experience and then form ideas based upon impressions, Hume must consider the difference between impressions and ideas, and elaborate just what he means by the term idea. Moreover, because “all our ideas or more feeble perceptions are copies of our impressions or more lively ones,”²⁶² Hume must be able to explain the process by which ideas are generated, as well as the way by which one can distinguish between faithful and unreliable copies of impressions. These two questions intertwine, and, as it turns out, his answer to the first question renders any answer to the second impotent.

²⁵⁹ Ibid., Bk. 1, Part 1, Sec. 1, p. 5.

²⁶⁰ Hume, *Enquiry*, p. 65.

²⁶¹ Ibid., p. 77.

²⁶² Ibid. 65.

Hume's answer to the first question resembles the empiricist approach found in Aristotle. The suggestion of that the deliverances of the senses impress upon the mind some particular, employable through modified means, results from the metaphorical sense of impression found in Hume. Mary Warnock observes that "perhaps, in Hume's case, the word 'impression' itself, with its metaphorical sense of pressing one seal onto one piece of wax, made it easier to overlook all such possible ambiguities."²⁶³ Following Aristotle and empiricist philosophy, Hume's answer appears to be the imagination. The deliverances of the senses are taken up by the imagination which impresses the form/shape of the deliverances of the senses in the form of an image, thus founding a storehouse of impressions, memory, by which these impressions are then susceptible to evaluation by human intellect as image-idea. Warnock continues with the metaphor of impressions in wax, stating that, at this initial stage of explanation, Hume "defines ideas as images. From the outset, then, [Hume] regards imagination, the image-making faculty, as playing a crucial role in our thinking."²⁶⁴

One perceives, Hume suggests, the representations of these immediate deliverances, impressions, and moreover, humans have the ability to recall impressions of deliverances past by means of memory. Thus Hume replies to questions regarding impressions and ideas, the representation of impressions and the source of ideas by citing the imagination as the mediator between the deliverances of the senses and the impressions subsequently formed, and also originator of the ideas

²⁶³ Hume himself employs the metaphor found in Aristotle of the signet ring impressing its form on a wax tablet. Cf. Warnock, p. 16.

²⁶⁴ Warnock, p. 15.

which we recall through the use of memory; thereby affirming his original argument that impressions cause ideas and ideas are mere copies. These ideas stored as memories, however, are not the forceful and lively impressions delivered by the senses, thus affirming Hume's claim of difference in degree. They are, rather, ideas stored in the memory, less forceful and less lively owing to the debt of time and the copied nature of ideas no longer immediately present for evaluation.

This response, however, presents an ambiguity between the impressions made upon/by the imagination and the ideas generated by the mimetic function of the imagination in the translation of impressions to ideas. If it is the case that the impressions are transformed by the imagination into a form susceptible to evaluation of the mind, are these impressions ideas or still merely impressions? Hume would have the deliverances of the senses be impressions available for inspection of the mind in all their immediate force and violence. Whereas this copying process, necessary to support his argument for ideas, would suggest that all transformation, copying, of impressions immediately alter the impression into an idea. It would seem that all we have are ideas available for evaluation by the mind, and that the representations afforded by impressions can never be accessed directly by thinking.²⁶⁵ This answer, should it prove tenable, may in fact be mitigated somewhat by citing the differences in immediacy and also difference between particular and abstract ideas. Indeed, that is what Hume's distinction between impressions and ideas implies.

²⁶⁵ Perhaps this is why Hume continues the ambiguity of perception found in Descartes and considers both as forms of perception—those of “external” objects and “internal objects” of consciousness—and appeals to experience to describe the process by which human cognition deals with its environment or the objects of deliberation.

Impressions are the immediate presentation of the deliverances of the senses, and ideas are removed, although “caused”, from immediate experience. Impressions of sensation are always particular and immediate; ideas of sensation are always the presentation of the absent object. But impressions and ideas of sensible objects do not exhaust Hume’s inventory of the human mind. Beyond impressions and ideas of sensation, Hume also delineates impressions and ideas of reflection from those of sense experience. The latter describe the connection of the “outer” with the “inner”, the former describe the operations of the inner life of the mind.

Regarding the connection between ideas and imagination in reflection, Hume observes that that “nothing, at first view, may seem more unbounded than the thought of man. To form monsters, and join incongruous shapes and appearances, costs the imagination no more trouble than to conceive the most natural and familiar objects.”²⁶⁶ The imagination, in this pejorative sense, may provide enumerable ideas which may have their basis in experience, yet have no corresponding impression. And yet, Hume continues, the imagination in its ordinary, non-fantastic, employment “is really confined within very narrow limits, and that all this creative power of the mind amounts to no more than the faculty of compounding, transposing, augmenting, or diminishing the materials afforded us by the senses and experience.”²⁶⁷ The imagination, according to Hume, even in the activity of idea generation, is merely reproductive, employing the materials afforded by experience and sensation. At times the imagination may combine simple ideas to produce monstrosities, but, more

²⁶⁶ Hume, *Enquiry*, 64.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

often, the imagination is employed in the generation of ideas that appear to serve faithfully the process of translating impressions into ideas.

Ideas are copies of impressions, losing the force and vivacity of immediate representation, and stored in memory for later use. But Hume is not satisfied with merely observing the nature of ideas and their connection with impressions. To determine how human understanding operates, he also elaborates the use of ideas and the trends we find when observing how ideas are connected. To determine these operations, Hume will rely, once again, on the imagination.

Hume begins Book 1, Part 1, Section 4 of his *Treatise* with the declaration:

As all simple ideas may be separated by the imagination, and may be united again in what form it pleases, nothing would be more unaccountable than the operations of that faculty, were it not guided by some universal principles, which render it in some measure, uniform with itself in all times and places.²⁶⁸

Because of the imagination's ability to unify, separate, add, and delete simple ideas from complex ideas, Hume finds it necessary to determine the rules by which the imagination associates ideas. If the production of complex ideas were left to chance, the imagination is an unruly faculty that produces monstrosities. But, Hume contends, we seem to find regularity with the associations of ideas found in reflection. Simply stated, there are three manners by which one idea is conveyed from one to another; resemblance, contiguity in time or place, and cause and effect.²⁶⁹ Hume does not deem it necessary to prove these three manners, believing them to be evident in what amounts to a de facto explanation of human psychology. He cites common

²⁶⁸ Hume, *Treatise* Bk. 1, Part 1, Sec. 4, p. 10.

²⁶⁹ Ibid. p. 11; also *Enquiry* p. 70.

examples demonstrating that if one idea resembles another it will bring forward from memory a similar idea, or that when thinking of a particular image from an event at a specific time and place one will naturally summon other images from a proximal period. Hume does not even deem controversial that humans reason according to cause and effect. What he does, however, is to call into question the metaphysical claims of cause and effect, thereby showing that even the associations of ideas are governed by beliefs, feelings and custom, which themselves are founded on creative attachments afforded by the imagination. To determine actual necessary connection between any two ideas representing events is impossible. According to Hume, “every effect is a distinct event from its cause”²⁷⁰ and as such it is impossible to determine a priori, by necessity, the cause of any effect. “In vain, therefore should we pretend to determine any single event, or infer any cause from any effect, without the assistance of observation and experience.”²⁷¹ But, it turns out, humans do think according to cause and effect, even when considering the other ways ideas relate²⁷² to one another; that is, we often believe the resemblance of one idea to another to be the cause of its recollection. The ways ideas relate together are in some way connected to the idea of cause and effect. But, because we cannot determine the causes of effects, we are left with no stable principle by which to determine how we associate ideas. Hume’s dissatisfaction with this state of affairs is apparent, and he proceeds to describe the assignation of causal relations based upon belief and feeling.

²⁷⁰ Hume, *Enquiry* Sec. 4, Part 1. p. 75; also *Treatise* Bk. 1, Part 3, Sec. 3, p. 80.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*

²⁷² Not to be confused with “relations of ideas” as delineated by Hume, i.e. geometry, algebra and arithmetic- which, owing to their analytic nature to admit of “certainty and evidence.” Cf. *Enquiry*, p. 71. What Hume is dealing with in the ways ideas relate to one another are matters of fact, experiences that do not admit a contradiction when negated.

That we make causal connections, Hume takes as phenomenologically evident. What happens in the process of causal ascription is fundamentally connected with the projection of the belief that the regularity we find in experience is causal. Belief “is produced by a number of past impressions and conjunctions.”²⁷³ Repetition and the attendant feeling of regularity are the sources for belief, and to this operation, Hume gives the name custom.²⁷⁴ Custom, it turns out, is the source for our ascription for the associations of ideas, impressions and the so-called knowledge that is subsequent on these operations. But just how beliefs and attendant feelings are attributed to regularity falls upon the imagination. The imagination, broadly construed, is the means by which we project causal connections onto either a series of impressions or ideas, in the absence of any proof for a connection between antecedent and consequent. We are led to believe in a connection of the two by resemblance and contiguity and determine the connection to be causal. Connecting two events causally, is the product of the imaginative connection based on these two basic principles of idea relations.

At this point it is pertinent to separate Hume’s narrow definition of imagination from the imaginative process involved in the projection of causal relations. Hume chiefly describes the imagination and its products as fancy, that unreliable and dubious faculty that provides ideas with only the slightest force and vivacity, which we characteristically stigmatize with epistemic doubt. Objects of fancy, those monstrosities the blatantly recombinant imagination can conjure, have

²⁷³ Hume *Treatise* Bk. 1, Part 3, Sec. 8, p. 102.

²⁷⁴ Hume, *Enquiry* Sec. 4, Part 1. p. 74; also *Treatise* Bk. 1 Part 3 Sec. VIII, p. 104.

little bearing on our impressions, other than their derivative and creative nature dependant upon those original data of experience. Hume will grant that one can “experience” ideas of fancy as reflective ideas, but they do not carry the epistemic weight of simple impressions, those supposedly connecting the “inner” mental realm with the “external” world of objects in sensible experience. Imagination in the larger sense I am indicating here is the way we draw connections between any ideas or impressions. In one of his most classic examples, Hume addresses the epistemic problem such dependency on the imagination elicits, the question of personal identity.

Hume expends some energy in describing the difficulties of attributing identity to a single impression experienced successively. Simple sense impression may have a simple idea corresponding, one which is then available to flights of fancy. The connection of impression to idea is, for Hume, imagistic, and thus imaginative. But, more importantly, the connection of one impression, translated to an idea, with another impression, even of the same object, then translated into another idea, and the determination that the object of these impressions is the same—that is, the judgment in the realm of ideas, of identity—must also be imaginative. The association of ideas, even as identical, is a process of resemblance, contiguity and causal connection, and is immanently under the auspices of imaginative connections. All the functions of associations are products of imaginative projection. Hume is unwilling to concede the identity of an external object given discreet impressions, no matter how alike they may seem in resemblance and contiguity. This being the case, he should be and also is unwilling to determine identity even in the mental sphere alone. The tenuous

connections of ideas leads Hume to the radical skepticism that marks his philosophy as the logical conclusion of the empirical tradition. Interesting to note here is that, according to Hume, all the determinations humans make, all judgments we pass, are the product of an uncritical feeling, from which arises a belief, and thus the custom or habit we have of making inferences.²⁷⁵ All human knowledge it would seem, is the product of imaginative connections being drawn between discreet sense impressions and their subsequent translation, manipulation and association in the activities of human mental life. Ideas themselves it would seem, while real, may have little connection with the world, and we are left with little epistemic verity and the specter of idealism. We have only what we project onto the world, and this is little consolation for the Scottish empiricist.

Kant, on the other hand, will accept this conceptualization of human projection onto the world. In fact, human projection of ideas provided by the understanding will characterize his philosophy. Kant, however, will attempt to distance himself from the charges of a vicious idealism, citing the difference between empirical and transcendental idealism. Moreover, the thought conceived by Hume, that causal connections are the product of human imagination and the projection of uncritical belief onto the world of objects, will have resonance in Kant as well. Kant acknowledges the difficulty in determining causal connections between empirical objects, but he will affirm the power of human projection concerning beliefs about purposiveness found in nature. This Kantian formulation of causal connections with purposes found in nature takes the form of teleological ideas, projected from the

²⁷⁵ *Treatise* Bk. 1 Part 3 Sec. VIII, pp. 98-106.

creative purposiveness found in human conceptualization. What we find in Hume's associationist psychology is a prelude to the dependence of human thinking on imagination found in Kant philosophy. Hume proposes and fails to provide the rules of the imagination, opting to explain such a mechanism according to the de facto explanations of contiguity, constant conjunction and cause and effect found in associationist psychology. Kant will push the question further, looking for a de jure explanation for the powers, rules, and application of the categories. He inevitably answers these questions in terms of the imagination, while noting and approving of the reproductive capacity of the imagination found in Hume.

Chapter 5: Imagination in Kant's Architectonic

Kantian Concerns

As I stated at the opening of this work, the chief topic for discussion is the imagination in the works of Immanuel Kant, and it is to this topic I now wish to turn. The programmatic at this point is to draw several of the themes encountered in the aforementioned history of the imagination and to trace the ways in which they inform Kant's philosophy and to understand how Kant transforms the philosophical tradition that came before him. One tenet that has underwritten and perhaps justified the history is that Kant's use of the imagination is well-informed and radical. I have chosen to introduce the imagination as the liaison between the understanding and the sensibility, of the worlds of mental representations and the world of objects as delivered by the senses, respectively. I have pursued this course to demonstrate the precedence found in the history of philosophy that informs Kant's dualism between sensibility and understanding. Whether or not this is representative of Kant's understanding is yet to be determined, but, for now, I wish to affirm the connection.

For Kant, the connection between the two stems of human knowledge, must be determined. How are concepts and intuitions brought together to form knowledge? This, in turn, will elicit a discussion of the objective reality and objective validity of Kant's categories, among other issues, and will demand

justification for judgments that claim epistemic verity. This in turn will elicit questions concerning the status, function and rules of operation by which the imagination exercises its task. This reported intent might imply a narrow confine to the 1st Critique, but, I believe, such an approach is short-sighted. Kant's employment of the imagination is not merely limited to epistemic claims concerning the connection of human thinking/judging to objects. The imagination figures prominently in all aspects of connecting sensibility with the understanding in judgments, whether of metaphysical, epistemic, moral or aesthetic. When it comes to determining the appropriateness of applying a priori categories to the deliverances of the senses, judgment is the central issue, and in the 3rd Critique judgment is the focus of concern. Therefore, concern with the 3rd Critique and its explicit treatment of the imagination is also in order. Furthermore, a look to the 2nd Critique is in store to determine the role of imagination, if any, in moral judgments. This integrationist approach, which focuses on the "critical" Kant while attending to the "pre-critical" and "post-critical" works is fraught with difficulties, some of which I would like to list and briefly explain here, in order to orient the interpretive strategy as well as demonstrate the often protracted fight in Kant scholarship.

a) The first, and perhaps most disconcerting, problem with this proposed study is the possibility to present an inaccurate, superficial and incomplete account of Kant's imagination, thus misrepresenting what such a faculty plays in his thought. Because I am attempting to trace the employment of imagination in Kant's philosophy,

attending to the use, modification, and perhaps even, development of such a theme in Kant's corpus, the materials available are numerous and often seemingly contradictory. The purpose of this study is not to overlook, dismiss, marginalize or explain away what might appear as conflicts or contradictions. The purpose is to attempt a unifying theme that can ground Kant's philosophical use of imagination and to see its place in the overarching issues of his work. Addressing the seeming inconsistencies and attempting to find a grounding by which Kant can maintain his arguments is the task I set before myself. The task is admittedly a large one, but one which I believe attainable, if one attends to the over-riding concern of elaborating the role of imagination in judgments, that is, in the origins of the categories of the understanding and their connection with the deliverances of the senses in the several types of judgments Kant enumerates.

This approach finds sympathy, not only with the pre-critical Kant and his metaphysical inquiries, but with the post-critical period and Kant's concerns with unifying his system. The former, albeit the more rationalist approach of the Leibniz-Wolffian school, does concern itself with the origins of the contents of the "inner" realm. In these works, Kant explores the basic principles that govern human thinking e.g. the principles of non-contradiction, succession and simultaneity such as those found in the *New Elucidations*. The post-critical period, cited as Kant's works in the years following 1792, finds an attempted summary in the *Opus Postumum* and this work attempts to bring together the insight of the Critiques and scientific exploration of the empirical world; that is, practical application of the insights found in the

critical period and the deliverances of the senses found in scientific inquiry. The critical period, it would seem, is book-ended by the very concerns of the Critiques themselves. The work accomplished here is to establish a core doctrine of the imagination in the Critiques, that further research into the connectivity of Kant's works may find traction.

b) A second concern with such a study is the terminological shifts we find throughout Kant's lifetime. Kant's use of imagination found in the pre-critical period are in alignment with the typical use found in the history of philosophy. In *Dreams of a Spirit Seeker*, Kant employs the Latinate *focus imaginarius* to describe the process by which impressions of external bodies produce spatial images available to judgments by the understanding.²⁷⁶ And while this process is necessary to coordinate "inner" representations with "outer" objects, the opportunity for figments of the fantastical imagination arises. Kant claims it is quite necessary that one "cannot, as long as [one] is awake, fail to distinguish my imaginings, as the figments of my own imagination, from the impressions of the senses."²⁷⁷ In Kant's own employment of imagination in this work, he subscribes to the general tendency in the history of philosophy to concede the necessity of the imagination, while cautioning his audience to the pernicious nature of fantastical imagination.²⁷⁸ At this point Kant does glimpse

²⁷⁶ Kant, *Dreams of a Spirit Seeker* Academy, 2:345 and 2:347..

²⁷⁷ Ibid.

²⁷⁸ Failing to differentiate between the image-making function of imagination and the fantastical employ of the imagination is to fall victim to "that type of mental disturbance which is called madness, and which, if it is more serious, is derangement." 2:346. In *Dreams*, Kant attributes those visions of shamans, spirit-seekers and, in particular, to Emmanuel Swedenborg, to just such a mistake. Cf. Kuehn, pp. 170-1.

the necessity of imagination, without providing much detail in the role it will play in connecting sensibility with understanding. At this early stage in his development, Kant continues the standard historical use of the imagination, one that concedes its employment, but condemns the imagination in its misapplied use. Kant will never truly deviate from this basic position, hence his connection with the history of the imagination. What Kant will develop in his mature writings, however, is insight into the means by which the imagination will perform its role as liaison, giving the imagination its proper due, while cautioning against its overuse, into inquiries that human reason “is not able to ignore,” but which “it also not able to answer.”²⁷⁹

In the critical period Kant will discuss several different imaginations; the reproductive imagination, the productive imagination, the transcendental imagination, and, it has been argued, even replaces the faculty of sensibility in the 3rd Critique with the term “imagination” itself. In this effort to discuss the imagination, these various uses must be brought into relief, providing distinctions as Kant presents them, but also uniting them under a general use of imagination. The insights found in the critical period are also marked by a shift in linguistic usage. Kant does employ the Latinate “*imaginatio*”, but more commonly employs the German term “*Einbildungskraft*.” The shift from Latin to German in his writing coincides with a deeper insight into the formative power of imagination. The shift to his native language and his subsequent philosophical insights may be attributed in part to his newfound critical programmatic, but may also be a shift from the image centered *imaginatio* to a power of creating, building and culture, *Einbildungskraft*. While

²⁷⁹ CPR Avii.

keeping the image-making function of the historical reproductive imagination, Kant gains new respect for the formative and creative powers of imagination. And even though Kant finds new respect for the imagination in the critical period, he still cautions against overuse of imagination in speculative metaphysics.

Imagination does not figure into Kant's post-critical thought too largely. One explanation for this is that much of his published works are re-figurations of lectures and previously written manuscripts. The attention of these works are often to "scientific" inquiries, notably his *Anthropology* and *Opus Postumum*. What we find in these works is rare mention of the imagination, often in a derogatory tone. However, what insight we find into the imagination is its application in empirical pursuits. After the critical work is accomplished in the three *Critiques*, Kant finds no need to discuss the imagination, but attends to the application of the processes discovered earlier. Following Manfred Kuehn, I would like to argue that Kant may develop many of his ideas, but does not deviate too greatly from his overall quest to establish metaphysics as a secure science and to explore the appropriate realms for human inquiry, both scientific and moral.

c) A third and deep concern for any study is the interpretation of the major thinker the author brings to his analysis. The question of concern is: Just what Kant are you reading? This particular issue has become one aspect of the cottage industry that is Kant scholarship. For authors with overriding epistemic concerns, the 1st *Critique* is the primary focus and support for argumentation is drawn chiefly from this text. For

those interested in moral or aesthetic issues, the texts primarily sought are the 2nd *Critique* and *Groundwork*, and 3rd *Critique*, respectively. Typically, one finds these divisions demarcated by an ocean or channel. Anglo-American interpretations, with their main focus on epistemology, often attempt to separate “the analytic argument” from Kant’s transcendental idealism.²⁸⁰ More European interpretations that focus on aesthetic and moral dimensions often separate themselves from Kant’s 1st *Critique* emphasizing a development or change in Kant’s position.²⁸¹ When comparing Anglo-American interpretations with those more European, one often finds a sharp contrast between strict analytic approaches that attempt to reconstruct Kant’s arguments and evaluate them accordingly and more historical approach that attempts to contextualize the arguments found in Kant’s work. Recently, however, we find overtures to bridge the gap between these two Kants, notably in the works of Beatrice Longuenesse and Hannah Ginsborg.

These two branches of Kant scholarship, while geographically significant, find their radical division in the immediate reaction to Kant’s critical works. The European group finds itself charting the historical progression of Kant’s ideas through German Idealism and the Southwest school of interpretation. The Anglo-American trend follows a more logical trajectory through the works of Frege and the neo-Kantianism that arose in the early 20th Century through the Marburg school of

²⁸⁰ Authors such as P.F. Strawson and H.A. Prichard present a “standard” interpretation that purports to demonstrate the incoherence of Kant’s project, and yet reserving room to extract the analytic arguments that deem they to be correct in Kant’s work. Cf. *The Bounds of Sense* p. 15-16.

²⁸¹ This group appears less exclusive in their analysis of Kant. Often short digressions into Kant’s 1st *Critique* and analysis of judgment are afforded by those authors who wish to treat the *Critique of Judgment* properly. Of course, there are exceptions to these generalized statements about Kant scholars.

interpretation.²⁸² Moreover, at the heart of the division between interpretive strategies is a conflict concerning which version of the 1st *Critique* is Kant's more considered view. Noting Kant completely revised several sections, provided an entirely new preface, introduction, and transcendental deduction, along with additions to his refutation of idealism and a, perhaps, radical and contradictory reformulation of his analogies of experience, the B-edition contains what some consider to be considerable differences from the A-edition. The most significant of these changes, so the debate contends, is Kant's rewriting of the transcendental deduction. This question appears to have become one of the most divisive, if not the most, among Kant scholarship. The Anglo-American tradition argues that Kant's considered view is the B-edition. After its initial publication, subsequent criticism in the literature, notably the Garve-Feder review, and reaction, Kant reformulates the heart of his philosophical enterprise, the transcendental deduction, in order to more clearly distinguish himself from antecedent forms of idealism. In order to distance his transcendental idealism from the metaphysical or naïve idealism of Berkeley, Kant rewrites the transcendental deduction and adds a refutation of idealism. The Southwest school of interpretation, broadly the more European interpretation, countenances this argument, but cites the originality and insightfulness found in the A-edition transcendental deduction. Such an interpretation argues that the original

²⁸² The Marburg school, founded by Hermann Cohen and closely associated with Paul Natorp and Ernst Cassirer, favor a reading of Kant that emphasizes interpretations that adhere more closely to a reading that supports a Fregean, positivistic, logical framework that emphasizes epistemic concerns over those metaphysical. The Southwest school, founded by Wilhelm Windelband and continued by Henrich Rickert, emphasizes the substantive logic described by Kant as transcendental logic. Hegel and the German Idealists consider themselves elaborators of this transcendental logic and emphasize the dialectical, metaphysical content over the formal, general logic favored by the Marburg school. Cf. Michael Friedman's *The Parting of the Ways* (Chicago: Open Court) 2000.

formulation is the truer expression of Kant's philosophical position, and that the reformulation is merely an attempt to allay critics who misunderstood the original, and thus is Kantian, but not Kant's considered view. The B-edition, they contend, is a reaction to criticism, and perhaps an attempt at popularization, not the advancement of his ground-breaking philosophical insight. The protracted debate is typically resolved by favoring one edition over the other and explaining away the discrepancies found between the two by subsuming one under the other.

Such interpretive strategies appear to be a plausible way to resolve the differences between the different versions. But to overlook the insight of one edition in favor of the other is to tacitly concede that Kant changes his position between 1781 and 1787. This is not the approach I favor in my interpretation of Kant. Certainly the A-edition of the transcendental deduction has advantages over the B-edition. The attention to detail, the continuity of terminology and the detailed connection and progression from the Transcendental Aesthetic is more pronounced. And yet, the B-edition appears to enlarge the scope, while omitting some of the details found in A-edition. By locating the insights and elaborating the continuity and coherence between the two editions, one can, I believe, not only determine the role of imagination in cognition, but also provide insight into the different ways one can putatively employ such a faculty. In addition to the synthetic function of imagination in apprehension, reproduction and recognition of the deliverances of the senses, as found in the A-edition, Kant will also distinguish between intellectual and figurative syntheses in the B-edition. Both versions of the transcendental deduction must be

taken into account in order to elaborate the comprehensive scope of imagination in Kant's philosophy. Thus, while I favor the A-edition for its insight and originality, I also concede the advancements made in the B-edition and its attempt to bring the radical insight from the earlier version into discussion with the philosophical conceptualizations of Kant's time.

By pursuing this approach I consider myself aligned more with the Southwest school of Kantian interpretation, highlighted and developed in philosophers such as Martin Heidegger, George Sherover, Martin Weatherston and Dieter Henrich, but also admit the benefit of exploring bracing examinations of Kant's arguments as found in the Anglo-American tradition. Such is the spirit I find in Henry Allison's work *Kant's Transcendental Idealism* and Longuenesse's *Kant and the Capacity to Judge*, a commitment to an explanation and defense of Kant's work, but a commitment to examining Kant's arguments and a willingness to point out when they do not achieve what he believed them have accomplished.²⁸³ Perhaps, the core of the argument for the radical use of the imagination in Kant's philosophy is just such a critique. Heidegger has pointed out (and the claim has been much discussed) that Kant may have glimpsed the truly remarkable place the imagination occupies in Kant's transcendental arguments, but that he shrank back from the abyss—and I wish to assume just such a stance.²⁸⁴ But rather than accepting Heidegger's often confusing analysis of imagination, I would like to offer my own: the imagination does occupy a central place in Kant's critical philosophy, in fact, it can even be employed

²⁸³ Allison, Henry *Kant's Transcendental Idealism* (New Haven, Mass: Yale University Press) 1983.

²⁸⁴ Heidegger, Martin *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* 5th ed. trans. Richard Taft (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997) p. 112.

to provide a transcendental deduction of the pure concepts, categories, of the understanding. Kant's own transcendental deduction does not provide such an explanation for the pure concepts and, this has been argued, presents a failure of the most critical portion of Kant's work. I concede that what the transcendental deduction provides is not exactly what the name implies, but the work provided in this section is also necessary in order to complete Kant's task in providing such a more straightforward deduction of pure concepts themselves. Kant's deduction is not a failure, as most Anglo-American scholarship suggests, but also does not go far enough, as Heidegger claims.

In light of these difficulties in scope and interpretation, I propose to recognize them here at the outset and to address such concerns as they arise. Within the analysis of the *Critique of Pure Reason* alone, this last interpretive concern looms large. In attempting to draw connections between Kant's works, terminological and continuity issues arise. These concerns cannot be ameliorated at one single insistence, but only by being faithful and charitable to Kant's own writings, while attempting to critique, develop and draw the connections implicit in his works.

Kant's Concern: Objective Validity

As we have seen from the history, there is an overriding concern with the nature of our objects of thought and their purported connection with the objects these appearances claim to represent. Beginning with Plato, we find the epistemic issue, whether representations faithfully present the objects of experience, central to concerns regarding judgments of our experience. The question appears to be: can we claim that the concepts employed in judgment “map on” to objects we experience through sensation? This issue arises from concerns with the source of our concepts. Kant himself attempts to combat rationalist speculation in the guise of idealism by bringing this very question to light. He asks: “how *subjective conditions of thought*” (read concepts, for Kant pure concepts) “can have *objective validity*, that is, can furnish conditions of the possibility of all knowledge of objects.”²⁸⁵ In other words, Kant wonders how it is possible that concepts, those representations found in distinctly human-rational cognition, can provide a legitimate ground for all judgments, especially judgments concerning objects of experience.

What is central to this question is at the very heart of traditional criticisms of idealism and the historical concern with the legitimacy of the concepts we employ to describe our world. This concern highlights the difficulty of claiming veracity in our conceptualization if there are indeed subjective elements in the concepts themselves. For Plato, the process by which we form images, representations, is derivative from objects more real than the images themselves, thus representations lack the standing

²⁸⁵ A89-90, emphasis in the original.

required to be called true judgments of objects. For the broadly empirical outlook, all our concepts are derivative from the objects of experience, and empiricism blindly puts faith in veritative representation, concepts, that present objects. The former situation leaves human judgments about the world in an inferior position and the inability to form true judgments about anything whatsoever. The latter situation leaves no tribunal by which we can justify that the concepts are indeed faithful to the objects of experience. Kant will point out that neither position accurately accounts for the subjective conditions to which all human cognition must conform. Hence they both fall short of providing a solution to the dilemma concerning objective validity. If the rationalist approach concedes the distinctly human orientation to judgments, Kant will object, all judgments face the prospect of being ideal constructs with no connection to objects of experience. If the empirical approach contends that all concepts are derived from experience, there is no guarantee that concepts are faithful to the objects. By assuming a middle ground between the two positions, Kant concedes the subjective conditions that determine conceptualization while affirming a connection with objects of experience. Kant can and will claim transcendental ideality while simultaneously affirming empirical reality. However, by pursuing such a middle path, Kant produces for himself the added difficulty required by such a strategy. Kant must argue for the necessity and a priori nature of the subjective conditions of human cognition as well as provide an explanation for how the concepts connect with objects of experience. Objective validity, for Kant, will be the source of his greatest labor.

To put the issue in perspective for Kant's philosophy, a few reminders about certain elements of his Copernican position need to be elaborated. For Kant, cognition is comprised of two elements, a passive and active component—the deliverances of the senses, through the sensibility, by means of intuitions, and the organization of the deliverances by an a priori conceptual framework found in the understanding, the categories.²⁸⁶ According to Kant's picture, all knowledge, that is, all judgments,²⁸⁷ are comprised of these two elements, subjective conditions and objective conditions. But this distinction may lead to confusion. Subjective conditions for Kant are not personal, perspectival concepts dependent upon the subject's emotional or historical situation. They are, rather, a priori conditions, both as forms of intuitions and as pure categories, necessary for the possibility of knowledge or experience at all. In Kant's words, "they relate of necessity and a priori to objects of experience, for the reason that only by means of them can any objects whatsoever of experience be thought."²⁸⁸ With this formulation, Kant can address the concerns of an illusory speculative idealism; the structural framework, the pure concepts, categories, are necessary for an object to appear (to be represented in thinking) at all and any further concerns between the object as it appears in experience and what the object truly is is moot. Because of the dual components that comprise human experience, there can be no connection to the so-called truly real object—that is, understood as a transcendental reality. What humans have is a

²⁸⁶ A93/B125.

²⁸⁷²⁸⁷ This is a rather bold claim. All judgments are considered knowledge, even logical judgments. This implies that even logical judgments must have both sensibility and understanding involved.

²⁸⁸ A93/B126.

phenomenal representation, not the object or thing in itself.²⁸⁹ By answering the Platonic/speculative question in this way—that is, by arguing that all experience is distinctly human-rational experience and there is no access to a transcendent reality to which humans may aspire—Kant can settle the historical question raised by Plato, Augustine and Aquinas concerning reality and faithful judgments of such. Reality, for Kant, is the experience that humans have, and the answerability of epistemic faithfulness to transcendent being is thereby nullified. The fictive nature of human representation as presented by these historical authors is answered by delimiting what can be called knowledge concerning our experience. In so doing, the epistemic question about illusion and phantasy employed by conceptualization in contrast to the ultimate nature of reality is no longer as grave an issue.

By answering this first question in such a way, Kant exposes himself to the second, the empirical, concern. If experience is the source of human knowledge, what guarantees do we have that the concepts employed in cognition are indeed a priori concepts and not merely derived from experience? Kant answers this question by asserting and subsequently arguing for the a priori nature of the categories based upon “the conditions which the understanding requires for the synthetic unity of thought.”²⁹⁰ This claim leads Kant to formulate the question in terms of a *quaestio jure*, a legal question, demanding a deduction to explain by what right we can claim the categories are a priori and how we can justify the claim that they are the necessary

²⁸⁹ A250.

²⁹⁰ A90/B123.

elements afforded by the understanding in all judgments.²⁹¹ In other words, Kant wishes to combat the empiricist claim that all concepts are derived from experience by demonstrating the a priori, non-empirical, nature of the categories and proving them necessary for all experience. Such a strategy allows Kant to concede certain concepts we have are indeed products of experience i.e. empirical concepts, but also to affirm the necessary building blocks out of which such empirical concepts arise. By framing the question in this way, Kant can argue effectively against the empiricists' claim that all concepts are derived from experience, as well as illustrate the means (and constraints) by which we encounter, that is, judge, all experience. Furthermore, Kant believes that this course of argumentation will demonstrate the necessity of the categories and their applicability to experience, thus providing the objective necessity, in regards to the universality of the categories for rational beings, as well as the justification for their application to objects of experience. In other words, this line of argumentation will provide the objective validity of the pure concepts of the understanding, the necessity and appropriateness of the application, objective reality, in the synthesis that is human cognition. The argument that provides such a grounding for the necessity of the subjective conditions, the pure concepts, and their connection with the deliverances of the senses is found in the transcendental deduction(s).

²⁹¹ A84/B117.

Chapter 6: Imagination in the Transcendental Deduction

The A-edition

Kant's transcendental deduction in the A-edition begins with a reminder to the reader that all our representations "whether they are due to the influence of outer things, or are produced by inner causes,²⁹² whether they arise a priori, or being appearances have an empirical origin, they must all, as modifications of the mind, belong to inner sense."²⁹³ Thus time, as the formal condition of inner sense, is "quite fundamental" to all knowledge. To elaborate, Kant proceeds to provide an analysis of the three ecstasies of time—present, past, and future—and their role in knowledge acquisition.²⁹⁴ Moreover, in describing the temporal sequence necessary to acquire any representation (pure or empirical), Kant illustrates the way in which the deliverances of the senses are synthesized, both in themselves and with the concepts of the understanding in order to arrive at judgment.

The most immediate ec-stase of time, the present, is found in the instantaneous apprehension of an object as an impression "*insofar as it is contained in a single moment.*"²⁹⁵ As it is a single moment, this impression is given as an

²⁹² I.e. Hume's theory of association and idea generation/connection, including phantasies.

²⁹³ A99.

²⁹⁴ While being able to be separated and discussed, the processes by which we make judgments appears to be a simultaneity of all three ecstasies. The three-fold synthesis does not happen separately, but all at once.

²⁹⁵ Emphasis in the original. A99

immediate unity, an appearance. Because an appearance, according to Kant, is the product of the two stems of knowledge, to call such an impression an appearance might elicit some confusion.²⁹⁶ What Kant ascribes to apprehension might better be described as a first glance, or, alternatively, as the immediate presentation of a field. Such a field most likely is comprised of distinguishable components e.g. looking out over a classroom contains a number of students, desks, walls, floor ceiling, objects delineable as foreground and background etc. Yet the immediate impression of any such glance is originally presented as a unity, a whole; it is only subsequent analysis of the scene which may provide the opportunity to distinguish discrete parts. But such an analysis is only possible on the grounds that the scene was first given as a unified field, which may be then be divided. This original unity Kant names the “*synthesis of apprehension*, because it is directed immediately upon intuition, which does indeed offer a manifold, but a manifold which can never be represented as a manifold, and as contained *in a single representation* save through such a synthesis.”²⁹⁷

Without the unity of apprehension, we can provide no representation of the object of experience and could not even begin to analyze the whole in terms of its constituent parts. Such analysis would be the completion of the process by which we first receive a synthesis of apprehension and then subsequently articulate what the

²⁹⁶ Appearance is a term Kant employs with several seeming ambiguities. Appearance most often is employed as a term to describe the object that is present in apprehension—quite literally, that which appears in apprehension. In another use, Kant employs appearance to suggest a mere seeming.

²⁹⁷ Ibid. Kant seems to imply at A97 that the immediate givenness of apprehension is a synopsis, and that the connection with the concept unity is the actual synthesis of apprehension. In the B-edition it is argued for as a synopsis or sometimes a figurative synthesis. The former captures the instantaneous nature of apprehension. The latter remains a highly contentious description of the process of apprehension, but one Kant employs on various occasions.

deliverances of the senses provide. Analysis of this sort is, however, a quite advanced stage of representation and judgment. Prior to analysis of this sort, one must be presented with a unified field, and subsequently apply concepts to this field and articulate, that is, represent, what is received. Kant will maintain that, in order to have an appearance, we must unite the field of vision with our conceptual architecture so as to judge it as an experience—that is to truly have it present as an appearance about which we make claims. The product, an appearance, however, presupposes receptivity of a unified field, and this is the formative process Kant is attempting to elaborate.²⁹⁸ These immediate appearances, or perceptions, are the beginning element in the process of knowledge acquisition. Once the passive, yet surprisingly synthetic, element of apprehension obtains, categories are applied and we are able to represent what is apprehended and to articulate it as an object of immediate apprehension.

But because the whole is comprised of parts and sensibility cannot be fixed upon a unified field for any calculable duration; that is, because an appearance may contain several components, because our sense perceptions are constantly shifting, moving and exploring²⁹⁹ and because we possess several different means by which we receive deliverances, the five senses, we cannot attend to the immediacy of apprehension for longer than the instant. With the collation of several manifolds of singular impressions, another manifold arises, a successive, more explicitly temporal, manifold. Each immediate and successive appearance must be synthesized together,

²⁹⁸ These representations and articulations would seem to imply at least the 3rd ec-stasie of recognition in a concept, hence the simultaneity of the three ec-stasies.

²⁹⁹ Saccades and microsaccades provide a biological demonstration of constant attentive movement even within a single sense organ.

Kant argues. But, in order to coordinate successive appearances, “experience as such necessarily presupposes the reproducibility of appearances” so that previous appearances may be synthesized in the present for comparative and coordinative purposes.³⁰⁰ This capacity Kant entitles the synthesis of reproduction in imagination, and claims that “the synthesis of apprehension is thus inseparably bound up with the synthesis of reproduction.”³⁰¹ What Kant is attempting to describe here is the possibility of connecting each successive immediate apprehension together to form a broader notion of experience and knowledge. If left with immediate sensation and the unified field found in the single representation, no knowledge seems likely to obtain. From each successive moment our attention will shift and without the ability to reproduce, recall, the previous apprehensions, there could be no compilation and comparison, no knowledge other than that of each immediate unity and such knowledge would be evanescent and fleeting upon a following apprehension—a problem recognized by Hume. Kant demonstrates the necessity of reproduction in the example of drawing a line:

When I seek to draw a line in thought... obviously the various manifold representations that are involved must be apprehended by me in thought one after another. But if I were always to drop out of thought the preceding representations (the first parts of the line...), and did not reproduce them while advancing to those that follow, a complete representation would never be obtained...not even the purest and most elementary representations of space and time could arise.³⁰²

³⁰⁰ A102.

³⁰¹ A102.

³⁰² Ibid. It is interesting here to note that in both apprehension and reproductive imagination, Kant describes both the empirical use, but also the transcendental use of syntheses- it would appear that in order to conceptualize objects of experience or even pure concepts, these fundamental syntheses are operative.

This reproductive capacity of the imagination is the ability to represent an appearance of apprehension when the object is no longer present, one from which the moment of apprehension has passed. The synthesis of reproduction in imagination is thus an orientation to and synthesis of both past and present. That we must reproduce and synthesize past apprehensions in the present or with a present apprehension is the a priori principle that governs this fundamental aspect of experience. Without performing this act of synthesis in such a way, no experience and no knowledge is possible. Important to note here is the use Kant makes of the imagination. In this formulation, Kant does not deviate from the use we find of the imagination in the historical record. The reproduction of intuitions no longer present, we might say through memory, finds its precedent in the figures like Aristotle, Aquinas and Hume. This function of imagination is not yet the radical formulation, but stays within the parameters of the well-defined history, a role that permits the recollection of past intuitions for use in the present.

And yet, with these two ec-stasies and faculties Kant's account of experience is not complete. One further aspect, the synthesis of recognition in a concept, must be delineated. Without recognition of the synthesis of apprehension in intuition and synthesis of reproduction in imagination, that is, without an explicit formulation and articulation from the understanding, these acts would pass unknown. In Kant's words:

If we were not conscious that what we think is the same as what we thought a moment before, all reproduction in the series of representations would be useless. For it would in its present state be a

new representation which would not in any way belong to the act whereby it was to be gradually generalized. The manifold of the representation would never, therefore, form a whole, since it would lack that unity which only consciousness can impart to it.³⁰³

Without the consciousness of this unity of synthesis, no concept is available by which we can represent experience, and experience would not obtain. And yet, consciousness itself is not the goal, but is merely the transcendental requirement, of this third synthesis. This third synthesis is the combining and articulation of the former two syntheses—a syntheses of syntheses, if you will—one which is brought under the heading of a single concept. Synthesizing the apprehensions and reproductions under a single concept, that is, bringing the various elements at work in apprehension together in the awareness that they belong together, is precisely the recognition Kant is attempting to demonstrate as the third elemental requirement in cognition.³⁰⁴ In a rare moment, Kant offers a promising example to explain what he means by recognition of a concept. He suggests that when perceiving a house, unless one stands at a perfect distance that enables you to see the entirety of the house in detail, one could, and most likely does “begin with the apprehension of the roof and end with the basement.”³⁰⁵ The limited scope of our perceptions cannot yield the single entity ‘house’ without a synthesis that brings the discrete perceptions together.

³⁰³ A103. Consciousness and the explicit awareness suggested by Kant here may be emended. That there is a consciousness in which such recognition takes place is necessary. Whether or not an explicit awareness is required is questionable. What must obtain is identification of the two in a single consciousness, and to do so one requires recognition afforded by concepts.

³⁰⁴ It is always at work in the appearance and cognition of a manifold, be it the singular manifold of apprehension or the successive manifold of reproduction.

³⁰⁵ A191. Likewise, Kant concedes you could begin with the basement and end with the roof. Regardless of the order, unless one is in perfect position to intuit a house as singular field, you apprehend several appearances that must be coordinated.

But, even should we have a synthesis that brings them together, we still stand in need of a concept that can represent this collocation. By synthesizing the reproduced past apprehensions together with present apprehension under the aegis of a single, articulable concept, Kant believes we now have the ability to represent objects of experience.³⁰⁶ However, in order to articulate a single concept by which we name the phenomenon appearing, we must employ certain conceptual building blocks that establish the concept we are naming. Such building blocks are the pure concepts of the understanding. Kant's argument about recognition in a concept remains the final stage in the temporal development of empirical concepts and leads him to claim that without this final synthesis and its product, concepts (typically empirical), the process would be incomplete, for consciousness would not be able to represent, judge, what intuition is supplying. Moreover, once the concept has been articulated in consciousness, it is then available for future use. When one receives similar intuitions, one must run through the synthetic processes again, but, more importantly, one can articulate the deliverances of the senses again as 'house' and explore further comparisons between the present and former occurrences. This comparison, essential for empirical, scientific knowledge, is afforded by the ability to cognize and recognize different particular experiences under general concepts. This recognition in concepts is one futural orientation that the synthesis of recognition permits. Kant, however, will pursue the futural orientation of this final act of synthesis through

³⁰⁶ Even should we find ourselves in position to intuit the house as singularity, we must subsume the apprehension under a concept in order for us to represent the intuition in thought. The example of several apprehensions highlights, more dramatically, the need to bring apprehension(s) under a concept that the representation of an object may obtain.

another, a transcendental, argument concerning the consciousness in which these processes obtain.

Kant presents the articulation of an object by means of concepts in consciousness as the final requirement of the syntheses that are the processes that combine intuitions of sensibility and categories of the understanding. What Kant fails to provide his audience here is the means by which the categories are actually joined to the intuitions. For this Kant will add another section entitled the Schematism. For Kant's purposes at this point, he does not wish to describe how pure concepts are combined with intuitions, but, rather, to describe the fundamental processes necessary in order for judgments to obtain. With the delineation of the three types of syntheses, and the three ecstasies, Kant believes himself to have exhaustively described the possible modes of experiencing an object through immediate intuition, the collating of intuitions through memory, and the articulation of the experience as a concept, and these processes are universal and necessary for any knowledge whatsoever (either pure or empirical). But Kant is not satisfied with merely describing these processes. Such a strategy would only present a *de facto* explanation based on psychological principles, but would not provide an answer to the *quaestio jure* with which he begins the deduction. His critical programmatic demands that he ask: what must necessarily be in place for these processes to occur? For Kant, a transcendental deduction must look further, into the conditions for the possibility of representation at all, rather than merely describe the temporal conditions necessary to join concepts with intuitions. According to Kant, only consciousness can impart the unity needed to bring together

past and present as a representation under a single concept.³⁰⁷ And so Kant must turn his attention to consciousness as the ground that provides the possibility of these syntheses in the first place.

Kant admits that these syntheses often occur rather quickly and faintly, so much so that we do not realize the processes at work. For Kant, the consciousness necessary for these activities is not an explicit or transparent theatre of the mind. It is, rather, a unified consciousness through which these several elements and processes are unified. Boldly, Kant claims that “without it [consciousness], concepts, and therewith knowledge of objects, are altogether impossible.” Moreover all concepts, “even the purest objective unity, namely, that of the *a priori* concepts (space and time), [are] possible through relation of the intuitions to such a unity of consciousness.”³⁰⁸ This is to say, all judgments require this transcendental necessity. In order to justify this claim, Kant seeks “a transcendental ground of the unity of consciousness in the synthesis of the manifold of all our intuitions, and consequently also of the concepts of objects in general, and so of all objects of experience, a ground without which it would be impossible to think any object for our intuitions.”³⁰⁹ The *a priori* ground that permits such syntheses is “no other than transcendental apperception” or, as Kant sometimes formulates it, the transcendental unity of apperception.³¹⁰ Because any empirical awareness of our inner states must run through the syntheses described above, empirical consciousness cannot satisfy the

³⁰⁷ A103.

³⁰⁸ A107.

³⁰⁹ A106.

³¹⁰ A107.

requirement for a single, universal ground. It is only an a priori, that is, transcendental, apperception, that will do. That this consciousness must be a single entity is obvious, for if there were several consciousnesses, or conscious states, a synthesis must be effected in order for the processes above to obtain. “The numerical unity of this apperception is thus the *a priori* ground of all concepts.”³¹¹ Because of the *quaestio juris* mode of interrogation for objective validity, posited at the beginning of the transcendental deduction, a question concerning the legitimacy and origins of these categories, Kant can claim to have satisfied at least part of the inquiry. It is because consciousness is a unity, through which all the ec-stasies of time are brought to bear that Kant can claim by what right we conjoin intuitions and concepts—the right belongs to the very being that employs the three-fold synthesis. This is to say, having achieved this fundamental ground, Kant believes that the programmatic set out at the beginning of the deduction, the search for objective validity, is complete. The necessity of the transcendental unity of apperception is a priori and can establish the ground from which all syntheses are possible. Important to note here is that Kant has not established the a priority of the categories, and so his deduction seems incomplete. What he has established is the a priori nature of human cognition, and he will employ this precedent to provide further rules by which the categories are employed i.e. the schemata.

Furthermore, apart from providing a transcendental argument for a unified consciousness, which is enough to argue against Hume’s skepticism regarding personal identity, the theme of the transcendental unity of apperception, and its

³¹¹ Ibid.

necessity in order to perform the syntheses of apprehension, reproduction and recognition, permits Kant to discuss the ability to cognize, according to rules, in order to produce knowledge claims, judgments. “The transcendental unity of apperception forms out of all possible appearances, which can stand alongside one another in one experience, a connection of all these representations according to laws.”³¹² Because the “original and necessary consciousness of the identity of the self” is a necessary and antecedent condition for the determination of any object, it provides a singular requirement to establish the precedent of rule governed cognition. In order for objects to appear, there must necessarily be a unity of consciousness.³¹³ Furthermore, in order for objects to appear, there must be “an equally necessary unity of the synthesis of all appearances according to concepts, that is according to rule, which not only make them necessarily reproducible but also in so doing determine an object for their intuition, that is the concept of something wherein they are necessarily interconnected.”³¹⁴ What Kant achieves is a formalized sense of self and the broadest prescriptions by which manifolds are connected together to form an appearance, that is by apprehension, reproduction and recognition in a single consciousness. That these appearances must be connected in this way in order for knowledge to obtain are the rules to which Kant refers at this time. Moreover, if the appearances are connected by these rules time and again, the potential for duplication of experience, that is, the possibility for replication and comparison of concepts is possible. But

³¹² A108.

³¹³ This may provide Kant a singular instance to refute Hume’s skepticism regarding causality. The transcendental unity of apperception is the antecedent cause necessary to bring about cognition.

³¹⁴ A108.

even if duplication, replication and comparison are not available just yet for empirical concepts, we are, according to Kant, “in a position to determine more adequately our concept of an *object* in general.”³¹⁵

The phrase “object in general” cannot be taken too lightly at this point in Kant’s argument. Kant is trying to establish the validity of his pure concepts—by his claim, he is trying to “furnish conditions of the possibility of all knowledge of objects”—and he has done so by describing the necessary processes by which any object must be thought. The lack of particularity in these processes guarantees Kant that he has only described the processes for objects in general and thus for any possible judgment. Because Kant has determined the question of the deduction in terms of the conditions by which pure concepts can “serve solely as *a priori* conditions of a possible experience,” he needs to keep the discussion in his deduction at the level of general objects and not the particularities of applying pure concepts to any particular intuition, but, rather, to any possible intuition. Kant continues to argue that because of the necessity of the processes described, they are rules that govern thought and this rule can be formulated as a principle, “the transcendental principle of the *unity* of all that is manifold in our representations, and consequently also in intuition.”³¹⁶

But, for Kant, arguing for this transcendental ground and subsequent principle is not the final task of his deduction. In order to complete his exegesis of the unity of apperception, he explores how it is that such a consciousness is actually unified. That

³¹⁵ A109.

³¹⁶ A117.

it is a requirement has been established, but Kant wishes to elaborate the means by which such a transcendental requirement is unified. It is at this point that Kant's radical use of the imagination, and the futural orientation of the synthesis of recognition in concepts comes to the fore. A faculty and principle to govern the unity of apperception is the final step Kant explicates in order to complete his deduction and demonstrate how all the syntheses described may transpire and are interconnected. As the unity of apperception is required for the various syntheses enumerated above to obtain, Kant finds a transcendental principle and faculty that produces the very grounds from which all other syntheses arise. In Kant's words: "this synthetic unity [apperception] presupposes or includes a synthesis, and if the former is to be *a priori* necessary, the synthesis [the fundamental synthesis] must also be *a priori*."³¹⁷ Because an *a priori* synthesis—that is, a transcendental synthesis—is necessary in order to have a unified subject that performs the specialized, temporal syntheses of representation, the principle that governs the synthesis of apperception into a singular unity must also be *a priori*. To this "blind but indispensable function of the soul," Kant gives the name the transcendental synthesis of imagination.³¹⁸

For Kant, this imagination cannot be the reproductive faculty described earlier during his exposition of successive appearances, for the reproductive imagination rests upon empirical conditions, the presentation of intuition or manifolds of intuitions. This fundamental imagination is the pure, productive imagination that enables a synthesis that is necessary for cognition. This productive capacity of the

³¹⁷ A118.

³¹⁸ A178, A118.

imagination explains the possibility of the unity of apperception. The reproductive imagination which is dependent upon empirical conditions, although necessary, accords itself to the connection of intuitions along associationist lines delineated by Hume's psychology. The productive imagination, on the other hand, does not concern itself with the connection of given intuitions, but, rather, with providing an explanation for a unified self that is necessary for any experience whatsoever, not the particular experiences found in the reproduction and association of empirical representations. The productive imagination's function is merely to explain the means by which apperception can be unified. "Thus the principle of the necessary unity of pure (productive) synthesis of imagination, prior to apperception, is the ground of the possibility of all knowledge, especially of experience."³¹⁹

This formulation of imagination explains the earlier, rather cryptic, phrase Kant writes during his discussion and enumeration of the table of categories. At this point in the *Critique* he writes: "Synthesis in general, as we shall hereafter see, is the mere result of the power of imagination, a blind but indispensable function of the soul, without which we should have no knowledge whatsoever, but of which we are scarcely ever conscious."³²⁰ During the discussion of synthesis in the table of categories, Kant is attempting to express how the synthesis between intuitions of sensibility and the concepts of the understanding obtain. After the deduction, we can see that Kant is not merely suggesting the historical imagination as the image-making faculty that translates intuitions into representations via image-making, thereby

³¹⁹ A118.

³²⁰ A78.

connecting objects of sensibility with the ideas we find in thought. Rather, Kant advances the imagination beyond the established historical record by noting the function that the imagination plays in reproduction of intuitions or manifolds of intuitions in order to collate experiences, by arguing further for the conditions that are necessary for such a reproductive imagination to perform such a function. The productive imagination is responsible for the very grounds that permit such a reproductive capacity. In order for reproduced representations to inhere in a single being, an explanation for a single consciousness within which we find these representations is necessary. In order to have a unity of apperception that guarantees the numerical identity of thinker/representor, the imagination must synthesize possible apperception, necessarily and transcendently. Moreover, for all possible experiences of objects (perceptions) there must be this unity of consciousness. In order to conceive of possible future perceptions, we must posit ourselves as the perceiver in the future.³²¹ And to do so, one must have a sense of the unity of the self required to imagine future states. The productive imagination provides the explanation for this sense of self as well as the projection of ourselves into the future to enable further cognition and any system of knowledge. Although this function of the productive imagination goes unnoticed, it must be the case that in order to have any cognition, past, present or future, there must be a sense of the self provided by the productive imagination as well as a projection into the future of the self that will be

³²¹ This is the second and fundamental futural orientation of the imagination. Interconnected with the futural movement of potentially recognizing concepts already obtained from empirical experience, the transcendental imagination synthesizes not only the past moments of consciousness, but, also, all possible future moments of consciousness.

the future experiencer of objects. “Since this unity of apperception underlies the possibility of all knowledge, the transcendental unity of the synthesis of imagination is the pure form of all possible knowledge, and by means of it all objects of possible experience must be represented *a priori*.”³²² The *a priori* principle found in such a synthesis will inform and guide all other modes of synthesis. Hence the synthesis that we find in the productive imagination enables all other forms of syntheses found in Kant’s A-deduction. In short, synthesis in general and in its various instantiations is the activity and product of the imagination but seen in different uses. This places imagination at the level of apprehension, reproduction and recognition. The productive imagination, which produces a self through which the world is cognized, as well as a future self through which the world may be cognized, is the *sine qua non* for all human experience—the function may be blind, but is certainly indispensable for all judgment.

To recapitulate and to demonstrate the connection “in which understanding, by means of the categories, stands to appearances,” and the fundamentality of the imagination, Kant provides a summary and bottom-up model to demonstrate that either approach finds the same conclusion. In the so-called objective deduction, Kant writes:

What is first given to us is appearance. When combined with consciousness, it is called perception. Now since every appearance contains a manifold, and since different perceptions therefore occur in the mind separately and singly, a combination of them, such as they cannot have in sense itself is demanded. There must therefore exist in us an active faculty for the synthesis of this manifold. To this faculty I

³²² A118.

give the title, imagination. Its action, when immediately directed upon perceptions, I entitle apprehension. Since imagination has to bring the manifold of intuition into the form of an image, it must previously have taken the impressions up into its activity, that is, have apprehended them.³²³

In this formulation, Kant is explicitly identifying the imagination as the faculty that is responsible for synthesis in apprehension. But, importantly, it is activity following the precedence of the productive imagination. Presupposed by this passage is the continuity and unity of consciousness that must be a priori, in order for a being to have perception. This original subjective synthesis is then transferred to apprehension in order to execute another original synthesis, but this time on behalf of perception(s). This transferred power of imagination is to have profound and lasting ramifications for our understanding of receptivity and perception.³²⁴

Because appearances come to us through the various senses and because any given field is comprised of distinct parts, an original synthesis on behalf of appearance that occurs in immediate apprehension is necessary. The imagination thus produces a single image in an original objective synthesis, one that allows for a single representation of the manifold of perception as an appearance. This original production of an object oriented and objective synthesis employs the same faculty as that which provides the unity of consciousness. Roughly, in order for a perceiving consciousness to obtain, there are two fundamental components, both brought about by the transcendental power of the imagination. The unity of consciousness is necessary on behalf of the perceiving subject; the unity of perception is required on

³²³ A120.

³²⁴ Kant will eventually carry this inquiry further in the *Critique of Judgment*.

behalf of the object intuited. The productive imagination synthesizes the manifold of consciousness, even to the degree of synthesizing outstanding conscious states in the projection of self into the future, to present a single being in which experience of an object takes place. For the object, the productive imagination affects a synthesis that enables apprehension to receive a given field as an image, that is, as a unified representation. It might be tempting to say that this image-making capacity is a reproduction of deliverances of the senses, but the issue Kant raises is that this presentation of a field in apprehension is a necessary synthesis that allows for objects to appear in apprehension, it is an original, creative synthesis that allows for objects to appear at all. It is the original unification of a field found in immediate apprehension prior to conceptual application. Moreover, there is no transcendent object that this imagination is copying, rather, the imagination is creating the very object about which we can make judgments. Without such a synthesis one of the two necessary elements of cognition, receptivity, has no object.

Continuing, from this original apprehension, Kant notes that there must be a “subjective ground which leads the mind to reinstate a preceding perception alongside the subsequent perception to which it has passed, and so to form whole series of perceptions.”³²⁵ These reproductions, or memories,³²⁶ are the product of the reproductive imagination. This empirical imagination is precisely the association of representations that follows the established patterns that Hume so diligently describes in his associations of ideas through the use of the imagination in the *Treatise*.

³²⁵ A121.

³²⁶ A term Kant only rarely uses.

The final step in recapitulating the conditions for the possibility of experience is the formation of the multiplicity of apprehensions and memories in a unified consciousness. “For even though we should have the power of associating perceptions, it would remain entirely undetermined and accidental whether they would themselves be associable; and should they not be associable, there might exist a multitude of perceptions, and indeed an entire sensibility, in which much empirical consciousness would arise in my mind, but in a state of separation, and without belonging to a consciousness of myself.”³²⁷ Without some objective ground our associations would be separate and accidental. This ground is the unity of apperception, and all appearances “must so enter the mind or be apprehended, that they conform to the unity of apperception.”³²⁸

According to Kant’s analysis, “the two extremes, namely sensibility and understanding, must stand in necessary connection with each other through the mediation of this transcendental function of imagination, because otherwise the former, though yielding appearances, would supply no objects of empirical knowledge, and consequently no experience.”³²⁹ This is to say, that although we may

³²⁷ A122

³²⁸ Ibid.

³²⁹ A124. Kant’s formulation for the imagination here, as the mediator between the two faculties of sensibility and understanding, has elicited a debate concerning the overall status of the imagination, an issue I will take up later. Briefly, there are roughly two camps within Kant scholarship, those that argue for the imagination as a discrete faculty independent of the understanding and with its own capacity, and those that argue the imagination as a sub-process of the understanding. Sarah Gibbons, Rudolph Makkreel, Martin Heidegger, and John Llewelyn all seem to agree that the imagination is a separate and discrete faculty. The typical strategy to argue this point is to draw a distinction between a narrow and broad understanding of “understanding” an issue I shall take up later. It is often noted that in his own copy of the 1st *Critique*, Kant emended the quoted line from A77/B103. Kant crossed out the term soul and replaced it with understanding. Opponents of the separatist thesis, as I call it, people like Henry Allison, P.F. Strawson and Paul Guyer, cite this as incontrovertible proof that the imagination is merely a function of the understanding. The “separatists”, however, suggest that Kant,

have qualitative experience, some appearance, there would be no cognizing agent to which we could attribute this experience, nor could we articulate through concepts what this experience is. The latter needs a unified being which can receive the deliverances of the senses and the conceptual framework that accompanies such a unity, in order for articulation and, subsequently, compilation of these concepts as judgments in a corpus of knowledge.

From this line of argumentation several questions seem to arise. If Kant's purpose in the deduction is to prove objective validity and objective validity concerns only those conditions which furnish the possibility of objects of experience, Kant does not seem to have proven that his list of categories can be deemed objectively valid. Apprehension in intuition, reproduction in imagination, and recognition in a concept, along with the transcendental unity of apperception and the transcendental power of the imagination, appear to be the conditions that permit cognition and thus may be esteemed as objectively valid. But where are the categories in all this discussion? Are there any a priori rules or conditions that will permit their application to intuition, either empirical or pure? This portion of a deduction, one that seems requisite in order to complete the enterprise is wholly missing, but is one which might possibly be duplicated. Kant himself suggests this, but recuses himself from performing this work by suggesting that doing so will merely detract and distract from the general purposes of a critique of pure reason.³³⁰

in this personal emendation, employs "understanding" to mean something like the "mind", and understanding in its broadest sense. For further discussion of passage A77/B103 see Llewelyn, *Hypocritical Imagination*, pp. 33-34.

³³⁰ A83/B109.

Reactions to the Deduction

The reactions to Kant's table of categories and his purported deduction of them are as variable as they are numerous. An exhaustive account here might take us too far afield from the discussion of the imagination in Kant, but we can elucidate general trends and objections authors have noted over the years. The most general trend we find in these authors is a harsh critique leveled at what Kant has claimed to achieve in the transcendental deduction. Commonly, Kant is charged with having provided a faculty psychology that explains what processes are in play in judgments, even the a priori grounds by which cognition obtains, but a faculty psychology does not account for the list of the categories Kant has seen fit to provide as the pure concepts of the understanding nor does it answer the *quaestio jure* of category application. Briefly, the suggestion is that Kant's work in the deduction is good, but falls short of proving what is necessary about the categories themselves and their application. The following are a few responses and criticisms regarding Kant's deduction.

Hermann Cohen³³¹ rejects the deduction of the table of categories, instead preferring to read the Transcendental Analytic in reverse order. Cohen begins with the Analytic of Principles and interprets them as an epistemology of Newtonian physics. By claiming Newtonian physics as an a priori science of the principles of experience, Cohen argues that the Kant's elucidation of the Analytic of Principles

³³¹ Founder of the Marburg school of neo-Kantianism circa 1902, whose adherents include Paul Natorp, Ernst Cassirer, and eventually many logical positivists through the influence of Rudolph Carnap. For further discussion see Michael Friedman's *The Parting of the Ways* pp. 25-26.

provides the principles applied in cognition and believes the table of categories can be deduced therefrom.³³² By demonstrating how knowledge is possible, i.e. the principles applied in judgment, Cohen believes we can deduce the categories. In brief, Cohen argues that by knowing what it is that we call knowledge and how we come to these claims, we can deduce the constituent half of knowledge found in the understanding. This strategy may be the way Kant actually conceived his critique of reason. It is plausible that Kant presupposed Euclidean geometry as an a priori science, and proceeded to provide a faculty psychology and the principles necessary to affirm this assumption. His presentation, however, proceeds in a very different manner. What Cohen fails to realize is that Newtonian physics cannot be an a priori natural science, because the principles found in Newton are derived from experience, hence have an empirical condition and cannot be pure a priori, although they may be a priori.³³³ Laws of gravitation and momentum may seem to be universal and necessary for the objects of experience, but the legitimacy they boast always has its sources in abstraction from empirical examples. Indeed, they may govern empirical objects as far as we have seen them demonstrated, but they are proven inductively and hence do not possess the a priority necessary to be a pure natural science.

³³² Cf. Cohen, *Erfahrung*, pp. 345-346.

³³³ In the introduction to CPR Kant makes a distinction between pure a priori and a priori. The former indicates the universality and necessity required prior to any experience. The latter can be construed as universal and necessary, but are dependent upon empirical conditions. As an example of the latter, Kant cites that with proper understanding of structural engineering, one need not undermine the foundations of a house to know that if one does, the roof collapses. One can know a priori that what will happen, but this a priori knowledge is dependent upon the empirical conditions set forward by engineering. The former indicates knowledge prior to any empirical conditions. Cf A8/B12 Cp. A21/B35

P.F. Strawson continues in the neo-Kantian, analytic tradition by arguing for a failure of the transcendental deduction.³³⁴ Strawson interprets the purpose of the deduction to be a more modern use of the term “deduction”, a deduction of the categories in a sense that Kant does not himself seem to endorse. For Strawson a deduction needs to provide a genesis for the categories themselves from axiomatic principles. According to Strawson, objective validity is not uncovering the necessary conditions for cognition in the manner pursued by Kant. Strawson argues that objective validity can only be achieved if the very conceptual architecture, the categories themselves, can be demonstrated in their universality and necessity and their employment illustrated. This most certainly is not what Kant provides, and Strawson deems Kant’s exercise as a complete failure.

In a more sympathetic vein, Henry Allison attempts to redress Strawson’s accusations and to defend Kant against undue interpretation.³³⁵ He points out what Kant means by objective validity, noting Strawson’s misunderstanding, and he attempts to ward off the pronouncement of complete failure. However, Allison himself admits Kant’s lack when it comes to an explanation of the table of categories.³³⁶ And while Allison admits the conspicuous lack of a deduction in terms of the origin and genesis of the categories, he mitigates Strawson’s critique further by citing the Schematism as the illustration of the application of the categories to

³³⁴ Strawson, p. 117.

³³⁵ Strawson here exemplifies the mid-20th century analytic approach to the deduction. Other authors include H.A. Prichard, Jonathan Bennett and might be characterized as trying to purge the idealism from Kant in an effort to uphold the Copernican insight Kant displayed, but to save Kant from himself.

³³⁶ Allison, p. 170.

intuition. While Allison attempts to present a defense of Kant's transcendental idealism, he continues the tradition of reading the 1st *Critique* primarily as a treatise on epistemology. The defense of transcendental idealism is made by distinguishing between empirical and transcendental idealisms and focuses on the epistemic conditions that Kant offers to argue for the latter.

Martin Heidegger will oppose the trend to read Kant's work exclusively as epistemology, claiming Kant has performed an invaluable service explicating the regional ontology of human knowledge.³³⁷ He interprets the doctrine of the transcendental power of imagination as an illustration of Dasein's finitude and fundamental orientation to time. The source of pure concepts of human cognition are to be found in this very orientation to time. Yet, a Heideggerian reading of Kant presents its own difficulties. His analysis of Kant's use of time in structuring the categories and their application remains faithful to Kant's intended explicit statements, but space appears to have been lost in Heidegger's analysis. Furthermore, Heidegger accuses Kant of not having gone far enough. According to this reading, Kant may have seen the ontological implications of his own work, implications Heidegger will make explicit in terms of his own fundamental ontology; but, Heidegger accuses, Kant failed to move beyond delimitations of human cognition, and by not doing so failed to draw the philosophical connection between his epistemology and fundamental ontology. Yet Kant was neither concerned with nor

³³⁷ Heidegger represents the competing school of neo-Kantianism in early 20th Century Germany. In contrast to the logico-epistemic reading found in Cohen's Marburg school, Heidegger and the so-called Southwest school, founded by Wilhelm Windelband in Heidelberg and continued by Heinrich Rickert in Freiburg, insist on the distinction between math, logic and the table of categories. Within the Southwest school, Heidegger's particular approach is to interpret Kant's work as a pre-formulation of Heidegger's own project of fundamental ontology. Cf. Friedman, p. 26-33.

familiar with this subsequent development of fundamental ontology and thus Heidegger has been accused of reading too much into Kant's employment of time. That is to say, Heidegger reads too much of his own philosophy into that of Kant.

Recently, Beatrice Longuenesse attempts to reformulate the question of the source of the categories. Rather than looking exclusively to the Deduction of the Principles, she follows Kant's own suggestion that the table of categories finds its sources in the transcendental table of logical judgments.³³⁸ In the so-called metaphysical deduction of the categories, Kant himself makes explicit the connection between the table of judgments and the table of categories, but what he fails to provide is what this connection might be. By exploring the table of judgments and the arrived body of logic during Kant's time, namely Aristotelian syllogistic logic, Longuenesse attempts 1) to recreate how logic and subsumption work in this logical system, in order to demonstrate the a priority of the categories, 2) to demonstrate their necessity in order to make judgments and 3) their origin itself. What remains unclear is the origin of the categories. Her line of argumentation achieves the first and second of the three stated goals, but remains questionable whether she achieves the final task. Longuenesse demonstrates how syllogistic judgments work, and even illustrates how the categories are employed in the categorical premises of syllogisms, thus connecting major and minor premises and showing how universal concepts are necessary in order to make particular judgments. The categories can be proven necessary for judgments and their role in doing so can even be illustrated, but what Longuenesse does not seem to describe is how the categories are supposed to arise

³³⁸ Longuenesse, p. 5.

from the judgments themselves. One suggestion is that the table of logical judgments themselves represent the necessary means by which any judgment can be made. And if we must judge according to these forms, there must be some concept employed in order to make the possibility of general predication possible in a categorical, hypothetical or disjunctive statement. Thus she believes that from the necessity of judgments arise the need and list of the categories Kant has provided. One difficulty with the interpretation centers around what Kant considers to be the origin of the categories. Such an explanation may indeed demonstrate how they are employed in judgment and the necessity of them in use, but it speaks very little toward the source from which categories arise, that is, prior to application in use.

Common to all these interpretations, except Heidegger's, is a focus on the B-edition deduction. In contrast, my own interpretation of the deduction focuses on the A-edition and attempts to show that Kant achieves what he purportedly sets out to in his deduction. To his critics that deem the deduction a failure, I wish to suggest a misinterpretation of the goals he has set out for himself. Kant has shown the conditions for the possibility of human cognition, typical to his style, not by asking how judgments occur *per se*, but what judgment is and what elements are necessary in order to achieve them. His demonstration of the conditions presupposed by cognition are indeed *a priori*. And yet, I also agree with the general consensus that Kant fails to provide any in depth description of the categories and their origin—in either A or B editions. Faculties, principles, and schemata are all important for a coherent account of cognition, but without explaining the origin of the categories themselves, Kant

leaves open the question about the basic concepts employed in his enumerated processes in the deduction. Without providing a deduction of the categories that demonstrates the completeness and a priority of Kant's enumerated list, his work seems incomplete. It is just such a task that I would now like to pursue and would like to do so along similar lines of Longuenesse's main contention—that the metaphysical deduction provides the clue (or guiding thread) to a satisfactory deduction of the categories and the subsequent sections i.e. the transcendental deduction and the system of principles cannot be understood unless a metaphysical deduction of the categories is provided. Unlike Longuenesse's approach that centers around the table of logical judgments to the exclusion of the transcendental aesthetic, I pursue a deduction according to Kant's suggestion:

The same function which gives unity to the various representations *in a judgment* also gives unity to the mere synthesis of various representations *in an intuition*; and this unity, in its most general expression, we entitle the pure concepts of the understanding. The same understanding, through the same operations by which in concepts, by means of analytic unity, it produced a logical form of a judgment, also introduces a transcendental content into its representation, by means of the synthetic unity of the manifold in intuition in general.³³⁹

By introducing a transcendental content to the forms of judgment, I hope to demonstrate how the categories arise and the completeness of Kant's list. Likewise, I believe that in providing a deduction that will satisfy the general clamor for origins, we will see, once again, the imagination at work in the very deepest recesses of Kant's philosophy. The function of the understanding that provides the a priority of

³³⁹ A79/B105.

the categories by connecting logical judgments with the transcendental content of the forms of intuition is the imagination.

If a deduction of the categories, a search about their origins, is to be found in Kant, it must be sought from a different section than the transcendental deduction. In the *Analytic of Concepts* and the *Clue to the Discovery of all Pure Concepts of the Understanding* we find an abbreviated attempt by Kant to attempt a metaphysical deduction of the categories. Opposed to the transcendental deduction, which reports to demonstrate the conditions for the possibility of cognition, in the metaphysical deduction Kant purports to show the origins of the table of logical judgments and consequently the categories as well. As with the transcendental deduction, the reported success of the metaphysical deduction has as many variations as it does interpretations. For the time being, I would like to follow Longuenesse in affirming the success of the metaphysical deduction, but through different means than she herself provides.

Chapter Seven: An Integrative Proposal for a New Deduction

A New Deduction: objective validity

A new metaphysical deduction is in order to assist Kant in satisfying the *quaestio jure* with which he concerns himself at the heart of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. This new deduction is intended to present a supplementary to Kant's own, by addressing the origins of the categories themselves. Kant does provide an answer to this question, citing the transcendental unity of apperception as the necessary origin of any cognition. But this sense of origin does not provide his reader with a satisfying deduction of the categories. What Kant's critics have pointed out is the need for a more explicit description of the transcendental table of judgments and its connection to the table of categories. It is now to this task I wish to turn.

Before beginning this new deduction, one must be reminded again of the distinction between sensibility and understanding. Kant claims that the division between the two is that "[c]oncepts are based upon the spontaneity of thought, sensible intuitions on the receptivity of impressions."³⁴⁰ According to Kant, the realm of the understanding is concepts and thinking (judgment), that of sensibility is receptivity and intuitions. By this juxtaposition, Kant delineates the understanding as

³⁴⁰ A68/B93.

an active faculty and sensibility as passive. This is of primary importance in tracing the origin of both the tables of judgments and the categories, for with these transcendental tables Kant is dealing here not with empirical judgments or objects (although we will find them in connection with empirical objects) but with a priori modes of thinking, the modes and concepts that are necessary for rational beings. Kant is dealing exclusively with the forms of thinking, the forms by which thinking occurs and the rules that thinking obeys. It is my contention, and Kant's I believe, that the table of logical judgments leads directly to the table of categories, but not merely through analysis of syllogisms, as Longuenesse pursues, but through the delineation of rules of judgment through an exhaustive account of a priori intuition.

As the transcendental table of logical judgments is the product of the logical employment of the understanding, a brief examination of Kant's logic will prove insightful regarding the origins of such a table. Kant's own words are helpful:

General logic... abstracts from all content of knowledge, that is, from all relation of knowledge to the objects and considers only the logical form in relation of any knowledge to other knowledge, that is, it treats of the form of thought in general.³⁴¹

The domain of logic, as Kant formulates it, is the form of thinking—the ways by which we order information and concepts. Kant, in his thoroughness, allows for two applications of this logic, as it is employed with empirical objects but also removed from empirical content, that is, in pure thought. In this discussion, Kant excludes logic as it is applied to empirical objects in order to ensure empirical skeptics that the judgments and concepts he provides are not mere abstractions from experience.

³⁴¹ A55/B80.

According to Kant, pure, or general, logic has nothing to do with empirical objects. The application of general logic can only follow upon having demonstrated the a priority of the rules of thinking. According to Kant, the rules of thought with which we are dealing should “contain solely the rules of the pure thought of an object.”³⁴² Furthermore, a pure logic which determines “the origin, the scope and the objective validity of such knowledge [of the pure understanding], would have to be called transcendental logic.”³⁴³ This pure, transcendental logic “concerns itself with the laws of the understanding and reason.”³⁴⁴ By separating this transcendental logic from general logic, Kant can emphasize the rules that govern thinking itself and maintain that the list he provides remains free from any empirical content. The laws will thus be universal, as they pertain to no particular objects of experience. Rather, they will govern how objects of experience can be judged. The transcendental table of logical judgments concerns itself with the rules by which the understanding orders its concepts, and thus will govern how an object can make an appearance at all. At this point, it is clear what the table of logical judgment concerns, but the question of its origins is not so.

The origin of the table, I would like to suggest, is the interplay of the imagination with the forms of pure intuition. This seemingly odd declaration is the final product of exposing presuppositions about judgments themselves and the requirements Kant holds to maintain their transcendental status. As transcendental logic is not empirical, no experiential content, that is, no objects of empirical

³⁴² A55/B80.

³⁴³ A57/B82.

³⁴⁴ Ibid.

experience can be permitted. As this is Kant's position, about what then is such a logic forming laws? In order of his analysis, Kant has not even admitted the pure concepts of the understanding, thus they cannot be the content of transcendental logic. Yet, Kant has permitted the pure forms of intuitions as the content of meditation. As pure intuitions are merely the form of sensibility, devoid of particular content, they meet the requirement of general logic, that is, they are abstract and not of particular objects. It now remains to be seen how he can employ the forms of sensibility in a transcendental logic.

Following Kant, there are two forms of pure intuition, space and time. Time, as the form of inner sense, manifests itself in the form of simultaneity and succession. Space, as the form of outer sense, manifests itself in terms of proximal location, position. Understanding space and time in this abstract, formal, sense, the imagination employs these universal, formal "concepts" in a discursive manner. That this is merely formal thought allows Kant to maintain that any logical determinations employing these "concepts" will be able to provide a table of judgments, one that regulates all judgments generally, but in its first formulation as purely transcendental. The table of logical judgments is the product of an exhaustive projection of the pure forms of intuition by a power well used but little documented in the history of philosophy, imaginative variation.³⁴⁵ Using the power of imagination, the possible permutations of space and time can be elaborated as follows:

³⁴⁵ An interesting and important question is whether such imagining is extra-conceptual, prediscursive, and the presentation that enables discursivity or whether such a presentation is already discursive. As it is given here I wish to leave the question open, certainly the elaboration is provided in conceptual

- 1) one ‘object’ in one place at one time; local identity and temporal simultaneity
- 2) one ‘object’ in one place at two different times; local identity and temporal succession
- 3) one ‘object’ in two different places at one time; local proximity and temporal simultaneity*
- 4) one ‘object’ in two different places at two different times; local proximity and temporal succession
- 5) two ‘objects’ in one place at one time; local identity and temporal simultaneity*
- 6) two ‘objects’ in one place at two different times; local identity and temporal succession
- 7) two ‘objects’ in two different places at one time; local proximity and temporal simultaneity
- 8) two ‘objects’ in two different places at two different times; local proximity and temporal succession³⁴⁶

The imagination, working with the pure intuitions of space and time, devoid of any content,³⁴⁷ generates these permutations to create this list of possible scenarios.

Furthermore, this task can be done repeatedly and the same list of eight will be produced—these are the only possible combinations of two variables with two possibilities- any further elaboration will fall under one of these headings. The list is exhaustive of the possible permutations of the concepts of space and time. Thus imagination will enforce a rule in ascribing any permutation to one of the above listed, that is the imagination will synthesize any further elaboration into one of the

apparatus, but this need not imply the elaboration is already under the conceptual constraint of the categories.

* logical impossibilities

³⁴⁶ The list could continue indefinitely, but the fundamental relationships of objects to one another and the judgments to be drawn do not increase. Hence the addition of further ‘objects’ will not increase the possible judgments to be determined.

³⁴⁷ It is important here to note that Kant never prohibits “material for the concepts of the understanding.” Rather, he cites a specific kind of material, a “manifold of a priori sensibility, presented by the transcendental aesthetic” as the proper content for pure concepts. He suggests that “in the absence of this material the concepts would be without any content, therefore entirely empty.” A77/B102.

already listed possibilities.³⁴⁸ Hence, this table can be considered complete. This list of possibilities of the combinations of space and time, is not yet the transcendental table of logical judgments Kant provides. But with further exploration of the imagination's use of this list, the table of judgments can be derived.³⁴⁹

Stipulating one 'object' as the entirety of the domain and imagining one 'object' in one place at one time yields the judgments; universal, affirmative, categorical and assertoric—this one 'object' is, it is all that exists in the domain, for all things in the domain it holds. Stipulating two 'objects' in a domain and imagining two 'objects' in one place at one time yields the judgments; universal, negative, categorical and apodeictic—for all things in the domain, it is necessary that two 'objects' cannot occupy the same space. Stipulating two 'objects' in a domain and imagining two 'objects' in two places at one time yields the judgments; particular, hypothetical, disjunctive, affirmative, assertoric and apodeictic—it is, and is necessarily so, if two, individual 'objects' occupy two separate spaces at the same time, they bear some relation to each other in proximal location. As separate and distinct objects in the domain, one must attend to one or the other. Moreover, Kant

³⁴⁸ The understanding will recognize by the content of the imaginative permutation that it is a reproduction of a former, original permutation.

³⁴⁹ In his exegesis of the transcendental table of categories, Kant suggests that we also rely upon "general logical concepts" and the "technical distinctions ordinarily recognized by logicians." A71/B96. I interpret this to mean that we rely upon the general forms of syllogisms including the AEIO propositions of Aristotelian logic i.e. universal, particular, affirmative and negative propositions. Schwyzer and Longuenesse argue for the necessity of this more formalized system, but without realizing the source for the basic propositions of the syllogistic system. Cf. Schwyzer p.12. Reinhard Brandt, in his work *The Table of Judgments*, suggests Kant also presupposes other logical principles; the principle of non-contradiction, the principle of sufficient reason and the law of excluded middle. Cf. Brandt, p. 96. What I am attempting to demonstrate is the origin for these additional principles, at least for identity and excluded middle.

insists that provided we have the first two judgments in any heading, we can deduce the third, hence all the judgments he lists may obtain from this simple list.

The transcendental table of logical judgments is hereby shown to be drawn directly from the power of imagination and its variations on pure intuitions. What is of special significance here is that, while administering the permutations of imaginative play, the imagination itself is producing the possible forms of judgments. This productive function of the imagination is creating the rule by which all syntheses must operate; every act of judgment, that is, all conjoining—whether empirical or transcendental—must operate according to the specified rule of synthesis that the productive imagination lays out in this earliest enterprise of joining pure intuitions of space and time.³⁵⁰ The completeness of the permutations and the corresponding rules allow for all possible forms of synthesis, that is, all judgments.

By undergoing this labored analysis of the content of logical judgments, I hope to have shown the direct deduction of the table of judgments from the only possible content available at this point in Kant's analysis, the pure intuitions, by means of the imagination. Additionally, I have shown how Kant can maintain that all knowledge does begin with experience, the experience of thinking through pure intuitions, but it does not necessarily arise from experience. The fundamental judgments by which we judge experience begins with the experience of the pure forms of intuition, but arises through the productive imagination's use of them.

³⁵⁰ Another important note here, one that Kant makes explicit in the A-deduction, is that whenever we have multiple 'objects' in the domain or multiple times, the syntheses of apprehension and, more specifically, reproduction are at work according to the principles Kant lays out only later in 1st *Critique*.

Knowledge, logical and pure at this stage, does begin with experience, the activity and exercise of the imagination, but its origin is elsewhere—in the power of the imagination to synthesize experience in such a way that provides the rules for the understanding. In Kant's words, this originary synthesis occurs simultaneously at the levels of "apprehension of representations as modifications of the mind in intuition, their reproduction in imagination and recognition in a concept."³⁵¹ Kant here suggests, as we have seen, that the above permutations require the immediate apprehension of pure intuitions, variability and reproduction of these intuitions according to the play of reproductive imagination, and are codified, conceptualized, as an exhaustive list of possible judgments. The judgments, as immediate acts of joining, are thus the first employment of such rules, and the enumeration of a table of judgments provides Kant occasion to demonstrate just such synthesizing.

While the transcendental table of logical judgments affords the opportunity to see the employment of the imagination in an ordinary way, the content of such judgments does not yield any scientific knowledge—it does not directly relate us to the world of possible (empirical) experience; it only creates a barren world of syllogistic rules. The next step in Kant's illustration of cognition, the categories, does not provide us with the rich world of possible experience either, but it does provide us with the fundamental categories employed by the imagination³⁵² to create the venue for possible application of concepts with empirical intuitions. Little further work needs be done to show the deduction of the table of categories from the table of

³⁵¹ A97.

³⁵² Through the schematism.

judgments. Like the judgments, the categories employ the manifold of pure intuition and the imagination to synthesize this manifold. But, unlike the judgments, which employ general logical concepts, the categories are available by use of the judgments themselves. Again, the statement from A97/B105 provides us with insight into how categories may be formed by the power of the imagination; Kant writes:

The same function which gives unity to the representations in a judgment also gives unity to the mere synthesis of various representations in an intuition, and this unity, in its most general expression, we entitle the pure concepts of understanding. The same understanding, through the same operations by which in concepts, by means of analytical unity, it produced the logical form of judgment, also introduces a transcendental content into its representation, by means of the synthetic unity of the manifold of intuition in general. On this account we are entitled to call these representations pure concepts of the understanding...³⁵³

Unlike the acts of judging by which we enact syntheses, the categories are representations of these syntheses, representations of the logical judgments. Kant claims a “given category is the corresponding logical function, conceived now as ranging over whatever might be presented as an object of thought.”³⁵⁴ By representing the act of judging as categories, the understanding provides itself with the conceptual architecture by means of which it can begin to evaluate possible experience. Following Kant’s suggestion, the activity creating the categories is, once again, left to the power of the imagination.

Analogously to the imaginative variation involved in deducing the judgments, the categories can be deduced by following the imaginative variations of the possible

³⁵³ A79/B105.

³⁵⁴ Schwyzer, p. 17.

permutations of space and time listed above. Imagining one ‘object’ in one place at one time in conjunction with imagining two ‘objects’ in one place at one time yields the category of unity—two objects cannot occupy the same space at the same time, unless they are one; imagining two ‘objects’ in two places at one time yields the category of plurality; imagining one object, whether in two places or one, at two different times yields the category of inherence and subsistence, provided we represent them as identical ‘objects’; imagining two ‘objects’ in two places at one time yields the category of community, etc. According to this account, the categories are a combination of the pure intuitions and judgments brought to representation by the power of the imagination. The categories are thus deduced from the table of judgments according to the same activity by which the table of judgments was deduced, the productive power of imagination. Such a deduction adds the missing exegesis that permits Kant to answer the *quaestio jure* he sets out as the question to answer regarding the legitimacy of the categories. The right by which Kant can claim objective validity is the exhaustive account of the forms of intuition and the complementary judgments determined. That this exercise is pure a priori satisfies Kant’s prerequisite that such a deduction is not merely the exercise of empirical concept acquisition, but neither is it solely a rational logico-discursive presentation. By employing formal judgment and forms of intuitions, Kant can claim the a priority, universality, necessity and exhaustiveness required to affirm objective validity of the categories. The categories can thus be seen as the necessary rules by which human cognition obtains.

This deduction of the categories is not, however, elaborated as a replacement of the transcendental deduction as found in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. What I hope to have shown is how the faculty of the imagination makes possible both judgments and categories, as well as the explicit deduction of the categories themselves. In so doing, we can deem Kant's list of categories as a priori, universal and necessary. Furthermore, it is an exhaustive list, and these categories must necessarily be employed in order for a rational being to represent any object of experience, that is, they must be operative in making judgments concerning actual objects of experience.

Of course, this deduction will not be successful unless there is some "vestibule" to which this compilation of pure, a priori judgments and categories adheres. Yet this is precisely what Kant does provide in his transcendental deduction. The synthetic unity of apperception is the single consciousness in which these operations of imagination transpire. As Kant states, representation "and consequently all objects with which we can occupy ourselves, are one and all in me."³⁵⁵ This much Kant has shown successful in his argument from the transcendental deduction. It is my contention that the above examination is an attempt to elaborate the activities that transpire in what Kant so circumspectly describes as necessary for "the transcendental principle of the unity that is manifold in our representation, and consequently also in intuition," that is, apperception. The power of the imagination, described above in deducing the judgments and categories, is the same productive power that Kant employs in his deduction to prove, *de jure*, the self required for cognition and the basic synthetic functions of apprehension, reproduction and recognition.

³⁵⁵ A129.

Furthermore, we can now see the lawfulness of judgments Kant mentions in the processes of pure cognition and the connection between the categories one employs in cognition, both pure and empirical. The allusions to principles in the transcendental deduction are indeed the necessary requisites of apprehension, reproduction and recognition, but it is now possible to see the full extent to which all experience is governed by such. Pure cognition, like those many imaginative permutations listed above, must also obey these enumerated processes in the transcendental deduction. But now we can justify the recognition process, for the concepts used in recognizing have been properly deduced. As the program listed above shows the act of judging and the representation of such an act as a conceptual primitive for the understanding, so too does the imagination by providing the originative synthesis, apperception, show “the inner ground of this connection for the representations to the point upon which they all have to converge.”³⁵⁶ By performing its productive function, by producing judgments and representations of judgments, the categories, the imagination creates a consciousness “which must be capable of accompanying all other representations, and which in all consciousness in one and the same.”³⁵⁷ Thus Kant’s deduction and my own are not exclusive enterprises, but, rather, my own deduction is supplementary and assists in discovering the constituents of elemental representation.

³⁵⁶ A116.

³⁵⁷ B132.

Schematism: Objective Reality

Having sketched such a deduction and coupling it with the one Kant himself provided, we are in position to respond to several of the complaints leveled at Kant and his claims to objective validity. Contra Cohen and Strawson, Kant can now claim to have provided not only a transcendental deduction of the necessary conditions for the possibility of cognition (Kant's stated purpose), but he can also claim to have provided a metaphysical deduction of judgments and categories themselves. The chief complaint regarding Kant's transcendental deduction is that it rarely mentions the categories and when doing so presupposes a metaphysical deduction, which Kant does not provide. And while Kant does not provide a compendium of the possible judgments available to human cognition by thinking through the permutations of space and time, Kant does provide the insight and the overture to such a metaphysical deduction. Thus when Kant references the categories in the transcendental deduction, he does so with assurance that the pure concepts are indeed exhaustive and a priori.

However, a second objection still applies. Given the accomplishments of both the metaphysical and transcendental deductions, Kant still is not in a position to boast that the listed categories are indeed the ones employed in empirical experience. One facile objection could question how often we really use the category of limitation in judging an object of empirical experience. An equally quick response is that even though we are not explicitly aware of doing so, we still may employ the category of limitation when organizing the deliverances of the senses. However, instead of taking

this approach Kant will provide an illustration of how the categories are actually connected with the deliverances of the senses. The chief difficulty for Kant arises in the act of joining categories to empirical intuitions. What has been deduced so far are pure, a priori, categories that bear little resemblance to empirical intuitions of sensibility. The categories, as we have them now, are not fit for direct application to intuitions of possible experience. Recognizing this difficulty, Kant provides the Schematism to explain how these pure, a priori concepts may be related to empirical intuition. In other words, he will pursue the mechanism(s) by which the categories may actually be and are applied to objects of experience.

To elaborate the difficulty of this task, Kant admits that “in all subsumptions of an object under a concept the representation of the object must be homogenous with the concept.”³⁵⁸ This is to say, in order to bridge the gap between the active, organizing architecture of the understanding and the passive, receptive deliverances of sensibility, for Kant, there must be some common denominator, or else any synthesis would be impossible. Yet, the pure concepts of understanding, categories, are “quite heterogeneous from empirical intuitions.”³⁵⁹ It would appear that Kant is at an impasse; having argued for the completeness, necessity, universality and a priority of the categories has left him with little recourse to demonstrate how such concepts can be joined with contingent, particular deliverances of the senses. Kant is left to

³⁵⁸ A176/B218. This formulation elicits two questions: the broader question pertains to the subsumption of any intuition under a concept, both pure and empirical. Kant prefers to answer the question in terms of pure concepts and intuitions, thereby eliding the general question of schemata for empirical concepts. I follow Kant’s lead here by developing the objective reality of pure concepts—that is, answering how pure concepts are synthesized with intuition by means of the schemata—while acknowledging the need for an answer to the broader question concerning schemata for empirical concepts.

³⁵⁹ Ibid.

ask “how, then, is the subsumption of intuitions under pure concepts, the application of a category to appearance, possible?” Provided we examine the exegesis of the Transcendental Aesthetic, the admonition Kant delivers at the beginning of the transcendental deduction and the deduction I have provided above, the answer will become apparent.

Kant’s admonition at the beginning of his transcendental deduction was to remember that all our representations (either pure or empirical) must all, as modifications of the mind, belong to inner sense. All our knowledge is thus finally subject to time, the formal condition of inner sense.”³⁶⁰ In the Transcendental Aesthetic, Kant asserts that space and time are the “forms of intuition.” Every empirical intuition comes to the understanding through the forms of space and time. Moreover, even the pure intuitions used above to deduce the categories, being pure as such, were merely the permutations of objects in general as conceived through the forms of space and time. Empirical or pure, intuitions necessarily are delivered by sensibility through the forms of space and time.³⁶¹ Furthermore, in the Transcendental Aesthetic, Kant argues that, of the two forms of intuition, time is the “a priori condition of all appearance whatsoever.”³⁶² In brief, Kant’s argument is that objects of outer intuition, or intuitions we perceive as coming from the outside, those that present shape, form and proximal relation are limited. All intuitions, either considered as coming from outer sources or those from inner, all must be represented as inner intuitions. Because time is the condition of inner appearances, and all outer

³⁶⁰ A99.

³⁶¹ A43/B60.

³⁶² A34/B50.

intuitions must be represented through inner sense, time is the form of sensibility that informs all appearances. Since the metaphysical deduction of judgments and categories also relies upon the form of time as conceived as a pure form of intuition, an answer to Kant's demand for homogeneity now presents itself. Time is the one constituent factor inherently involved with all aspects of cognition—time as the condition of all intuition, pure intuitions as integral to the process of deducing judgments, and the categories themselves. Kant argues that schemata, defined in terms of time, will present “the third thing, which homogeneous one the one hand with the category, and on the other hand with the appearance.”³⁶³ Thus, Kant suggests, schemata make “the application of the former to the latter” possible.³⁶⁴ In his exegesis of the schemata, one for each category, Kant explains each in terms of time. Time it would seem is the homogeneous element that can bridge the gap between the seemingly disparate elements of cognition. Time, Kant reports, is the common ground for categories, intuitions and schemata.

One need only glance briefly at Kant's listed schemata themselves to understand how time figures in his listing e.g. the schema of substance is permanence of the real in time, the schema of actuality is existence in some determinate time. Kant's account is, I believe, clear and to the point. On the empirical side, the reproductive imagination incorporates the manifold of intuition, given in apprehension, and thereby creates an image to represent that which sensation has given, utilizing the features it finds outstanding and salient to represent the

³⁶³ A138/B177. One should read appearance here as intuition, or, better, as the presentation of the deliverances of the senses.

³⁶⁴ Ibid.

intuition.³⁶⁵ This is to say, the reproductive imagination creates an image out of the manifold of empirical experience. Kant leaves open the question as to whether this is entirely adequate—indeed it is ordered by the sense organs we, as humans, have. Undoubtedly, this is not a flawless enterprise; if our sense faculties were any different, the image produced would vary accordingly. Indeed we need only to look to the errors and mistakes made in everyday judgment to realize misgivings in our own ordinarily working sense apparatus. Yet, regardless of whether our sense organs are functioning under normal operating parameters, or whether we are producing an image that accounts for all salient features, we organize the image under the auspices of space and time. On the pure side, the productive imagination has generated the categories under which we subsume the particular image as it is delineated according to time. On the empirical side, images are formed according to time from the deliverances of the senses. The final act of the productive imagination is to create the schema by which images are made possible.

Kant states that the productive imagination “produces schemata that make images possible, but cannot themselves be images or be drawn from images.”³⁶⁶ Because, the synthesis of imagination aims at no special intuition, but only at a unity in the determination of sensibility, the schema has to be distinguished from the image.³⁶⁷ The schemata do provide this unity by representing what an image can be

³⁶⁵ A141/B181.

³⁶⁶ Makkreel, p. 30.

³⁶⁷ A140/B179.

according to the possible permutations of the pure intuition of time.³⁶⁸ Admittedly, “[the schema] are never entirely congruent with the concept, and yet somehow they fit into the category.”³⁶⁹ The schemata are not a perfect fit, for the categories are a representation of both space and time, as the representation of a judgment, whereas the schemata are depicted solely in temporal terms. Hence schemata are neither categories nor intuitions, but, rather, a mediation between the two. The combination of empirical intuitions and categories is executed by the power of imagination by matching correlating images to schema and the schema to correlating concepts. Kant sums up this explanation by saying that any schema “is simply the pure synthesis, determined by a rule of that unity, in accordance to the concepts, to which the category gives expression.”³⁷⁰

³⁶⁸ A143/B183. Makkreel, p. 30. Kant’s schematism is couched solely in terms of time. Kant can do so, I believe, because of earlier statements made concerning the dependence of space upon time. Makkreel suggests that in the B-edition Kant reforms the relationship between space and time into one of reciprocity, not dependence. Makkreel further suggests that the B-edition deduction and the Refutation of Idealism make “space the condition for the determination of time.” p.32.

³⁶⁹ A142/B181

³⁷⁰ Ibid. Taken alone this statement seems to imply the schemata are identical with either the judgments, regarding their rule-like nature, or with categories, as they are the representation of the rule. Jonathan Bennett argues that “Kant’s theory associates each concept with a rule for image-production.” *Kant’s Analytic* p. 141. This confusion, I believe, is due to Kant’s tortured locution. In this quotation from Kant, he makes a distinction that is not so obvious. The difficulty rests in the word ‘concept’. ‘Concept’ used here can be taken one of two ways. ‘Concept’ could mean an empirical concept, rich in content and under the employment of the understanding for discursive, even taxonomical and scientific, purposes using discursive rules of judgment, hence identical with judgments themselves. But defining ‘concept’ in such a fashion presumes precisely what Kant is trying to illustrate, and would undermine Kant’s enterprise. This formulation denies one half of his equation for knowledge, the transcendental half, and assumes that the judgments are identical with concepts, as abstraction from empirical experience (thereby making Kant an empiricist). This cannot be the proper understanding of ‘concept’. The alternative is to read ‘concept’ here as a pure concept of understanding, a category. I believe this to be justifiable in terms of Kant’s project. What Kant so torturedly says here is that the schemata employ representation of the judgment, the pure concept, but eschew its spatial nature and focus solely on the temporal character, and, as such, cannot be identical with them. The schema utilizes only half, hence is not congruent, to the category, but yet employs the underlying, fundamental pure intuition necessary for both pure concepts and empirical intuitions. In so doing, the schemata bridge the gap between categories, devoid of content, and

This mediating function of the schemata is attributed exclusively to the imagination. According to Kant, “the schema itself is always a product of imagination.”³⁷¹ It is in the formulation of the schematism that we find the standard interpretation of Kant’s imagination at its clearest. Synthesis, as the product of the imagination, comes to fruition. By creating schema and images, and by incorporating the temporal aspect of intuitions and categories via judgments, the imagination is the general liaison between sensibility and understanding. And while correct, the standard interpretation overlooks the fundamental role of the imagination in all aspects of the processes whereby we find categories given a priori, intuitions as representations, often images, and the schema that connect the two. This new elaboration demonstrates the fundamentality of what is typically considered an obscure faculty.

From A to B

The above analysis is based upon an interpretation of Kant’s 1st *Critique* from the perspective of the A-edition deduction, the Transcendental Aesthetic, Analytic of

intuitions, which are content rich; schemata being neither the rule, the judgment, nor the representation of the rule, the category.

³⁷¹ A140/B179.

Concepts, the Clue to the Discovery of all Pure Concepts of the Understanding³⁷² and the Schematism. Kant further complicates the matter by rewriting the entirety of the transcendental deduction for the second publication of his book in 1787. The B-edition deduction varies considerably from the original edition of 1781, but in doing so it proves illustrative of the major themes found in the A-edition. Before addressing Kant's critics, defenders and their particular interpretations of objective validity and reality in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, I propose to examine the significant differences between the two versions.

One of the most startling differences from the A-deduction to the B version is a shift of vocabulary and focus, almost to the complete exclusion of the imagination. Imagination only makes an appearance towards the end of the B-version, but in a pivotal passage. Rather than beginning with an enumeration and description of the three ec-stasies of time and the associative processes involved to represent objects through them, Kant instead takes up a description of the transcendental unity of apperception that underlies all representation. Kant glosses these seminal passages by reminding his audience that combination of a manifold in general can never come to us through the senses, for combination is an act of spontaneity, and spontaneity belongs not to the faculty of sensibility, but to the understanding.³⁷³ In fact, "all combination—be we conscious of it or not, be it a combination of the manifold of intuition, empirical or non-empirical, or of various concepts—is an act of the

³⁷² Often referred to as the metaphysical deduction.

³⁷³ Kant will later conflate these processes and label them under the umbrella process of figurative synthesis.

understanding.³⁷⁴ Kant rarely makes his position more clear than in this passage. But also provocative, and perhaps supporting my thesis from the A-edition, is the suggestion that we may possess combination of a manifold of intuition in some way that is not empirical. From this, albeit brief, passage delineating the faculty responsible for synthesis, Kant seems willing to allow for some synthesis of a manifold of pure intuition, for Kant implies that we can have a combination of a non-empirical manifold. For Kant, the larger issue remains the one central to his first deduction, demonstrating how several such syntheses can obtain coherency and can be further employed to create a corpus of knowledge.

Once again, Kant points out that the synthesizing activity of the understanding (in this version of the deduction) presents a manifold as a single representation, a unity. But, for Kant, there remains another unity, a unity “which precedes a priori all concepts of combination” and which itself

is not the category of unity, for all categories are grounded in logical functions of judgment, and in these functions combination, and therefore unity of given concepts, is already thought. Thus the category presupposes combination.³⁷⁵

Therefore, Kant determines, we must

look yet higher for this unity, namely in that which itself contains the ground of the unity of diverse concepts in judgment, and therefore of the possibility of the understanding, even as regards its logical employment.³⁷⁶

³⁷⁴ B130.

³⁷⁵ B131.

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

With these two compact phrases, Kant achieves several things. Kant has established, more concisely, several positions from the A-edition, namely that need for a transcendental deduction to elaborate the personal-individualizing condition for the possibility of cognition, the unity of apperception; but Kant has also made explicit the connection between judgments and categories.

Kant discharges the first task, of elaborating the transcendental unity of apperception, in much the same fashion as he does in the A-edition. He does, however, contribute new insight into the relationship between synthesis, analysis and the identity of apperception. Along with the transcendental need for a unified consciousness that ensures a subject in which representation inheres, Kant points out that this identity comes about “not simply through my accompanying each representation with a consciousness, but only in so far as I conjoin one representation with another, and am conscious of the synthesis of them.”³⁷⁷ It is only by uniting a “manifold of given representations in *one consciousness*” that it is “possible for me to represent to myself the *identity of the consciousness in these representations*.”³⁷⁸ Kant continues by suggesting that “the *analytic* unity of apperception is possible only under the presupposition of a certain *synthetic* unity.” The transcendental unity of consciousness is not only a formal requirement, as argued in the A-deduction, but is also a performative act necessary in order to provide the analysis of such a necessary unity. At the bottom of all representation, both in transcendental argument and the performance thereof, a unity of consciousness must obtain. But, importantly, a

³⁷⁷ B133.

³⁷⁸ Ibid.

reciprocity between the unity of apperception and the synthesis of a manifold of intuition arises; in order for one to know the necessity of the unity of apperception, one must be synthesizing a manifold. In Kant's words, the "principle of the necessary unity of apperception is itself, indeed, an identical, and therefore analytic, proposition; nevertheless it reveals the necessity of a synthesis of the manifold given in intuition, without which the thoroughgoing identity of self-consciousness cannot be thought."³⁷⁹ Curious to note here is that Kant does not draw a connection between the productive power of imagination and the transcendental unity of apperception. Conspicuously lacking in this B-deduction is any explanation concerning the means by which this originary synthesis occurs. According to Kant, this original synthesis takes place in the understanding, to the exclusion of imagination in this foundational process.

As to the second task, connecting the categories to logical judgments, Kant is more explicit in his second deduction. In order to do so, Kant must revisit the idea of judgment and of what such a process consists. Kant states; "a judgment is nothing but the manner in which given modes of knowledge are brought to the objective unity of apperception."³⁸⁰ This cryptic phrase presents difficulties when trying to expound Kant's understanding. According to Kant, whether or not any given judgment possesses objective validity is not the issue. What a judgment does is to present a proposition, typically by employing the copula 'is', to the unity of apperception. The content of the judgment at this point is irrelevant; the necessary presentation to the

³⁷⁹ B135; also Bxl.

³⁸⁰ B141

unity of apperception is what grounds judgment and prescribes its objective validity.³⁸¹ This process of presentation is necessarily at work in all judgment, and as such Kant deems the process of judging itself objectively valid, not in the necessity of its content, but in the necessity of such a presentation.

At this point Kant wishes to make a distinction between two types of judgments, the same distinction between judgments of perception and judgments of experience found in his *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*. He does so to illustrate the difference between objective and subjective validity in regard to judgments. If one were to state ‘If I support a body, I feel an impression of weight’ one is merely making a judgment of perception. Kant determines that when one states, ‘It, the body, is heavy,’ one is making a judgment of experience. The former is a representation that has always been conjoined in my perception; in the latter “what we are asserting is combined *in the object*, no matter what the state of the subject may be.”³⁸² In the former, we are relating the state of an object to an empirical consciousness, the presentation of ourselves to ourselves as undergoing experience. In the latter the proposition is connected with the fundamental unity of apperception, and hence is not dependent upon the state of the subject. The use of the copular verb determines the presentation of a possible empirical fact to apperception in the case of judgments of experience. In the case of judgments of perception, a hypothetical is employed to determine reference to a particular subject asserting the claim. Empirical apperceptions possess only subjective validity owing to its

³⁸¹ Objective validity understood here as I have argued Kant intended in the A-edition above, the grounds argument.

³⁸² B142.

presentation of a self in a manifold of intuition, and this self is only another such presentation, that is an empirical representation. Because the representation of an empirical self and the content rich activities of such a being, such judgments in themselves are objects of empirical knowledge and hence are not about the object perceived but the experience the subject undergoes when interacting with objects. The judgment concerns our states, not the states of the objects. Transcendental apperception, as the a priori condition of all experience, is no such presentation, and eludes the subjectivity of self-presentation. A judgment such as ‘Bodies are heavy’ is never presented in reference to the self, although it is grounded in the unity and identity of the self. Rather, the judgment is made in reference to the object, which is only possible by means of the synthetic unity of consciousness (even as it is unreferenced). A reminder of objective validity may be in order to clarify these puzzling remarks. Objective validity is not the absolute confidence in the truth of the content of any given proposition. It is, rather, disclosing the conditions for the possibility of experience. By keeping to Kant’s stated purpose in the deduction, judgments of experience demonstrate the necessary connection between presentations of intuition and judgments through the unity of apperception in order for an object to appear at all. Thus Kant believes that when he describes, “bodies are heavy,” he is describing a judgment concerning the appearance of an object as such, and not the appearance of an object in reference to any specific subject, rather to any subjectivity whatsoever. Understandably, one might object that all judgments of perception must also be related to the transcendental unity of apperception, thus connecting it with the

fundamental grounds for objective validity. But this is where Kant makes the differentiation between the actual objects about which the judgments are being made. In a judgment of perception, the judgment actually regards the being that perceives e.g. *I feel weight when supporting a body*, and although this might then be considered a judgment of experience, one that suggests that all perceiving agents supporting bodies must feel weight when doing so, this is not the reported judgment in a judgment of experience. It is, rather, a qualitative, hypothetical description of an individual's experience. Judgments of experience, on the other hand, are not about the perceiving being's states, but are, rather, predications about the object of experience e.g. *Bodies are heavy*. This distinction allows Kant to delve more deeply in to possible types of judgments and to differentiate between the so-called subjective judgments from objective ones. Kant's chief concern in the B-deduction, as it was in the A version, is to focus on objective judgments and to qualify how such judgments may be deemed truly objective, and by making this distinction, he believes he might more easily delineate how such judgments are possible.

It is by narrowing his focus to logical functions of judgment that Kant will be able to clarify more readily how judgments can be objective, and, Kant believes, demonstrate how categories necessarily factor into making judgments of experience. The means by which "a manifold of given representations (be they intuitions or concepts) is brought under one apperception" is the act of the understanding Kant describes as "the logical function of judgment."³⁸³ A logical function of judgment is the determination of a manifold as a single representation and the presentation of such

³⁸³ B143.

to apperception. The means by which these representations are presented to apperception is through the categories, which “are just these functions of judgment in so far as they are employed in determination of the manifold of given intuition.”³⁸⁴ Unfortunately, this is Kant at his clearest regarding the relationship between the categories and judgments in the B-deduction. Of note here is that Kant’s explanation reinforces the A-deduction and the need for a deduction of the table of judgments as well as the table of categories in relation to judgments. Simply describing categories as representations of judgment to apperception still allows Kant’s critics to demand some explanation of the completeness and a priority of both tables. Kant promises to give more in the observation for §20, but only manages to recapitulate what the A-deduction already informed us, namely, that one “must abstract from the mode in which the manifold for an empirical intuition is given, and must direct attention solely to the unity which, in terms of the category, and by means of the understanding, enters into the intuition... its unity is no other than that which the category prescribes to the manifold of a given intuition in general.”³⁸⁵ Even in the B-edition, Kant still seems in need of an explanation of what these general unities consist and from whence they are drawn.

The B-deduction, despite its lack of demonstrating the connection between the table of judgments and table of categories—precisely the same lack we find in the A-deduction, and markedly pointed out by Kant’s critics—continues the need for a metaphysical deduction of the categories. Moreover, Kant’s revision presents some

³⁸⁴ Ibid.

³⁸⁵ B144.

disturbing differences, differences that might appear as inconsistent with his original position. Two such differences between the A and B editions are 1) the change in Kant's terminology regarding the imagination, which involves glossing over seemingly pivotal remarks from the A-edition and 2) the addition of further roles e.g. figurative and intellectual syntheses. And yet, I would like to contend that the editions are complementary. Both editions admit and argue the need for a transcendental unity of apperception and the correlation between experience and this signal requirement. Having entered his revised deduction by different means, and establishing this key doctrine, Kant revisits the three-fold synthesis enumerated in the A-deduction, but in abbreviated form. Rather than recount the three associative processes necessary for cognition, Kant summarizes them under the heading of figurative synthesis (*synthesis speciosa*). Figurative synthesis is the "synthesis of the manifold of sensible intuition, which is possible a priori."³⁸⁶

To put into relief this newly dubbed synthesis, Kant contraposes figurative synthesis with intellectual synthesis. The latter "is thought in the mere category in respect of the manifold of an intuition in general, and which is entitled combination through the understanding alone."³⁸⁷ *Prima facie*, figurative synthesis appears to be the combinatory process responsible for the liaison between concepts and intuitions, of the sort that Kant described in the three processes listed at the opening of the A-deduction. Additionally, intellectual synthesis appears to be the power of judgment as it concerns merely the forms of thought i.e. the logical forms of judgment. The

³⁸⁶ B151.

³⁸⁷ Ibid.

former concerns itself with knowledge, the latter with thinking. This distinction between knowability and thinkability is one sometimes overlooked in this discussion, but for the purposes of drawing distinctions between these two forms of synthesis it proves helpful (and it will have profound implications for the transcendental dialectic). For knowledge to obtain, Kant is adamant, two factors are involved, “first, the concept, through which an object in general is thought (the category); and secondly, the intuition, through which it is given.”³⁸⁸ Yet, if no intuition can be given that corresponds to the concept, “the concept would still indeed be a thought.”³⁸⁹ Figurative synthesis is the process(es) by which intuition(s) are given to the understanding, which has its own synthesis responsible for the production of the categories, which can be thought, but never given as an intuition. Figurative synthesis corresponds to the production of a synthetically unified manifold in the form of an image for representation to the understanding from the A-edition through associative processes and hence is a modified explanation of various uses of imagination.

Kant concedes that both species of synthesis are transcendental, that is, necessary in order for knowledge to obtain, figurative synthesis responsible for providing the content of knowledge, intellectual synthesis responsible for providing the forms necessary to organize the content of knowledge claims. We could approximate the functions of figurative synthesis as providing a presentation of intuition and intellectual synthesis as providing the logical forms of judgment as we

³⁸⁸ B151.

³⁸⁹ Ibid.

have found the imagination described in the A-edition. “Both are transcendental, not merely as taking place a priori (as we found in his principled argument of the A-deduction of the necessity of the three syntheses in determination of the three ecstasies of time and the necessity of logical forms of judgment provided by the original deduction provided above), but also as conditioning the possibility of other *a priori* knowledge.”³⁹⁰ And yet, Kant interposes between these two syntheses a third, one in which “the figurative synthesis is directed merely to the synthetic unity of apperception.”³⁹¹ Such attentiveness Kant describes as the “transcendental synthesis of imagination.” In this capacity, “imagination is the faculty of representing in intuition an object that is not itself present.”³⁹² Just what the figurative synthesis as imagination is representing that is not present is entirely unclear. According to my interpretation, it is precisely the novel deduction above and by providing an explanation for how the categories are presented, although no object of experience is present, the imagination takes center stage as a necessary, productive process for cognition. Such an interpretation finds support in Kant’s next claim that the

imagination, owing to the subjective condition under which alone it can give to the concepts (read logical judgments) of understanding a corresponding intuition belongs to *sensibility*. But inasmuch as its synthesis is an expression of spontaneity, which is determinative and not, like sense, determinable merely, and which is therefore able to determine sense *a priori* in respect of its form (read categories) in accordance with the unity of apperception, imagination is to that extent a faculty which determines the sensibility *a priori*; and its synthesis of

³⁹⁰ B151. Parenthesis added.

³⁹¹ Ibid.

³⁹² Ibid.

intuitions, conforming as it does to the categories, must be the transcendental synthesis of imagination.³⁹³

This dense passage isolates imagination in many of its roles as well as develops the fundamentality in all aspects of cognition. In its ability to present intuitions, the imagination must synthesize the deliverances of the senses; in its ability to present the logical forms of judgment by means of intellectual synthesis (only suggested by Kant, but shown by my own deduction) the imagination must synthesize the possible forms of thinking; in its ability to produce the categories, the imagination synthesizes the judgments with the forms of intuition; and in its role of joining intuitions and categories, the imagination produces schemata³⁹⁴ by which intuition can be brought into homogeneity with the categories. As the faculty responsible for synthesis in general, the imagination proves to be a vital function in cognition. Thus, while Kant explicitly drops the three-fold synthesis and much of the imagination in favor of figurative and intellectual synthesis and emphasizes the transcendental unity of apperception in the B-edition, he does not emend his work in a way that removes the imagination from any part of his analysis. What Kant presents is a less developed but more reader friendly version of the deduction, one that can clarify the grounds argument of the transcendental deduction, but this version must necessarily involve the imagination.

³⁹³ B152. Parentheses added.

³⁹⁴ If § 24 is correct there may be no need for the schematism, other than an as a listing of the functions of the productive power of imagination to produce rules by which the pure figurative synthesis bridges the chasm between contents of knowledge claims and the categories. Kant's argument that it obtains is found in the deduction itself.

Critics and Defenders

After such work, Kant is now in position to answer some of his harshest critics. The success of his deduction, we may even conjecture the project of the Transcendental Doctrine of Elements seems to be plausible, and is based upon an exegesis of the imagination as a discrete faculty, but one functionally connected with both sensibility and understanding. At this point in time we may defend Kant from his accusers and note interesting parallels between my interpretation and others sympathetic to defending Kant.

Of authors that attend to the Transcendental Deduction, Peter Strawson is rather harsh in his evaluation of the success and importance of Kant's arguments in either edition. Strawson concludes that Kant's Transcendental Deduction is a failure in determining the objective validity of the categories. This evaluation is precipitate upon two important interpretations Strawson attributes to the 1st *Critique*. In *The Bounds of Sense*, Strawson is careful to provide a guide of his interpretation of Kant, arguing for "two faces" of the *Critique*, only one of which he wishes to promote and defend. Strawson wishes to separate Kant's doctrine of transcendental idealism—which amounts to attributing, according to Strawson, to our own cognitive constitution the limiting or necessary features of experience³⁹⁵—from a metaphysics of science that is available in Kant so long as one adheres to an austere interpretation. This latter task, the one proper to Kant studies according to Strawson, permits the reader to embrace the Copernican revolution without slipping into what

³⁹⁵ Strawson, p. 15.

Strawson believes is the speculative realm of transcendental idealism. An austere reading of Kant argues that “there can be no legitimate, or even meaningful, employment of ideas or concepts which does not relate them to empirical or experiential conditions of their application.”³⁹⁶ Upon such a reading, the notion of forms of intuition, having no empirical referent, becomes meaningless and thus should be abandoned in favor of concepts to which we can make direct reference. In addition, the second important consideration when discussing Strawson’s interpretation of Kant’s philosophy lies in the advancement of the function and use of logic to which Strawson has access by the time of his writing. Strawson will elaborate not Kant’s understanding, but his own, which he believes finds application in the logic advanced and employed by the middle of the 20th Century. Strawson identifies two principles of logic that will govern his evaluation of the transcendental table of logical judgments and arguments based upon its establishment. The two, basic ideas of logic Strawson cites are 1) truth-functionality and 2) quantification. While these notions were available to Kant, at least the second of these two, they are not the principles Kant cites directly and, consequently, will color the evaluation and interpretation of Kant’s doctrines. The overall evaluation Strawson attributes to the success of Kant’s philosophy will take us too far afield at this point, and yet his evaluation of Kant’s deductions will prove helpful in uncovering difficulties and ambiguities found in the text.

To quote the Oxford professor in full:

³⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 16.

Such analytical argument as we can find is conducted at dizzying heights of abstractness and generality; it is intertwined with the elaboration of the subjectivity thesis, the transcendental psychology of faculties; for anything detailed of specific by way of conclusion, it depends entirely on the derivation of a list of categories from the forms of judgment... the Deduction leaves us favorably entertaining rather than wholly possessed or persuaded of [the argument for the objective validity of the categories].³⁹⁷

What Strawson indicates in these concluding remarks is Kant's reliance on the categories on judgment and the nebulous connection between the table of judgments and the table of categories. That a derivation of the categories depends on the table of judgments has been noted above. Also as noted above, should such a derivation of the categories from the table of judgments prove tenable, the a priori nature of categories as well as the necessity of them for cognition will be established. Thus Strawson's critique is really one not concerning the Transcendental Deduction, but, rather, a critique of the Metaphysical Deduction, wherein Kant putatively indicates the reliance of the categories on the table of judgments. And having provided such a deduction, the sting of Strawson's critique will be ameliorated. Strawson himself notes that if the Metaphysical Deduction is successful, the objective validity of the categories is established. He continues to suggest that should such a derivation obtain, the Transcendental Deduction becomes redundant, unless the argument arrives at the same conclusion, but from a different set of premises.³⁹⁸ Such a second argument is proper and necessary, according to Strawson, because "the appeal to formal logic produced virtually no result... the attempt to derive categories from the

³⁹⁷ Strawson, p. 117.

³⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 83-84.

notion of objective judgment was a failure.”³⁹⁹ That is, a Transcendental Deduction is necessary because of Kant’s failure in the Metaphysical Deduction.

And yet, for Strawson, the Transcendental Deduction fares little better than Kant’s Metaphysical Deduction. In part this critique stems from Strawson’s interpretation regarding the aims and sufficiency of a demonstration of objective validity. According to Strawson, objective validity is “the necessary applicability of categories to appearances, to the objects of experience.”⁴⁰⁰ This definition of objective validity will come to be challenged by figures like Henry Allison, who argue that demonstration of the applicability of categories is the second half of a two part argument in the Transcendental Deduction. The first half is to demonstrate the necessity of the categories “with respect to objects of sensible intuition in general.”⁴⁰¹ The second half, Allison argues, is the task cited by Strawson, to demonstrate the “the necessity of the categories with respect to human sensibility and its data.”⁴⁰² This second task is what Allison describes as the objective reality of the categories, one with which Kant is concerned, but a different argument than that of objective reality. Much of the contention relies upon interpretations of Kant’s stated task; to “prove that by their [the categories] means alone an object can be thought.”⁴⁰³ Allison’s argument amounts to dividing the Transcendental Deduction into two parts, the first of which is to demonstrate the a priori necessity, and hence validity, of the categories in order to think any object in general, the second to demonstrate the application of

³⁹⁹ Ibid. 84.

⁴⁰⁰ Strawson. 85

⁴⁰¹ Allison, p. 133.

⁴⁰² Ibid.

⁴⁰³ A97.

the categories to human intuitions and the objects found therein. By limiting himself to the second of these two tasks, Strawson concedes Kant's argument for the transcendental unity of apperception,⁴⁰⁴ but overlooks the importance of this unity in grounding and demonstrating the necessity of the categories.

One might go even further and suggest that Strawson's demands for objective validity of categories is actually a misplaced demonstration, one which Kant will provide in part in the Schematism and then fully in the Analytic of Principles. Strawson's definition of objective validity draws from Cohen's reverse reading of the Transcendental Analytic and presupposes applicability before demonstrating the a priori nature of the categories and the objective validity that obtains at the most general and abstract levels, that is, prior to application. What Kant is demanding in the Transcendental Deduction is not concrete examples of the application of the categories, but the necessity of the categories, demonstrated priori to any empirical experience. Strawson, it would seem, has placed the cart before the horse.

This tacit strategic approach, along with Strawson's stipulations of formal logic, also informs his evaluation of the metaphysical deduction. According to Strawson's austere reading of Kant's doctrines, a metaphysical deduction must be one that is devoid of spatio-temporal considerations.⁴⁰⁵ To argue for this seemingly implausible analysis of the metaphysical deduction, Strawson cites the relevant passage at A76/B102 between general and transcendental logic. At this point Strawson stresses the doctrine that transcendental logic contains the notion of "the

⁴⁰⁴ Strawson, p. 117.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 77.

synthetic unity of the manifold in an intuition *in general*.”⁴⁰⁶ Strawson continues by pointing out that the categories as presented in the metaphysical deduction are not schematized categories and thus have no temporal conditions.

But what Strawson fails to note, thereby preventing him from seeing the original presentation of deduction of the categories and table of judgments, is the differentiation between the unity of the manifold in general, as presented in the metaphysical deduction, and the narrowing of categories in the schematism to attend to the temporal structures necessary to provide rules for application to particular objects. In the metaphysical deduction, the role of time and space is the general and a priori presentation of any possible manifold, in the schematism the role of time is the structural rules of temporality that provide the possibility for the generalized (read universal) categories of the understanding to be applied to particular objects. Moreover, Strawson’s emphasis on the unity of the manifold quoted above appears to disregard, or at least fails to fully comprehend, Kant’s own discussion of transcendental logic when Kant states transcendental logic “has lying before it a manifold of *a priori* sensibility, presented by the transcendental aesthetic... Space and time contain a manifold of pure, *a priori* intuition.”⁴⁰⁷ To exclude time and space from consideration in the metaphysical deduction overlooks the role of formal intuitions as presented by the imagination in the derivation and elaboration of both the table of logic and categories. Thus by providing the complete list of possible “objects” according to the parameters of space and time by the productive

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁷ Strawson, p.77.

imagination, we can provide a metaphysical deduction to which Strawson will disagree, but on specious interpretive grounds. By employing the logical principles available to Kant, and eliding the logical notions Strawson wishes to replace them with in his reconstruction and evaluation of failure, Strawson's evaluation of the metaphysical deduction can be refuted.

Even with such a refutation, the charge of redundancy must be addressed. Strawson has charged that if the metaphysical deduction was a success, in terms of proving the necessity of the categories in cognition, the transcendental deduction would have been redundant. This charge is dependent upon Strawson's peculiar, austere, interpretation of the task set out by Kant in the Transcendental Deduction. If the task demanded by the deductions is to prove the application of the categories to objects of experience, it would appear Strawson is still correct in denying the success of the deduction. When the task is divided into the two part system provided by Allison, Strawson himself provides a way out of his own charge of redundancy. By affirming the necessity of the transcendental unity of apperception, and by forcing him to concede the original metaphysical deduction provided here, Strawson's own evaluation of starting at new premises to arrive at the necessity of the categories is imminent. The starting point of the metaphysical deduction is the forms of space and time, the imagination and the logical table of judgments. What Kant's transcendental deduction provides is a missing premise regarding the individual in which the cognitive processes inhere. The Transcendental Deduction, therefore, provides not a new deduction of the categories, but, rather, argues for the missing premise that

permits the universality of the deduction of the categories for all rational beings that are subject to the conditions of sensibility with which we find ourselves equipped. Such an approach strengthens the necessity of the Transcendental Deduction and illustrates that, rather than a redundancy, it is integral to Kant's transcendental argumentation to delimit the conditions of cognition.

One further point that does not permit Strawson to understand the importance and mechanism behind both the Transcendental and Metaphysical Deductions is his relegation of the imagination to a second-class faculty rather than one in its own right.⁴⁰⁸ This interpretation appears to be the natural consequence of Strawson's reliance upon the B-edition deduction. Because of the emphasis Kant places on the transcendental unity of apperception and its subsequent revision in the B-edition, which downplays the role of the imagination, Strawson interprets the imagination to be a function of the understanding. Because Kant deletes the exposition of the three temporal ec-stasies with their emphasis on synthesis of manifold, memories and recognition, the second edition of the 1st *Critique* lends itself to such an interpretation. But careful attention to the heart of the B-edition deduction, §24, does not warrant the demotion of the imagination to an auxiliary of understanding. It is in this section, entitled *The Application of the Categories to Objects of the Senses in General*, that Strawson's chief concern lay, and his treatment of the imagination overlooks the fundamentality of imagination in the process(es) of synthesis. It is to be noted that the imagination is responsible for the synthesis of categories and the deliverances of the senses—the very formulation Strawson describes as the goal of the deduction,

⁴⁰⁸ Strawson, p.97.

objective validity. If we recall, Kant indicates that it is the function of the imagination to effect the figurative synthesis necessary to combine categories with the object presented in the sensibility in order for cognition to obtain, first by synthesizing the deliverances of the senses into a unity, then by presenting such a unity for subsumption under the categories as an image and finally as the act of synthesis connecting the appropriate schemata to the image. If Strawson's concern is with the application of the categories, such an oversight appears to undermine any sympathy to the text.

But perhaps Strawson is concerned in his austere interpretation to connect the categories, albeit dubious in his mind, with the givenness of the objects in appearance. In point of fact, the bulk of Strawson's analysis appears to be a defense of this very Kantian precept in the face of sense-data theorists and their claim that all concepts are the product of abstraction from empirical data. He argues that the deliverances of the senses are "discrete, single, separate, without complexity."⁴⁰⁹ Any complexity is the product of synthesis, performed by the understanding with the help of its "lieutenant, imagination." And yet, it is at this point that Strawson's strategy exposes its interpretive weakness again. Rather than focusing on the production of the categories, and the role of imagination in doing so, Strawson overlooks the process of pure synthesis in favor of the syntheses involved in empirical judgment. He is willing to concede Kant's doctrine that "'pure' synthesis is involved also in the generation of the unity of the 'pure manifold' of space and time," but fails to appreciate this doctrine in terms of a derivation of the categories. This is,

⁴⁰⁹ Strawson, p.97.

in part, because of Strawson's rejection of transcendental idealism in favor of his austere interpretation that attempts to confine Kant to an emender of sense-data theories of concepts and author of bloated faculty psychologies. In doing so, Strawson will reject any discussion of pure, a priori syntheses and subsequently any employment of the imagination in its pure form. By relegating the imagination to a sub-faculty of the understanding, employed only in the figurative syntheses of empirical judgments, Strawson overlooks the most critical insight of the Copernican revolution and the point behind Kant's treatment of intellectual syntheses in illustration of the deduction of categories from the form of intuitions in general from the Metaphysical Deduction.

With Henry Allison's interpretation and defense of Kant's transcendental idealism, we find a more sympathetic read of Kant's Metaphysical and Transcendental Deductions, but one which suffers from problems similar to Strawson's. By distinguishing the two different steps in the argument of Kant's Transcendental Deduction, Allison is able to differentiate himself from Strawson's position and errors, but by emphasizing the B-deduction, Allison himself overlooks the role of imagination in intellectual synthesis, and hence does not perceive the fundamentality of the imagination in a deduction of the categories.

Allison interprets Kant's stated goal of the Transcendental Deduction in a much more sympathetic light, granting to Kant the claim that the goal of the deduction is to demonstrate the conditions for the possibility for cognition, and by what right we have to claim them as necessary. But to do so, Allison makes the

distinction between the a priori right to claim the transcendental unity of apperception as a condition for cognition and the a priori right to claim the application of the categories to the deliverances of the senses in human cognition. Allison affirms the success of the former, the objective validity of the categories in conjunction with apperception, but not the latter, the objective reality of the categories. In doing so, Allison makes an important and interesting observation about objective validity and objective reality, which in turn has consequences regarding the objects to which the categories apply. In an attempt to make clear this difficult distinction I will quote the rather lengthy passage from Allison.

Using the legalistic metaphor suggested by the notion of validity (*Gultigkeit*), we can also say that a judgment is objectively valid if the synthesis of representations which it contains is “grounded” or “legitimate.” The objective validity of the categories is to be explained in terms of their role in judgment. Thus to say that the categories are objectively valid is to claim that they make possible, “ground,” or “legitimate” an objectively valid synthesis of representations.⁴¹⁰ But since it is only in and through judgments that we represent objects, the objective validity of the categories can also be said to consist in the fact that they are necessary conditions for the representation of objects.

By contrast, the notion of objective reality has an ontological sense. To claim a concept has objective reality is to claim that it refers or is applicable to an object. Thus a fictional concept, such as ‘unicorn,’ would not have objective reality, although it could very well function as a predicate in an objectively valid judgment, such as ‘unicorns do not exist.’ In the case of the categories, which alone concern us here, the claim of objective reality is equivalent to the claim that they have a reference or applicability to whatever objects are given to us in intuition (objects of possible experience).⁴¹¹

⁴¹⁰ According to Allison, the ability to be true or false.

⁴¹¹ Allison, p.135. Allison’s declaration of goals in the deduction shifts subtly from the beginning to the end of Chapter 7. He starts out by making the distinction cited here, the difference between

One important point to note here is the connection Allison draws between the objective validity of the categories with their employment in valid judgments (arguments). In order to draw this connection, Allison relies upon the judgments found in the table of logical judgments, much as we have for the original deduction presented above. Important to notice here is Allison's contention that the categories must be legitimated or grounded in order to be objectively valid in judgment, but Allison fails to provide any grounding other than the necessary, unified consciousness in which such judgments may obtain. Allison argues the categories are employed in/by such a consciousness, but whence the categories is still left in question. Furthermore, because the objective reality of the categories, the actual use of the categories in empirical experience, depends upon the objective validity and the legitimacy of the categories, by failing to provide a transcendental deduction determining whence the categories, the second half of Allison's distinction will obviously fail. Without demonstrating the source(s) and necessity of the categories in connection with the possibility of receptivity, Kant's conceptual and sensible stems of knowledge will fail to be aligned. Allison's proof strategy falls short of providing this connection, while the one I have provided attempts to bridge this connection.

objective reality and objective validity, and then, in his conclusion, deems that the categories are objectively valid in a "judgmental or logical sense" but "fails to demonstrate that the categories make experience possible." This shift in goals obscures Allison's analysis; objective reality cannot be equated with the reportedly failed second task of Kant's deduction. The legitimacy or grounding of categories in apperception Allison argues for convincingly. What Allison's strategy lacks however is the proper understanding of the connection of apperception and the forms of intuition. The arguments for apperception are similar to those for the forms of intuition; both are transcendental arguments, but neither of which we directly experience. We never experience the transcendental unity of apperception, although we may experience the synthetic unity of apperception as a representation in cognition through the unification of ec-stasies of time. Likewise, we never experience the form of intuition, although Kant does seem to make allowances for a formal intuition. Cf. §24 B160-161.

The true difficulty in Allison's interpretation and judgment concerning Kant's Transcendental Deduction is the shortcoming that we find in Kant. Allison's faithfulness to the transcendental deduction precludes him from discovering the logical forms of formal intuition. And without doing so, Allison is beholden to a doctrine that the categories govern apperception, apprehension and empirical intuition. He is correct to specify that judgments concerning these facets of cognition are governed by the conceptual apparatus necessary to make synthetic, empirical judgments, but mistaken in his assessment that all synthesis is governed by the categories. In one respect, prior to explicitation of the categories Kant provides, we find the forms of intuition synthesized in formal intuitions that may obtain prior to the categories Kant provides. Recognizing these formal intuitions conceptually appears to be the difficult task at hand if there are no categories to govern such recognition. Thus Allison argues that any recognition of formal intuition must be category governed. And yet, in the table of judgments, Kant is not employing the categories per se, but, rather, determining the concepts available to human cognition by providing an exhaustive account of the ways in which formal intuitions may be manifest. If the difference between the table of judgments and table of categories is correct as I have presented it, the categories do not govern the table of judgments, but are, rather, the temporalization and spatialization of the judgments found in formal intuition. Certainly, the categories appear to be co-occurrent with the forms of logical judgment, or, at least they follow immediately upon the re-spatialization and re-temporalization of the judgments to bring them closer to objects of empirical

experience. With this re-re-spatialization and re-temporalization, we are no longer dealing with formal intuitions, but with the abstract concepts that necessarily follow from the logical judgments. No longer are the judgments mere forms of logical judgment, that is of objects in general; by introducing the forms of intuition again, they move beyond logical form to conceptual generalities, categories.

The approach I have taken is the inverse of Allison's. Rather than generatively describing the categories, Allison takes them as primitives connected with the forms of judgment (and he is correct to emphasize the connection with the categories). In doing so, Allison argues all syntheses are products of productive imagination and are category-governed.⁴¹² This peculiarity forces Allison to describe the synthesis required by the transcendental unity of apperception to be category governed, and thereby displaces the grounding legitimacy of the categories in transcendental apperception. Likewise, apprehension, even the unity of apprehension in immediate object presentation, is category governed. This forces Allison to overlook the synthesis that takes place at the level of sensibility in presenting a unified manifold to the understanding, a synthesis operating in formal intuitions and the logical judgments that are precipitate. In short, Allison's commitment to conceptual primitives without explanation forces him into a position that suggests conceptual organization at all levels of cognition. It would seem to be, for Allison, concepts all the way down. My approach, on the other hand, permits synthesis of varying sorts, at varying levels. The imaginative synthesis operating in formal

⁴¹² Allison's connection with judgment differs from my own, however, because of his reliance upon syllogistic argument form and validity determined by Aristotelian logic, rather than with the form of space and time as explored through imaginative variation.

intuition is not concept governed in my approach. Rather, it is the synthesis that provides unity of a manifold considering the formal presentation of an “object” in space and time, not any empirical object, but the formal intuition that elicit logical judgments concerning identity and non-contradiction that can in turn be elaborated into the list of twelve Kant provides. Formal intuitions, intellectual though they may be, require a synthesis that is not the understanding joining concepts with the deliverances of the senses. This intellectual synthesis is generative of the table of judgments and, subsequently, the table of categories. If the productive imagination, and the reproductive imagination for that matter, are operative, at times extra-conceptually, at others conceptually, we can support Kant’s many claims about varying syntheses, but also unify the two stems of knowledge under one root. Allison, it would seem, would have that root be the understanding.⁴¹³ In doing so he subsumes all syntheses under a single, conceptually-governed activity, that betrays Kant’s own descriptions (primarily from the A-edition). Rather than apperception being the condition that accounts for the unity of time, Allison interprets the unity of time as the sufficient condition of the unity of apperception. Furthermore, the unity of time is the basis for the categories and Allison would also have the categories providing the ground of apperception, a direct contradiction of Kant’s stated purpose in the transcendental deduction.

⁴¹³ This interpretation also leads Allison argue for the imagination as a sub-process of the understanding, one that is inherently concept governed. Allison does, however, make some overture to extra-conceptual synthesis, in the guise of figurative synthesis when discussing arguments for the infinite given magnitude of time and space from the Transcendental Aesthetic. Cf. 162-163. He believes that by doing so, he can retain the two stems of knowledge. However, by affirming synthesis is the product of the sub-process of the understanding called imagination, all synthesis remains concept governed.

At the same time, Allison is willing to concede the “doctrine that the unification or determination of time is produced by the transcendental synthesis of imagination.”⁴¹⁴ But this concession does little to explain Allison’s position that all synthesis is category governed. In point of fact, it presents a trenchant difficulty in trying to reconcile these two aspects of Allison’s interpretation. If the imagination is a sub-faculty of understanding, and the imagination is responsible for the synthesis required for the unity of time that enables the unity of apperception, it would seem that all syntheses are category governed. By arguing for an extra-conceptual synthesis that provides the unity of time in an infinite given magnitude, while at the same time maintaining synthesis is category governed, Allison appears to provide an inconsistent position on the proper role and constraints governing synthesis in general. By distinguishing between types of syntheses, both extra-conceptual as well as category governed, and the distinction between imagination in its productive capacity from that of its reproductive capacity, my interpretation can ameliorate this difficulty in Kant’s text and Allison’s interpretation.

The only place Allison will rely upon the imagination is to attempt to prove the objective reality of the categories, and he will inevitably deem this argument a failure. And yet, in doing so, he overlooks the imagination in its original and fundamental function, its functions both in the transcendental unity of apperception and in the determination of judgment and categories. In short, he makes the same interpretive error that Strawson commits by relegating the imagination to a sub-

⁴¹⁴ Allison, 162.

function of the understanding, allocating its employment in figurative synthesis alone and failing to account for it in intellectual synthesis.

In a more recent study of the deduction and logical table of judgments, Beatrice Longuenesse (1998) follows Allison's guide and interprets the pivotal section of the 1st *Critique* in light of syllogistic logic, but approaches the subject in a novel way. Longuenesse proposes that "neither the argument of the Transcendental Deduction of the Categories... nor the System of Principles of the Pure Understanding, can be understood unless they are related, down to the minutest details of their proofs, to the role that Kant assigns the logical forms of our judgments, and to the manner in which he establishes the table of categories or pure concepts of the understanding according to the 'guiding thread' of these logical forms."⁴¹⁵ In opposition to Cohen and his intellectual heir Strawson, Longuenesse defends Kant from their backwards reading, whereby they start with empirical concepts and their application in the principles and subsequently work backward to prove the validity of the categories. Rather, Longuenesse begins with the Metaphysical Deduction and attempts to find the logical forms that inform the production of the categories.

Longuenesse begins this process by pointing out that logic, for Kant, means the "universal rules of discursive thought." She asserts that, despite Kant's suggestion in both the 1st *Critique* and the *Prolegomena*, the logical table of judgments is not merely the collocation and emendation of logical forms of syllogistic logic, although they do inform the production of the forms of discursive thought. For

⁴¹⁵ Longuenesse, p.5.

Longuenesse, the logical forms Kant indicates are the product of a process similar to that of the construction of mathematical concepts. But unlike mathematical concepts logical judgments are entirely discursive and not intuitive. This interpretation grants Kant success, albeit too concisely/briefly stated in the metaphysical deduction, and consequently success in the Transcendental Deduction because the legitimacy of the categories has been demonstrated priori. This interpretation follows Allison's lead in reevaluating the purpose of the Transcendental Deduction by sympathizing with Kant's stated purpose. Unlike Allison, however, the argument for the universality of the logical forms and the argument for their functional identity with the categories permits Longuenesse to affirm the objective reality of the categories and not only their objective validity. Because the logical forms of judgment are the means by which all thought is organized in discursive thought, by the addition of the forms of pure intuition, the categories become the means by which intuitions are thought in the understanding, hence their necessary application is ensured.

One difficulty with Longuenesse's argument centers around the content of discursive thought. One facile objection questions what the content of these concepts employed in discursive might be. Certainly, so the objection runs, in the employment of discursive thinking, we are employing concepts; but concepts of what? As the "form of thinking in general" these concepts cannot have empirical content, lest they be concepts of particulars and lose the very aspect Longuenesse relies upon to determine the universal validity of the judgments and categories. To address this difficulty, Longuenesse characterizes the contents of discursive thought as "concepts

in a judgment to something represented by ‘x’ or ‘x, y, z’.”⁴¹⁶ By presenting variables as the objects available to discursive thought, Longuenesse follows Kant’s prescription for the contents of intellectual synthesis, thus removing any empirical content of particular objects. In so doing, Longuenesse can affirm the a priori nature of discursive thought and the forms of transcendental logic while still retaining the ability to provide different objects under such cognition. However, this description highlights the difficulty in providing concepts, reportedly devoid of content, while still stipulating the possibility of making distinctions. In order to represent “x” or “x, y, or z”, Longuenesse must still be employing, at minimum, the concept of a singularity and plurality, two of the very concepts she is attempting to justify. Even in the pure realm of discursive thinking, these concepts appear to be in employment and a deduction of them appears to be in order. Thus by relying on the logical forms of judgment with variables designating distinctions between “objects” of consideration, even in discursive thinking alone, neither Longuenesse nor Kant can make the claims she tries to make of him. Rather, some content must be employed in order to determine the forms of discursive thought. By adding the formal requirements of space and time, as in the deduction I have provided above, we can emend the tremendously valuable work Longuenesse researched in order to determine how such concepts of singularity and plurality are able to be employed even in discursive thought alone. This addition explains how one can discursively provide distinctions between variables ‘x, y, z’ in order to distinguish between “objects” available to discursive cognition. In doing so, one can highlight the role of the

⁴¹⁶ Longuenesse, p. 10, 87.

imagination in its transcendental determination of logical judgments and thereby categories.

This brings us to one further point concerning Longuenesse's interpretation of Kant's doctrines. Despite an even-handed approach to both versions of the 1st *Critique*, and thus avoiding the common critique of her predecessors, Longuenesse still interprets the transcendental imagination along similar lines as Allison and Strawson. Both for them and for Longuenesse, the transcendental imagination of the A-edition becomes the *synthesis speciosa*, figurative synthesis, of the B-edition. And while my interpretation above does concede the employment of imagination in *synthesis speciosa*, in both its reproductive and productive uses, it does not merely relegate imagination to this empirical employment. The transcendental imagination also has its place in intellectual synthesis, the grounds for *synthesis speciosa* in the first place, by providing the forms of discursive thinking to begin with. And while it may seem like the imagination is an inapt word for the a process whereby no images are actually in play (for that would still fall under the figures of figurative synthesis) it presents an opportunity to see Kant's use of imagination beyond the mere image making employment of his philosophical forebears. In fact, it highlights the radical transformation of Kant's use of imagination- one by which it is in part responsible for the ways in which we both see and think our world.

Chapter Eight: Is the Imagination a faculty, one or two?

In exploring the role of the imagination in the 1st Critique, I have thus far treated the imagination as an independent faculty. In fact, I have been treating the imagination as the faculty that mediates between Kant's well-established dualism, even suggesting that the imagination might be the mysterious root out of which the sensibility and understanding emerge. However, that the imagination is independent is far from obvious when one investigates both Kant's works and commentary on such; that the imagination is the root faculty is nearly universally denied. Several issues surround the imagination, and several reasons obscure the doctrine I have attempted to illustrate. It is now to this presupposition I now wish to turn.

The chief reason for obscurity concerning the imagination as an independent faculty remains Kant's inconsistent and confusing references to this faculty in question. The revisions to the *Critique of Pure Reason*—notably the revision to the Transcendental Deduction, wherein Kant employs the imagination—leave his reader wondering what work if any, it performs in the A-deduction and how this use is modified or supplemented in the B-edition. In the preceding chapters, I have attempted to show a reconciliation and harmony between the editions, thereby attempting to alleviate this problem. But, in addition to the revisions of the 1st Critique, Kant employs the imagination in his two subsequent Critiques. By the time Kant writes the 3rd Critique, he has nearly abandoned the language of sensibility and

passivity when describing the deliverances of the senses, favoring imagination as the faculty that presents the deliverances of the senses. This shift in locution compounds the difficulty of discussing the imagination as a faculty in its own right, for in this later work it appears to be allied with sensibility. The discrepancies between the A and B editions compounded by the seeming discrepancies with the terminology of the 3rd Critique present significant challenges to a unified theory of imagination in Kant's works. There is, however, a possible resolution to these difficulties, and it is only by turning to these issues themselves that one can provide a coherent account that demonstrates the necessity of the imagination both as an independent faculty and as the root of the other faculties while satisfying the architectonic of Kant's dualism. It is thus to the difficulties and reformulations Kant provides that I now wish to turn.

One of the most glaring changes Kant makes in his reformulation of the Transcendental Deduction is his departure from the three-fold synthesis with which he begins the A-edition. The speculation about Kant's desire to present the ground of the categories i.e. the transcendental unity of apperception, in addition to a simpler version of synthesis at work in such an argument presents plausible reasons why Kant might abandon the three-fold synthesis of the A-edition in favor of two syntheses in the B-edition. Yet another reason is the implications and perhaps confusion that arises from such syntheses. Kant originally declares quite simply that "synthesis in general... is the result of the power of imagination."⁴¹⁷ But if one examines the three-fold synthesis, one finds synthesis operating at all three levels, thus presenting an opaque doctrine that requires synthesis of the power of imagination at all three levels,

⁴¹⁷ A78/B104.

but only one to which Kant explicitly attributes synthesis by the imagination. Beginning with the first of the three-fold, the synthesis of apprehension in intuition, the synthesis that obtains is an immediate, unified whole.⁴¹⁸ Such a synthesis Kant appears to attribute to the sensibility, for it is by the deliverances of the senses that one is presented with a unified manifold of intuition(s), for it is not a synthesis enacted by the understanding's ability to bring particulars to judgment. At first blush, such a synthesis effected by apprehension is a synthesis that obtains at the level of sensibility, hence the imagination might be associated with the faculty of sensibility. This need for a collocation of sensations is found in the epistemic strategies of empirical philosophies, and by declaring the synthesis required in apprehension, Kant echoes Aristotle and Aquinas without explicitly mentioning a *sensus communis*. But this is precisely the idea Kant is promoting by arguing for a unified manifold given in apprehension that we understand to be comprised of data delivered by our discrete sense receptors.

When turning to the second of Kant's three-fold synthesis, the synthesis of reproduction in imagination, one finds explicit treatment of the imagination at work in providing presentation of objects no longer present. One might call these occurrences memories, for that is spirit in which Kant employs reproductive imagination; unfortunately, Kant rarely makes use of the term. Regardless of terms, however, we find Kant appealing to the classic definition of the imagination as the faculty responsible for the presentation of objects not present, or if present, attendant

⁴¹⁸ A99.

parts no longer under the direct gaze of apprehension.⁴¹⁹ Furthermore, Kant employs this reproductive imagination as a mediating faculty whose role is to mediate between immediately given sensation, former sensations, and their recognition as same, different or in reciprocity. Such a use of the imagination reminds his audience of the pivotal role the imagination has played in nearly all the historical accounts, despite certain authors attempt to subordinate this vital function.

When turning to recognition, the third in his three-fold, one finds Kant's own development of synthesis in judgment. Judgment belongs to the faculty of understanding properly, and, as such, synthesis appears to be allied with the understanding. In bringing the deliverances of the senses together with the architecture of categories—that is, by subsuming the particular presentation of apprehension under concepts—judgments are formed e.g. in identification of an object, parts and wholes, or reciprocity.⁴²⁰ That such a synthesis is required for any identification and recognition is apparent, otherwise no object of experience obtains—literally, we would not recognize the object of experience delivered by sensation. And yet, this proves a difficult doctrine to maintain. If synthesis in general is the product of imagination, the imagination appears to be a function or species of the understanding. The overriding concern in the three-fold synthesis is to provide an account for the presentation, recognition and possible reproduction of objects of experience for epistemic purposes, but Kant appears to have the imagination operating differently at various points in such an explanation.

⁴¹⁹ A100.

⁴²⁰ A105.

That the vagueness of such a doctrine vexes Kant remains a plausible suggestion for his reformulation of the Transcendental Deduction in the B-edition. No longer will Kant recount these syntheses, but will instead argue more straightforwardly for the transcendental unity of apperception as the main doctrine that grounds the objective validity of the categories. And yet, in such an argument the imagination appears again, this time in the form of another ambiguity. According to Kant the transcendental unity of apperception must be properly delineated, but to do so he makes recourse to the transcendental power of the imagination. Such a function is the only a priori means by which he can argue for the unity of the “I think” that accompanies all experience.⁴²¹ Since the transcendental power of imagination remains the function by which Kant explains the possibility of the transcendental unity of apperception, and this latter doctrine requires a pure, a priori explanation of any possible manifold (in this case the pure representation of the self as unified), Kant has recourse to a power of the imagination that is only intellectual. Such a purely intellectual synthesis, and the judgment that the argument for the transcendental unity of apperception is successful by means of it, appears to be allied, once again with the understanding, thereby undermining the imagination’s claim to independence.⁴²² In contrast to such pure synthesis, Kant will find himself in need of an explanation of the deliverances of the senses, or intuitions of such deliverances, and does so by contraposing the intellectual synthesis with a figurative one. The figurative synthesis

⁴²¹ B151-152.

⁴²² B152.

affords the presentation of a unified manifold in intuition.⁴²³ Accordingly, “since all our intuition is sensible, the imagination, owing to the subjective condition under which alone it can give to the concepts of understanding a corresponding intuition, belongs to sensibility.”⁴²⁴ Kant would thus seem to align imagination of the figurative variety with sensibility again. However, “in as much as its synthesis is an expression of spontaneity, which is determinative and not, like sense, determinable merely... the imagination... is an action of the understanding.”⁴²⁵ Because the presentation of senses to the understanding in the act of judging is a synthesis of spontaneity, the imagination cannot belong merely to sensibility, but appears to belong as a function of understanding. Kant, it would appear, maintains that the imagination belongs to both sensibility and understanding. Such a doctrine, however, will violate the strict dualism established earlier in Kant’s analytic of principles.

By shifting locution in the 3rd Critique, from an analysis of the passivity of sensibility and spontaneity of understanding, to an analysis of the products of imagination and concept formation found in the understanding, Kant will attempt to alleviate the confusion of the 1st Critique. However, he will, once again, muddy the waters when discussing the imagination. Such a dualism between imagination and understanding might be construed as Kant’s considered view, firmly placing the imagination in the service of sensibility. But the nature of judgments discussed in the 3rd Critique suggests caution against such a strong interpretation. Because Kant occupies himself with reflective judgments, judgments wherein the object is no longer

⁴²³ B151.

⁴²⁴ Ibid.

⁴²⁵ B151-152.

present or in reflection of an object of experience whereby one moves away from direct apprehension of the object to contemplation of it, what the dualism of imagination and understanding amounts to is only an attenuated dualism. What the imagination presents in reflective judgment is the presentation of an object no longer present, which is tantamount to the presentation of reproduction, memory, found in the three-fold synthesis. The shift in locution is only precipitated by a shift in judgments, not by any radical revision of Kant's terminology from the 1st Critique.

After the exercises of two deductions and a third critique, there appears to be three possible options available for Kant. Kant can ally the imagination with sensation, thereby explaining much of the figurative synthesis and synthesis of apprehension; ally the imagination with understanding, thereby explaining intellectual synthesis and the spontaneity/activity found in judgments and the synthesis of recognition in concepts; or he may posit the imagination as a third faculty in its own right. Each interpretation presents itself with a unique set of problems, but, I would like to contend, while the problems of two options are insurmountable difficulties to Kant's project, one option may be mitigated in such a way as to affirm Kant's doctrines.

If the imagination is to be allied with sensibility or explained as a sub-process of sensation, startling implications become apparent. Should one interpret imagination as part of sensibility, Kant can easily explain the synthesis that obtains in apprehension. The unified manifold that is immediate in apprehension is now easily explained by a form of synthesis exclusive to sensibility itself. Such a manifold is

unified because sensations themselves are unified in the passive receptivity of the disparate sense receptors. Furthermore, Kant gains a strong sense of the empirical reality to which he must appeal in order to establish the possibility of veritative judgments. Judgments of objects of experience can be deemed true by referencing the unified object presented by the senses. To find the truth of a judgment, one would merely need to appeal to sensation. It may be the case that the various sensations of the object are discrete, but if this interpretation is pursued, any such syntheses of discrete sensation obtains in the passivity of sensibility itself. As such, the objects of experience are responsible for the syntheses and judgments concerning objects will have recourse to the very objects themselves as given in sensation. If this interpretation is pursued, one makes Kant into an empiricist of the Lockean-Humean sort. All synthesis obtains in sensation itself and inspection and judgments of objects, while properly the domain of understanding, is ultimately beholden to the passivity of sensation for verification. All concepts thus become some translation of the object of experience into a representation available for inspection by the mind. In doing so, Kant will lose the ability to claim pure concepts by which we organize the world, and hence will not be able to effect the Copernican turn. By allying imagination with sensibility Kant gains a strong empirical reality, but loses the transcendental ideality he so vociferously argues for.

If one allies the imagination with the understanding, however, the inverse obtains. By making the imagination a sub-process of the understanding, Kant will be able to account for the spontaneity of the pure categories, for pure concept formation

and articulation will be entirely the domain of the understanding. By possessing the power of synthesis, the activity of joining forms of intuition, empirical intuitions and concepts will be exclusively the activity of understanding. By determining the imagination as a function of the understanding much of the murkiness of synthesis found in the deductions can be overcome, notably the synthesis of recognition in concepts and intellectual synthesis. All synthesis, but most importantly, synthesis found in judgment can be easily explained as the product of the spontaneity of understanding. But such an approach has its costs as well. If Kant gains a strong sense of transcendental ideality by this interpretation, he does so at the sacrifice of empirical reality. If all synthesis is the product of understanding, there remains no tribunal against which one can weigh the judgments being made. Judgments may turn out to be mere figments of the imagination. Indeed, such a strategy tilts Kant in the direction of the rationalist philosophy of the Wolffian-Leibnizian *schulphilosophen* against which Kant is also struggling. Indeed, there seems to be no justification for the objective validity of the categories.

The third option available is to account for the imagination as an independent faculty; such a strategy, however, is also not without its difficulties. By arguing for the imagination as an independent faculty, Kant will be able to explain memory more easily, and can do so along the lines illustrated by Hume. Memory is a reproduction of the deliverances of the sense, a presentation of objects no longer present. As such, memories are susceptible to various influences e.g. resemblance, deterioration etc. The main strategic benefit Kant can find in such an argument is the ability to maintain

the dualism between sensibility and understanding, while finding a mediator between the two. If the imagination is an independent faculty the passivity of sensibility can be maintained and the spontaneity/activity of understanding can be affirmed, with the imagination providing the liaison between two such seemingly incommensurate capacities. The drawback of maintaining the independence of the imagination is the loss of a principled explanation of how such a “blind but indispensable function of the soul” works, thereby losing an account of pure reason. Since Kant’s project is a critique of pure reason, in all its capacities, such a loss of appears unacceptable, lest we have at the most pivotal moment a faculty with no explanation or reason. Furthermore, by making the imagination a third faculty, albeit a mediating faculty, such a strategy will present difficulties in explaining the connection between the independent faculty of imagination and the other independent faculties; 3rd man arguments will present intractable problems for such an explanation. In the final analysis, it would appear that no strategy can maintain Kant’s position while providing satisfactory explanations according to the architectonic Kant has established.

Commentary on this issue also provides little assistance in finding a suitable choice. Briefly, there are roughly two camps within Kant scholarship, those that argue for the imagination as a discrete faculty independent of the understanding and those that argue the imagination as a sub-process of the understanding. Much of the debate centers around a historical fact. In his own copy of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant crossed out the word ‘soul’ in the passage that attributes the

imagination to “a blind but indispensable function of the soul,” and replaced it with ‘understanding’.

Sarah Gibbons, Rudolph Makkreel, Martin Heidegger, and John Llewelyn all seem to agree that the imagination is a separate and discrete faculty. These authors typically cite the A-deduction and its emphasis on processes required to have a single presentation of the deliverances of the senses, prior to synthesis with concepts of the understanding as proof that the imagination is operative outside the parameters of the understanding. Integral to such a thesis is the typical strategy that points out a distinction between a narrow and broad understanding of “understanding”. When Kant emends his own personal copy of the 1st Critique, his ascription of imagination to the understanding, this faction contends, is not to the specific faculty of the understanding per se, but, rather, to ‘understanding’ meant as something like the ‘mind.’⁴²⁶ What this faction fails to provide is answers to the protracted problem of the imagination as an independent faculty.

On the other side of the debate, proponents of the sub-process thesis, people like Henry Allison, P.F. Strawson and Paul Guyer, cite Kant’s emendation of his own copy of the 1st Critique as incontrovertible proof that the imagination is merely a function of the understanding and deny the understanding possesses multiple meanings. Kant did cross out the word ‘soul’ in the quote above and replaced it with ‘understanding’. Thus some commentary is convinced that the imagination is a sub-process to the understanding. The sub-process theorists, insist that the B-deduction

⁴²⁶ For further discussion of passage A77/B103 see Llewelyn, *Hypocritical Imagination*, pp. 33-34.

demonstrates that the imagination is only comprehensible when applied to processes of understanding and that two distinct faculties “fails totally to explain how one could ‘deduce’ the pure concepts of the understanding from the table of logical judgments.”⁴²⁷ What this faction fails to demonstrate is any resolution to the protracted problems facing the strategy of imagination as a sub-process.

What both factions have in common is the strategic error of examining this issue as an exclusive disjunction. The factious nature of the debate has led both parties to set up the issue as sub-process or independent, and then, owing to proclivities, demonstrating the difficulties with the opposing faction’s position. With such intractable problems enumerated above, either faction concludes the absurdity of the other’s position and thus affirms their own. What is conspicuously missing is any positive resolution to the difficulties surrounding any given position.

I believe, however, that one of the three strategies listed above may find such a positive resolution. Such an interpretation still relies on the absurd consequences of the other two, but, with proper provisos may overcome the inherent difficulties of its own. Arguing for the independence of the imagination is just such a strategy. As Allison has noted, such a position has the difficulty of providing an explanation for the categories as well as a third man argument to overcome.

While Allison’s point concerning the difficulties of a ‘deduction’ of the categories poses problems for the standard thesis regarding the independence of the imagination, the new deduction provided in chapter 7 not only demonstrates that the categories can be deduced from the logical table of judgments, but also point to the

⁴²⁷ Cf. Allison, p.124.

need for imagination at work in a deduction of the table of judgments itself. It is only with a separate faculty, one that is at work in exploring the possible combinations of the a priori forms of intuition that such a deduction of either tables is possible. The imagination in this capacity does operate within parameters, but the parameters are not of the understanding. They are, rather, parameters established by reason and the forms of intuition. Thus I believe the first obstacle can be overcome.

The second obstacle, the one regarding the relationships between the understanding, sensibility and imagination can be mitigated if one adopts the position that the imagination is not merely the liaison between the two faculties, but the unknown and common root of them both. Kant makes just such a suggestion in the introduction of the *Critique of Pure Reason* when he declares “that there are two stems of human knowledge, namely, *sensibility* and *understanding*, which perhaps spring from a common, but to us unknown, root.”⁴²⁸

Understanding the imagination as performing necessary functions in both sensibility and understanding allows us to comprehend Kant’s claim. When determining judgments, that is, by joining the deliverances of the senses with the concepts of understanding, there are two different and discrete faculties at work. But in discovering the means through which both intuitions and pure concepts are accounted, the imagination takes center stage. The imagination in its role in the presentation of a unified intuition; the imagination in its role of determining the categories of the understanding; and the role of the imagination as the faculty of synthesis in general, now permits us to understand what the common root of these

⁴²⁸ A15/B29.

two stems of knowledge may be. Kant has demonstrated the need for a synthesis in sensibility as well as a need to account for the synthesis found in acts of judgment. By taking the imagination as the root of both faculties, the syntheses found in the respective faculties becomes plausible. No longer must one argue exclusively for synthesis in any of the faculties. If the imagination is the root from which both sensibility and understanding spring, synthesis can plausibly be found in both. In doing so, the obscurities found in the A-edition can be ameliorated. The syntheses found in apprehension and the synthesis found in recognition can be viewed as the outgrowth of the synthesis found in imagination. Thus Kant can maintain his claim that synthesis in general is the product of the imagination, while the specific syntheses, whether they be the immediacy of apprehension, category generation of the understanding, figurative synthesis or intellectual synthesis; all such syntheses are grounded upon and derivative from the transcendental power of imagination. Such an interpretation promotes the hypothesis that the imagination finds employment in both sensibility and understanding. Rather than describing the imagination at work in both stems of knowledge, one can assert that synthesis occurs in both stems because of a common root. When examined from the stem of sensibility, the imagination finds itself at work in presenting a unified manifold, when examined from the understanding, the imagination also performs the necessary task of providing categories. The common root between the two, the one that actually explains the common connection between two seemingly independent and incommensurate faculties is the imagination itself. From a transcendental standpoint, the imagination

is a discrete faculty, but one which finds itself employed in both stems of human knowledge. Because it is a common source for both stems of knowledge, the role of imagination as an independent faculty does not suffer greatly from any third man argument.

Such a strategy does, however, bear one further relevant consideration. Since Kant describes the imagination with such variety, the question remains whether it is a single, unified faculty or perhaps more than one. Kant repeatedly cites the reproductive use of the imagination, most notably in the synthesis of imagination in reproduction. When describing the imagination at work in the Transcendental Deduction, Kant prefers to describe the imagination as productive and even transcendental. Such concerns, however, should trouble the reader very little. The productive use of the imagination is the very transcendental power described in the unity of apperception, but, furthermore, is the transcendental power at work in the original deduction of the categories in chapter 7 section A. By means of the transcendental use of imagination, one literally determines both the unity of the self as well as the conceptual architecture at work in cognition. This productive and creative power establishes the grounds from which cognition is possible. By considering the historical use the imagination has traditionally been given, one can see Kant 's employment of the imagination in its reproductive role as complementary to the productive use found in Kant's (and my own) transcendental arguments. The reproductive imagination represents objects no longer present. Such representation is a presentation, hence reproduction is a production. Much as Richard of St. Victor has

Bilhah as the handmaiden of reason, so too does the productive imagination have the reproductive imagination as a function of its employ. The presentation of reproduction of previous delivered senses is simultaneously a production for a new presentation. Thus we can see the imagination is an independent faculty, one which accounts for synthesis in varying capacities, and which unifies all syntheses under one faculty that is the root of Kant's dualism.

Chapter Nine: Imagination and Error Production

Principled Error Production

Even though Kant's critical reformulation finds a radical fundamentality and priority for imagination in the processes of cognition, in roles that are necessary for human knowledge to obtain, Kant is cognizant of the history of the imagination and the deceptive practices often attributed to it. In uncovering and clarifying the elements necessary for human knowledge, the imagination has its proper place. But, Kant will also observe that the imagination is prone to "daydream" and extend itself beyond experience.⁴²⁹ Despite its essential role in cognition, without proper parameters the imagination can also lead human knowledge astray. After Kant has performed his critical analysis in the *Transcendental Analytic*, he turns his attention to mistaken judgments of cognition, and it is here also that we find the imagination at work, at work in a way not countenanced by Kant, but, rather, as a source for illusion.

The *Transcendental Dialectic* is Kant's explanation and analysis of trenchant errors concerning metaphysical topics. Such an exploration is a fitting discussion in Kant's philosophy, for Kant is attempting to perform a critique that "must set forth the possibility of synthetic cognition *a priori* through a deduction of these concepts"

⁴²⁹ Prolegomena. 70, 4:317.

and to “set forth the principles of their use, and finally the boundaries of that use.”⁴³⁰

In other words, Kant attempts to ground metaphysics by determining the nature of human knowledge both in its construction as well as its limitations. Delimiting metaphysics as a science will combat the illusions of the established *schulphilosophen*, and will determine the objects and topics about which humans may make knowledge claims.

Metaphysics, as Kant conceives it, is “a natural predisposition of reason, but is also of itself dialectical and deceitful.”⁴³¹ Such inquiries are “indispensable” to the vocation of reason, and human understanding gravitates towards speculation about “the totality of all possible experience.”⁴³² As Kant understands the history, the discipline of metaphysics, both rationalist and empiricist, has consisted of speculation beyond the realm of human experience or a blatant appeal to probability and common sense. Neither approach determines what topics are fitting for knowledge claims. The former extend too far; the latter fails to provide the necessity metaphysical knowledge seeks. Kant sets about establishing metaphysics as a science that can dispense with the “ill-directed and fruitless cultivation” of ideas of pure reason in order to turn reason to a metaphysics “that will not deceive.”⁴³³ The common mistake in all inquiries concerning metaphysics up to Kant’s critical philosophy was to make knowledge claims that regarded concepts and ideas concerning objects that are never experienced. Speculation concerning notions such as God, freedom and the soul, as

⁴³⁰ Ibid. 119, 4:365.

⁴³¹ Prolegomena 119, 4:365.

⁴³² Ibid. 82, 4:328.

⁴³³ Ibid. 119-120, 4:365.

well as the principle of sufficient reason, had long been in practice, but, Kant notes, had not made any progress since Aristotle.⁴³⁴ It is to just such ideas that Kant turns in his Transcendental Dialectic.

In turning to such notions in the Dialectic, Kant does not wish to incontrovertibly refute the contents of such claims. Rather, Kant wishes to determine whether any such metaphysical doctrines can be asserted as propositions of human knowledge. His answer to such an inquiry is a resounding NO. This is not to imply that such ideas do not prove useful. Instead of asserting God, freedom and the soul as objects of human knowledge Kant will restrict their use in human thought. He will promote them as regulative ideas, ideas which are useful to thinking, but which can never be the objects of determinate judgments. These ideas are the “natural” product of reason projecting determinate ideas to their logical conclusion, community, causality and substance respectively. Kant explains reason’s desire to think these knowable, determinate concepts to their logical conclusion because human reason naturally attempts to encompass all possible topics of inquiry in its search for completeness.⁴³⁵ For reason to think community (totality) causality (antecedent conditions and consequents) and substance (that which endures through time and predication) to their logical conclusion—to think beyond the objects of finite cognition to their infinite conclusion—is reason’s attempt to expand human cognition beyond the bounds of objects known by finite human cognition. But, as Kant will point out on each occasion, the limits of human knowledge do not permit determinate

⁴³⁴ Ibid. 122, 4:368.

⁴³⁵ A298/B354.

claims to be made of such. To make a claim concerning the knowability of these topics, is one thing, to employ the ideas or to have faith in them is another. Faith in the ideas of God, freedom and the soul are useful for several reasons. The first of which is that reason (human understanding) is satisfied at having postulated what such ideas might contain, if expanded beyond objects it can know. Human curiosity is satisfied to a certain extent, insofar as we can projectively imagine what such ideas are/might be. In this regard, Kant suggests, human reason can and will inevitably tend, and, in thinking according to such ideas, the vocation of reason is satisfied.

A second benefit from thinking through to these unknowable ideas is the possibility of regulating human behavior and thinking. Immediately apparent is Kant's proposal to delimit human knowledge to allow room for faith. By declaring God, freedom and the soul as unknowable, Kant creates space for religious perspectives and toleration, perhaps even reclaiming the essence of religious sentiment in terms of faith. By allowing room for faith in delimiting the objects of human knowledge, Kant also permits such ideas to regulate human behavior. If we determine our behavior "as if" God exists, we have freedom and hence responsibility for our actions, and for these actions we must answer according to an eternal time frame, and Kant believes this will encourage morality.

The third, and perhaps most important, use Kant finds in designating such ideas as regulative is to humble the scientific claims of rationalist metaphysics. By designating certain topics off-limits, the topics about which humans can claim knowledge is thereby limited; by placing boundaries around human cognition, Kant

serves to further delineate those topics that can be known. Such epistemic humility bespeaks Kant's commitment to the limitations of human knowledge writ large, and by demonstrating what lies beyond the boundaries of knowable objects, Kant believes that it serves to put in relief what and how humans can come to know objects.

When turning to the Dialectic in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant observes such ideas as God, freedom and the soul are indeed concepts we have in our mental repertoire, but they are not concepts that have any real connection to experience.⁴³⁶ We do not, Kant claims, experience any of these concepts; that is, we never intuit an object that corresponds with these ideas. Rather, these concepts are the product of reason thinking itself to completion. To make a distinction between concepts of experience and these experientially ungrounded concepts, Kant renames these unexperienced and unexperientiable concepts as ideas of reason. It is reason's desire to think infinitely about concepts that it does not experience and cannot know that leads reason to posit such constructions e.g. when experiencing substance, human understanding recognizes substance as that which endures through time and change; in thinking that which endures infinitely, reason constructs the concept of soul—that which is immortal.

To distinguish this form of error in knowledge claims from that of an empirical sort, Kant's analysis in the Transcendental Dialectic is focused on transcendental illusion not with empirical illusion. Transcendental illusion, unlike

⁴³⁶ It could be asserted that one does experience such concepts in thinking them. And this much may be true. What Kant is pointing out is that even with this concession, one does not experience the object that such a concept purports to encompass. In the case of 'experiencing' the concept when thinking it, all one merely does is experience the thought of the concept, not the object it intends to represent—although there may be an exception with freedom as I shall argue later.

that of the empirical species, is concerned with ideas or principles that “are in no wise concerned with objects of experience.”⁴³⁷ One simple explanation for the illusion of the ideas of reason is an overextension of their use. One may meaningfully discuss the enormity contained in the ideas of God, freedom and the soul, but it is an overextension to posit them as actual objects of possible experience. Kant’s analysis decries speculative metaphysicians who have taken reason’s ability to expand concepts of experience to the domain of infinity, and do so by the daydreams of the imagination. Without experience of these ideas, one imagines what such concepts contain and do so by pursuing a reasoned or logical conclusion of the extension of concepts of experience. Kant will even concede the necessity to think to such limits, citing again the need for reason to think totality and completeness, but invariably Kant judges these imaginative fantasies as illusory and mistakes when posited as the claims of knowledge. And while this simplistic and mundane explanation about the mechanism that drives the transcendental illusions of the ideas of reason presents a viable limitation to the ideas of reason, this line of argument does not deviate too greatly from his philosophical forebears—on several occasions, we have been countenanced against placing too much trust in the imagination. In addition, it is not able to explain illusions of the empirical sort. If one does not rely upon this overly simplistic explanation, there is, I believe, a complementary explanation that covers illusions of both sort. A principled explanation will allow Kant to describe error production both transcendently and empirically. Rather than pursuing these illusions separately, I would like argue for a single principle that can explain both

⁴³⁷ A295/B352.

sorts of error in judgment, and then demonstrate its application in illusions both transcendental and empirical.

In the *Prolegomena*, we find a formulation for a single principle that can explain error production. Kant states that “all illusion consists in taking the subjective basis for a judgment to be objective”⁴³⁸ To understand the viability of this single criterion for error production, it is essential to remind ourselves of a few the already established Kantian doctrines. By the time Kant arrives at the Transcendental Dialectic in the 1st Critique, he has elucidated the subjective conditions of experience. From the Transcendental Aesthetic, we have come to understand that space and time are transcendental ideas, subjective, aesthetic conditions necessary for the intuition of the deliverances of the senses. From the Transcendental Analytic, Kant has determined the necessary but subjective conditions necessary for organizing (spontaneously) the deliverances of the senses from a human-rational standpoint, the categories. In order for intuitions to appear, they must be organized by the categories, and, as such, Kant has established the objective validity of these basic constituents of human perception and cognition. The single most important consequence of these essential elements is to effect the Copernican turn and Kant’s argument that human knowledge amounts to a collection or system of rules that govern appearances and the objects that appear in human cognition. We cannot, by this claim, know what an object is in itself, we cannot know thing(s) in themselves because objects of appearance are always intuited through the forms of intuition and organized according to the spontaneity of the understanding. The realm of human knowledge is

⁴³⁸ B70; *Prolegomena*. 82. 4:328.

limited to “objects” defined as what can appear in human experience. What the ideals of reason and speculative metaphysics presuppose is that the concepts necessary for human knowledge are actually determinate of things in themselves. When reason imaginatively extends (even in its natural use) its domain from the finite sphere of human knowledge and attempts to determine what substance is as a thing in itself, reason attempts to determine not what substance is as a subjective condition for knowledge, but what substance entails beyond human experience. The concept of soul—immortality of enduring being—arises. But this is the very mistake Kant has just cautioned against. Substance, a subjective condition for experience and knowledge thereof, is never experienced in itself. To claim that we ever experience substance, the condition of experience, is the first mistake. One can never experience what endures through time and change, even though one organizes their experience according to such a concept. In fact, empirically, we are hard-pressed to find any enduring substance in all the objects of experience. Yet we still employ the category when organizing the deliverances of the senses. For example, when painting a wall, the color and even texture may change, yet in order to describe the experience of painting an enduring referent i.e. a wall is necessary in order for the activity to be intelligible. Yet given a larger time reference, one will most likely experience the decay of the wall. Psychologically, we therefore expand the concept of substance not to walls themselves, but to smaller particles out of which the wall was comprised. And yet these too will eventually decay ad infinitum. This process ad infinitum thwarts reason, and hence reason posits the absolute reference from which an infinite

substance, soul, cannot decay. Yet souls are never the object of human experience. For the sake of completeness on an infinite scale, reason can think the enduring substance, but such a substance is not an object of possible experience. And when metaphysicians mistake this logical and natural conclusion of reason and posit it as a necessarily existing object, Kant reminds them 1) that such an object can never be experienced, hence it cannot be included in the corpus of knowledge and 2) that in doing so, speculative metaphysicians have mistaken a subjective condition for an objective one e.g. the category substance, pursued it to its logical end, soul, but since it is not an object of experience, must posit it as the thing in itself. In doing so, speculative metaphysicians have violated the strict prohibition concerning predication of the thing in itself, and would be forced to deny the Copernican revolution in Kant's philosophy. But by having shown the necessary conditions for the possibility of experience, Kant believes metaphysicians cannot deny that these predications are merely subjective conditions, and hence knowledge of soul(s) is relegated to the realm of the thinkable, by the vocation of reason, but cannot be included in knowledge claims. In short, it truly is a flight of fancy, or the imaginative extension of reason to attempt such folly.

Likewise, Kant is able to argue for empirical judgments. In the already established language, illusion in empirical judgments is nothing more than mistaking judgments of perception, subjective judgments, for judgments of experience, objective judgments.⁴³⁹ According to Kant's examples, the statement 'When

⁴³⁹ The correlation of judgments of perception with the subjective conditions and judgments of experience with objective conditions is an imperfect analogy. Allison, p. 136-142. However, in the

supporting a body, I feel weight.’ is merely a judgment of perception, while the statement ‘Bodies are heavy.’ (‘Bodies have mass.’) is a judgment of experience. The chief distinction between the two propositions remains that the former only refers to the experience of the perceiver, a reference to the perceiver’s state, and the latter predicates the object of experience. In the process of judging the former, reference is to oneself and the reported affect of supporting bodies. The subsumption of a particular object under a category, the requirement for the objective validity of the judgment, is entirely missing. When judging the second of these two propositions, on the other hand, one must subsume ‘body’ under the concepts, unity, reality, substance and existence. Because the categories have the objective validity illustrated from the deductions, in making a judgment of this sort, we are not describing the states of the perceiving subject, but are predicating the object of our experience. Anytime one mistakes a judgment of perception, the report of subjective experience, with a judgment of experience, the predication of an object, error results.⁴⁴⁰ This principle

Prolegomena Kant puts the subjective and objective conditions of experience in terms of judgments of perception and judgments of experience. By extending the conditions to their employment in judgment itself, it is easier to illustrate empirical judgments and the possibility of error.

⁴⁴⁰ One difficulty with this suggestion is that even in making judgments of perception, in order for the object of perception to appear, Kant argues that the categories are operative. E.g. In order for me to experience body and weight, I need to organize the manifold of experience to come up with concept like body and weight that one may pronounce when supporting a body I feel weight. Body, weight, support, feel and I are all concepts employed to make this statement. However, we can save the argument by exposing the referent. While it may be the case that every documented report of supporting bodies also leads to the assertion of feeling weight, this does not preclude the possibility that someone may support a body and not feel weight (not just in diminishing register but actually not feel weight). Hence the attribution of feeling is to myself and my states, not to the object itself. This is precisely what Kant wishes to demonstrate in the distinction between judgments of perception in opposition to judgments of experience. In the latter form, we are referencing ourselves, nor reporting feelings we experience, but are, rather, determining a predication ascribed to the object itself. Indeed it may be the case that most if not all our judgments of experience are extensions of judgments of perception (thereby making knowledge constructed) but we do so by employing the a priori categories to determine what we understand by body, weight, etc. And do so in a manner that is different from a judgment of perception. We do so by projecting the predication onto the object of experience—by

applies equally to transcendental illusions as well as those empirical. When one reports an idea one has as a knowledge claim, one has overstepped the parameters necessary for knowledge. When one reports a subjective experience as objective, so, too, has one made an errant knowledge claim.

While this distinction is important, it does not appear to explain the most common form of error production, mistakes of regarding the deliverances of the senses in terms of the object. Yet, in fact it can. Aristotle's classic example of wine, honey and vinegar can serve as a good example and demonstrate exactly how the mistaking of the two types of empirical judgments follows. When drinking wine after having eaten honey, wine tastes bitter. When drinking wine after having tasted vinegar, wine tastes sweet. What can be said of wine? Is wine sweet? Is it bitter? It is exactly this sort of relativistic tendency that demands Kant distinguish between judgments of perception and judgments of experience. Both declarations regarding the wine are judgments of perception. Failing to understand this, one might be tempted to transition from 'The wine tastes bitter' to 'Wine is bitter'; thus confusing the report of a perception with predication of the object and creating the illusion that we have predicated the object of experience.⁴⁴¹ But it is precisely illusion that has arisen. Such a line of argument could lead one to ask whether one can describe objects of experience in any meaningful way. Can we truly say anything of wine?

referencing the object and determining (although inductive and thereby defeasible) the predicate as belonging to the object and not to ourselves.

⁴⁴¹ This is in fact the result of the passive understanding of the standard empiricist picture. If the only determination of the predication of an object is the passive receptivity from the deliverances of the senses, then judgments with caveats are the only type permissible. By showing what elements human understanding brings to judgment, Kant is attempting to show demonstrate that all judgments are of the type that needs caveats. But rather than physiological caveats, Kant wishes to show the spontaneous caveats, thereby humbling human knowledge even further.

Kant's initial response appears to defer the question. Kant's concern does not seem to apply to particular instances of objects of experience in terms of their qualitative experiences. Kant's concern lays in determining the appropriate domain of natural science (and pure natural science and metaphysics). As such, Kant is not concerned with the taste of wine for reasons other than aesthetic, but, at this point in the analysis, he will concern himself about the predication of objects in reference to primary and not secondary qualities; that is to metaphysical principles and not merely accidental qualities. Regarding the taste of wine a *ceteribus paribus* clause (normal-optimal operating conditions clause) seems to be in place, and the determination of a taste of wine is made only in reference to 'normal' operating conditions of the senses and a prolonged process of comparison with multiple instances of tasting, wine tasting in particular. The science of oenology is possible, but Kant will not concern himself with the specifics of this branch. Rather, he will concern himself with the conditions necessary for the possibility of experiencing the wine i.e. that as a body it must have weight, that the wine causes taste receptors to experience etc.

Why we are tempted to mistake subjective conditions with objective conditions is a question about the psychology of error production—a question with which Kant does not overly concern himself. One possible reason is ignorance of the distinction between judgments of perception and judgments of experience. But even after the discovery, one might lose the rigor demanded by Kant's distinction and contend that perceptions are reports of objects. Kant suggests that this may be due to a kind of psychological darkness that precludes us from maintaining the distinction

described. It may be the case that we find the demand for rigor and right judgment outweighed by other concerns, and this obscures the distinction.⁴⁴² But does this imply that so long as we remain diligent and dutiful to epistemic concerns that we can and will avoid error? Will the parallax and the mirage no longer deceive us? In a certain sense, Kant's answer seems to be yes. When we report the perception of the parallax or the mirage, we will report them as subjective states and thus avoid the error of predicating an object falsely. Under Kant's conception, we will contend the oar appears bent, and can conduct further experiments to determine whether we can predicate the oar in any way in much the same way as was practiced prior to Kant, but now we have another argument for the necessity of doing so (other than the pragmatic one).

One further consideration of error, one that displays the same concerns as the standard historical picture is that of error and illusion found in dreams and delusions. As part of his refutation of idealism, Kant contends that "the existence of outer things is required for the possibility of a determinate consciousness of the self."⁴⁴³ But this does not imply that "every intuitive representation of outer things involves the existence of these things, for their representation can very well be the product merely of the imagination (as in dreams and delusion)."⁴⁴⁴ Kant's chief concern here is to argue against Berkeley's idealism, but also Descartes' material idealism.⁴⁴⁵

Following his explanation of the reciprocal nature of determining a transcendental

⁴⁴² Pröl. 60, 4:307.

⁴⁴³ B277.

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁵ To contrast his own transcendental or critical idealism from those of Berkeley and Descartes, Kant describes the former as dogmatic and the latter as problematic idealism. Cf. B275

unity of apperception found in the B-deduction and the objects of intuition, in addition to his concern to separate his own critical or transcendental idealism from the “fanatical idealism of Berkeley,” Kant argues that the affective nature of intuition implies an ‘object’, unknowable though it may be, that is “responsible” for the impressions of the senses. And because intuitions are the product of affectation, one implication might be that every intuition has a corresponding transcendental object. And while Kant will maintain that most appearances probably do have such a corresponding object, it is not necessary that all of them do. It is possible that certain presentations of intuition might merely be “the reproduction of previous outer perceptions.”⁴⁴⁶

This conciliatory move to the historical record fits nicely with Kant’s elaboration of the reproductive function of imagination as well as the stigma so often attached with the faculty and accompanying memories. Kant has explained how illusion arises, but has not yet provided any resolution to the problem. One such solution is to return to the essential formulation of error production. If, in dreaming, one ascribes the experience of the dreamer and the representations found in dream (or delusion) to objects, one has mistaken subjective experience for objective. One easy correction is to withhold judgment concerning the objects of dreams, and only to describe the experience the dreamer undergoes. And while this restriction may indeed avoid error production based upon dreaming or delusion, one further question arises; how do we know when we are dreaming from when we are not? If the overriding epistemic concern demands that we never predicate objects of experience,

⁴⁴⁶ B277.

either as existent or as having properties, based upon dream states, Kant must provide some criterion to allow for safe predication.

Such dream considerations are the resonant response of Kant to Descartes' concern, and it is in this context that we find Kant's response to the question concerning dreaming and waking. He writes:

Cartesian idealism therefore distinguishes only outer experience from dream, and lawfulness as a criterion of the truth of the former, from the disorder and false illusion of the latter. In both cases it presupposes space and time as conditions for the existence of objects and merely asks whether the objects of the outer senses are actually to be found in the space in which we put them while awake, in the way that the object of inner sense, the soul, actually is in time, i.e., whether experience carries with itself sure criteria to distinguish it from imagination. Here the doubt can be easily removed, and we always remove it in ordinary life by investigating the connection of appearances in both space and time according to universal laws of experience, and if the representation of outer things consistently agrees therewith, we cannot doubt that those things should not constitute truthful experience.⁴⁴⁷

The answer to the question concerning how one distinguishes dream and illusion from waking experience and the truth one can predicate of objects in waking life appears to be an appeal to the regularity and consistency that we find in waking life, in opposition to those we find in dreaming. In short, Kant seems to answer the question of dream illusion by declaring that truthful experience follows universal laws of experience i.e. those logical judgments found in the original deduction above.⁴⁴⁸ If we find two objects existing in the same place at the same time, we may vouchsafe that we are dreaming.

⁴⁴⁷ Prolegomena. 91, 4:37.

⁴⁴⁸ Very much in the same manner as Descartes, Kant does not doubt the veracity of logical judgments.

One difficulty with this explanation is that if these logical impossibilities fail to obtain, we still do not know whether we are dreaming or awake. In fanciful dreams, it is not too difficult to differentiate between dreaming and waking experience. In the absence of absurdities, it proves more difficult. For example, if we should find pink elephants as the objects of representation that follow the logical possibilities according to space and time, can we vouchsafe we are awake and having truthful experience? Can we truthfully claim pink elephants exist? In a sense, Kant does not concern himself with such questions concerning the content of empirical investigation. Once again, his concern lays with the possibility of predicating objects of experience according to scientific principles. Kant's concern is not with whether elephants are pink or not, but with questions about whether bodies have mass or every effect has a cause. The specifics of the domain of pachydermology or even of particular events and their specific causes is beyond Kant's immediate concerns. For the content of these specific areas of inquiry, Kant will leave these to the experts in the fields of research that determine the laws that govern these disciplines. Kant's suggestion is that these disciplines, as all waking experience, must follow universal laws of experience, and failing to do so means we are either dreaming or delusional.

When Kant elaborates error production, his overriding concern is to provide a principled criterion that can establish cases of misrepresentation. The specifics of any particular empirical discipline, he can contend, must follow the parameters delineated in the 1st Critique when affirming knowledge claims. Kant offers such principles in the final section of the transcendental analytic, in which he continues the work found

in the Schematism, but provides more specific elaboration of the categories according to the received physics (Newtonian) of his day. These principles, by and large, offer an opportunity for more elaborate extension of the general rules found in the Schematism and a deeper exegesis on the categories in application. When Kant turns to error production, these principles are operative as secure means by which we can describe the world of experience. In the case of error production, Kant finds it imperative to offer the same principled approach to explain the mechanism(s) by which we overstep the secure principles and produce mistaken judgments. This is inherently an overextension of the products of the imagination itself. This principle has application in several different cases of error production, namely the transcendental dialectic, the relativity of sense experience and cases of dreams and delusions. And yet, there remains one principle that governs all error production. Whether one is claiming knowledge of transcendental ideas, qualitative experiences or dreams, the mistake is the same. In all these cases, one mistakes subjective conditions or qualities for those objective. When we report the metaphysical truth of God or souls; we have overextended our the ideas of reason and imagined them to be objective; when we report the feeling of heaviness we have imagined heaviness to be a quality of the object of experience; when we report the content of dreams or recombinant memories as objects of experience—in all these cases one has mistaken subjective conditions for objective truth. The source for error production is precisely the mistake of imagining/declaring that which cannot be experienced as proper to the realm of knowledge. Cognizance of the architecture of knowledge and diligence in

reporting appear to be the corrective measures necessary to humble the claims of human knowledge and the means by which we can reduce, if not entirely avoid, error. In Kant's own words, "pure reason's knowledge of itself in its transcendent (overreaching) use will be the only prevention against the errors into which reason falls if it misconstrues its vocation and, in a transcendent manner, refers to the object in itself that which concerns only its own subject."⁴⁴⁹

Summary of 1st Critique

In Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* we find a nuanced and fundamental formulation of the power of the imagination. The imagination, as we have seen, is important in the several aspects that comprise knowledge claims. Due to Kant's own ambiguities and revisions discovering just what the imagination is and how it operates in theoretical, pure, reason requires an excavation and interpretation of Kant's primary text. To overcome rational idealism(s), Kant wishes to retain empirical experience in the judgments concerning knowledge. At the same time, Kant wishes to combat the trenchant skepticism that follows from the empirical tradition based in Locke and Hume. Thus Kant's formulation of knowledge will affirm an empirical

⁴⁴⁹ Prolegomena 82, 4:28.

realism as well as a transcendental idealism. Such a philosophical shift elicits a problem for Kant; if empirical data is a necessary component of knowledge in addition to transcendental categories, how will two such disparate elements be brought to together in judgment? In other words, how can Kant claim that pure concepts have objective validity, objective reality and be applied to the deliverances of the senses?

To find the “common root” from which both sensibility and the understanding draw their radical natures and thus to bridge the gap between the two, I have appealed to the imagination, in an effort to gain insight into the basic question of connectivity of the two faculties, but also to shed light on this third obscure faculty. To determine how sensibility may present a unified manifold of discrete parts, Kant presents overtures to an original yet sensible synthesis of the components found in the immediate deliverances of the senses. The synthesis found in immediate apprehension amounts to the presentation of a unified field. According to Kant, all synthesis is the product of the imagination, and hence immediate apprehension of a sensible field must have recourse to the imagination in the presentation of a unified manifold at a particular, instantaneous moment. To determine the pure concepts themselves and to provide a deduction of the categories, I have argued for an employment of the imagination to which Kant only makes suggestive allusions.

Kant’s own deduction does not provide the legitimacy of his list of logical judgments nor the table of categories themselves. Instead, Kant’s deduction argues for a synthetic and transcendental unity of apperception necessary for all judgments to

obtain in a single consciousness. While an essential component for Kant's foundational enterprise, this deduction falls short of explaining and justifying either table of judgments or categories. To Kant's deduction, I have provided a derivation of the categories from the permutations of pure space and time as explored through imaginative variation. Such syntheses of pure intuitions and the subsequent logical judgments afforded these exercises of the imagination provide an objective validity for the categories that supplements Kant's exploration of objective validity from his own deduction. This second deduction, my own, has one advantage over Kant's own by demonstrating the origin of the table of logical judgments and categories while proving the exhaustiveness and exclusiveness of the judgments and concepts Kant provides. The tables of categories does indeed present a complete list of pure categories, categories that all finite beings whose sensibility is governed by the forms of intuition space and time. Once the legitimacy of the categories is demonstrated the only task that remains is to illustrate their application with the deliverances of the senses.

This final task, that of objective reality, we find in Kant's exposition of the Schematism. This section illustrates the fundamental role the imagination plays in connecting categories with sense data. Because of the dualism he establishes between understanding and sensibility, Kant must find a liaison between the two very different faculties. Kant already has such a faculty in place, and it is to the imagination that he turns explicitly in this section. The imagination creates rules determined by each categories presentation of the form of time, schemata, by which the categories can be

connected with a corresponding presentation of sensibility in time e.g. substance is that which endures through time, and when we intuit something enduring through time we call it a substance. Thus the actual employment of the categories with intuitions, the objective reality of the categories, is brought about by use of the imagination. Since imagination is operative both in sensation and in understanding, the imagination provides the common root that enables judgments of knowledge—both pure, in the case of logical judgments, and empirical, in the case of judgments of experience.

This interpretation provides two important aspects concerning knowledge claims. Judgments of experience and knowledge claims that are dependent upon empirical data, empirical knowledge claims, are indeed possible through this process, but, more importantly, so too are a priori knowledge claims. Empirical judgments, synthetic a posteriori claims, have long precedent in the empirical tradition. Kant now has the means to explain the manner in which they are brought about. Moreover, the deduction I have presented enables Kant to maintain and explain how a priori synthetic judgments are possible. Provided the categories can be demonstrated and we can employ pure intuition in the production of the categories, Kant now has the means by which to explain how cause and effect is possible, even though empirical examples remain only probabilistic. Importantly, Kant can refute Hume's argument that cause and effect is a mere fantastic product of habit by demonstrating that the connection between two events is necessary. Furthermore, such a demonstration aids in explaining the conceptual conditions necessary in order to assert the inductive

claims of empirical causality. Synthetic a priori knowledge is indeed possible, and as such, metaphysics as a science can be rigorously pursued.

Because Kant can explain how both empirical knowledge and metaphysics can be pursued, the final obstacle Kant must explain is error production. In this aspect Kant also has recourse to the imagination. Any imaginative overextension of categories will result in mere metaphysical speculation. Transcendental ideas like God, freedom and the soul are the result of just such overextension. Such ideas are never encountered and hence we can never possess knowledge, neither empirical nor metaphysical of them. We can however, argue for the rational consistency of such ideas, and hence may employ them in a regulative use, but never as determinative of knowledge. Regarding empirical error and illusion, the same mechanism of overextension is operative. When one imaginatively projects perspectival predication onto objects, we mistake judgments of perception for judgments of experience. Mistaking subjective conditions for objective conditions is readily available when one does not constrain the projective use of imagination. By explaining all illusion, whether in the dialectic of reason or in empirical employ, as imaginative overextension, projection of ideas or personal states as real, Kant continues the tradition of countenancing caution when employing such a powerful, fundamental and ubiquitous power as the imagination.

Even so, with all the accomplishments of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant himself finds it necessary to continue his critical enterprise, extending his analyses beyond theoretical reason to concerns practical and aesthetic. By establishing the

fundamentality of the imagination in theoretical reason, I would like to continue along Kant's architectonic by tracing this fundamental faculty in both the *Critique of Practical Reason* and the *Critique of Judgment*. The final two chapters of this work begin such explorations. Continuing the development of the theory of imagination from the 1st Critique, I will now turn to preliminary implications and integrations found in the 2nd and 3rd Critiques.

Chapter Ten: Implications and Integration Imagination in The Critique of Practical Reason

In the years between the first publication of the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) and the second (1787) Kant's attention to reason shifts from its theoretical use to concerns practical and moral. Immediately following his revision, Kant continues his programmatic of delimiting reason and publishes the *Critique of Practical Reason*. To find imagination in this work requires considerable effort. Kant only mentions the imagination in a handful of explicit references, most often in a skeptical and critical light, and thus one might contend that the imagination finds little application in Kant's moral philosophy. However, the omission of the imagination does not indicate its absence, but rather a need to demonstrate the connection between the 1st and 2nd Critiques and the requirements of the imagination for both theoretical and practical philosophy.

Kant begins the *Critique of Practical Reason* by making reference to suggested possible titles.⁴⁵⁰ He muses that he could have entitled the work "The Critique of Pure Practical Reason" thereby drawing closer connections to his first critique. However, Kant opts for the shortened title, that he may demonstrate that such a pure practical reason is possible. Rather than asserting pure practical reason,

⁴⁵⁰ Ak. 3, p. 3. All translations and references for Kant's 2nd Critique are from the Pluhar edition of the *Critique of Practical Reason*, hereafter CPrR. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason* trans. Werner S. Pluhar (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co.) 2002.

Kant prefers to title his second critical work “practical reason”, something he believes all rational agents demonstrate in their everyday deliberative actions, in an effort to clarify how one ought to pursue moral deliberations, that is, through pure practical reason.

Also in distinction from the 1st Critique, Kant does not begin this endeavor with an enumeration and analysis of the faculties of cognition, for either theoretical or practical philosophy. Kant does retain the same architectonic, a doctrine of elements followed by a doctrine of method. But because Kant wishes to establish a practical philosophy that is pure, he seeks to eliminate any candidates for a moral philosophy that make appeal to any empirical considerations. To ensure a practical philosophy that is universal and necessary—that is, based on a priori reason and not any personal or cultural interests—Kant will begin his exploration of moral philosophy by purging it of any particulars, and hence he begins with principles followed by an enumeration of concepts. It is only after he explores a priori, principled moral deliberation that he will turn to the illusory dialectic to complete his analysis of moral judgment and its possible illusions.

In such a principled approach, as is well-known, Kant determines that only a good will can be predicated as good without qualification.⁴⁵¹ In a quite superficial sense, a good will is a will that makes rules, maxims, to effect some consequence or action. Many other capacities as well as objects are considered good e.g. happiness, wit, intelligence, but only the will can be considered good without seeking another

⁴⁵¹ Ak. 393, p. 7. All references to the *Groundwork/Grounding* are from Immanuel Kant’s *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals* trans. James Ellington (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co.) 1993.

object to which it applies. Kant equates a good will to a will governed by pure reason. In contrast to intelligence that may be guided by reason to effect some end, a good will performs its function of maxim making according to the dictates of reason rather than the interests of other ends. Such a distinction between end-oriented rule-making and universal rule-making is the celebrated difference between hypothetical and categorical maxims. The will's function is to formulate maxims for action, and to claim a good will, a faculty not influenced by other ends than rule-making itself, Kant claims that reason must determine "the will by means of a priori grounds."⁴⁵² These a priori, unconditioned, grounds are the very determination of universal and necessary means by which to formulate rules for action. A categorical rule, or imperative, will be the only means by which the will can ensure no ulterior motivation or ends in formulating rules. Thus Kant believes that only a principled approach to moral action and moral deliberation is possible to provide a pure will that can ensure universality and necessity, and provide a moral law for all to follow. Such a formal principle is the only approach that will not rely upon any empirical conditions, and as such provide the unconditioned ground for moral action.

The formulation of the categorical imperative itself and such a discussion of a priori principles by which the will can provide rules for action is, I contend, the culmination of a rather imaginative process itself. By appealing to common sense, Kant recognizes the multitude and variety of motives that influence action. To remove all goal-oriented thinking, the most entrenched of which are personal or community happiness, to find a principled manner by which to conduct all actions in

⁴⁵² *Grounding* Ak. 408, p.20. *CPrR* Ak. 30, p.43.

a moral fashion, itself requires a deleterious thought process, often deemed “abstraction,” that can only be executed under an imaginative framework. The exercise amounts to asking oneself to remove all biographical information, both personal and cultural, in order to determine what capacities are at work in finding a truly universal morality. To escape a cultural relativism that often leads to one ethical, Kant removes such considerations as personal interest or happiness from any such deliberation and to posit a purely formal articulation of the moral law. This deleterious imagination leads Kant to consider action from a common standpoint among all so-called human beings, their possession of reason alone.⁴⁵³ Reason itself has no goal or object, but can by means of imaginative restraint reign in irrelevant, particular and goal-oriented considerations for maxim making in moral deliberations. The principle that avoids these errors and whose form can be applied in such deliberations is the oft quoted categorical imperative:

Act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law.⁴⁵⁴

or, alternatively,

So act that the maxim of your will could always hold at the same time as a principle of universal legislation.⁴⁵⁵

This purely formal formulation by which a good will determines the maxims a rational agent is to enact is the single principle that will govern a good will and hence all moral deliberations. By determining this as the single principle by which maxims

⁴⁵³ This also allows Kant to extend his moral framework to all rational beings. Cf. *Grounding* Ak. 427, p. 35 *Grounding* Ak. 421, p.30.

⁴⁵⁴ *Grounding*

⁴⁵⁵ CPrR Ak. 31, p. 45.

should be formed Kant argues for the objective validity of such a formulation. The objectivity validity obtains from the universality Kant requires in searching for a principle that can apply to a purely good will, one devoid of empirical ends. The necessity of this formulation comes from the demands of reason and the demands of a universal morality itself. There is no other way, Kant argues, by which the good will can govern its activities and obey the dictates of reason than by following this imaginatively deleterious, purely formal principle to govern all actions.

And yet it is this very formal articulation that provides some difficulty for the second, major concern of Kant, the objective reality and application of such a formal principle to particular instances in the world of empirical experience. It is here that the imagination finds another employment, one specifically understood as a liaison between the purely formal principle and situations as they are experienced. This imaginative willing or willful imagination, is one that can illustrate a deep imaginative theme in Kant's practical philosophy.

There is one concern however. In the 1st Critique, Kant employs the imagination through schemata to apply pure concepts to objects of empirical experience. Recourse to such an explanation is strictly prohibited by Kant when he says:

the moral law has no other cognitive power to mediate its application to objects of nature than the understanding (not the power of imagination). What the understanding can lay at the basis—as a law for the sake of the power of judgment—of the idea of reason is not a schema of sensibility but a law, but yet a law that can be exhibited *in concreto* in objects of the senses, and hence a law of nature, though

only in terms of its form; therefore we call this type of law the type of the moral law.⁴⁵⁶

It would seem that by shifting from theoretical reason to the practical, Kant has replaced the schemata with what he terms “the typic,” to the exclusion of the imagination in its former mediating function.⁴⁵⁷ Such a reading does apply if one considers the imagination in its role only as the faculty for schemata and not the law-likeness of concepts themselves. Assisting in the exclusion of the imagination is the aforementioned reading of the understanding in the narrow sense.⁴⁵⁸ Perhaps the inverse is in order here, that Kant can be interpreted as regarding the understanding in its broadest sense, and the imagination in its narrowest. By inverting these conceptualizations, a place for the imagination can be found, not only in the creation of a categorical imperative, but also in its application. To affirm the application of the moral law, Kant must describe and explain what a “typic” of practical reason must be and how it applies to concrete situations; to do so will require not only the imagination but imaginative thinking.

To understand the typic of the moral law, Kant suggests one ask a specific question in order to grasp how the application of the categorical imperative to concrete situations obtains. One must ask whether “you could indeed regard it [the action proposed] as possible through your will” and whether the action you propose were to “occur according to a law of the nature of which you yourself are a part.”⁴⁵⁹

This is the means by which one can apply the moral law through a typic to a situation

⁴⁵⁶ CPrR Ak. 69, p. 91.

⁴⁵⁷ CPrR, Ak. 67-71, pp.89-92.

⁴⁵⁸ Cf. Chapter 8.

⁴⁵⁹ CPrR Ak. 69, p.91.

in order to demonstrate the objective reality of the moral law. Satisfying the first of these requirements is not difficult to accommodate. One must merely ask whether it is possible to enact the maxim under deliberation e.g. can I do X. The second requirement, however, proves much more difficult to achieve. This second requirement amounts to asking “what if...” everyone permitted themselves to act according to such a maxim and what the world would amount to under such conditions.⁴⁶⁰ By speculating under such universalization, one must imagine what such a world would look like and whether such a world is logically possible. In cases that fail universalization, we cannot imagine a world (nature) where such maxims are employed. In other words, the type of world imagined is not one that is logically possible. Kant provides telling examples e.g. case of false promises and/or suicide that fail such a test. Imagining what a world looks like in which people are permitted to make false promises would be a world in which promise making becomes impossible. To imagine such a world is a logical impossibility.⁴⁶¹ But, importantly, in order to execute this type of the moral law, one must imagine what such speculation entails. It is only by imaginatively exploring the possibility or impossibility of such worlds that the type can bridge the gap between the purely formal moral law and the concrete situation in which one is tempted to enact the maxim e.g. when one is tempted to make a false promise when she believes it to be in her advantage.

⁴⁶⁰ By separating these two requirements, I do not wish to imply two separate requirements, for both are part of the universalization test. What is indicated here is a two step process, the first of which satisfaction can be determined easily enough, the second proving to be the litmus test required for moral prescription.

⁴⁶¹ CPrR Ak. 69, p.92.

Instrumental in applying the moral law and establishing the possibility of such a typic are: 1) the formal principle deduced from a pure will, 2) recognizing the concrete situation in which one is called to act, 3) forming a maxim (a rule governing the action under consideration) and 4) determining whether such a maxim when tested against the formal principle can indeed produce a world that is logically possible.⁴⁶² In the case of lying, the application of the moral law is quite simple. The formal, moral law has already been determined by Kant's consideration of a single principle based upon the good will's guidance by reason—that is, the categorical imperative. Examining the empirical situation within which one finds oneself remains an estimation covered by the 1st Critique and determining objects/situations of empirical experience. We can and do experience situations in which we find ourselves in interaction, either causal or reciprocal, with objects of experience, and the estimation of the objects (ourselves included) involved in a situation that elicits action is one which the epistemic and ontological considerations pure reason have made explicit. The third criterion amounts to introspectively understanding the action desired in the situation and the maxim by which the object can be obtained. This presents an opportunity for Kant to demonstrate the desire afforded by inclination and the calculative thinking we undergo in order to bring about desired effect. However, Kant insists that the desired effect must be brought about by moral means, not merely any means that presents a resolution of gratification. Should the desired effect only be achievable by immoral action, practical reason must lead the way and sublimate inclination. In the case of lying, one wants to acquire some advantage and the means

⁴⁶² CPrR, Ak. 68, p.90.

of attaining it can only be brought about by bearing false witness. Kant remains adamant and cautious at this point, reminding his readers that the desired object or advantage is not the proper motivation for morality.⁴⁶³ In this case the motive is some form of self-interest. But lest these deliberations become unclear and one be tempted to place the object of desire or advantage before moral considerations, Kant provides the fourth criterion. By examining what must be in place in order to bring about the desired effect, lying in this case, one can test the means by which such advantage obtains. By removing any personal or empirical considerations and examining the act of lying itself and the maxim needed in order to effect such an action, we remove any extraneous considerations or irrelevant data from the application process.⁴⁶⁴ By examining the maxim for the act itself and determining whether such a type of law produces a world that is possible, Kant can effectively test, a priori, whether such a maxim falls under the a priori auspices of the moral law. This imaginative, a priori application of the moral law is the type, or *typic*, of the moral law and only those that pass the test are *typics* that are imaginable and thus morally permissible.

Unlike schemata as we have found it in the 1st Critique, the *typic* does not rely on pure intuition, but, rather, is a conceptual abstraction that permits of a priori analysis, and then moral judgment in the application of the determination found in the universalization test. Bridging the gap between pure practical reason and its formulation of the moral law is the *typic* that permits one to withdraw from empirical

⁴⁶³ CPrR Ak. 72-73, pp. 95-97.

⁴⁶⁴ One might discuss this fourth step in the application process in terms of abstraction. One literally removes all consideration of advantage or interest and looks solely at the means used to obtain the end. Abstracting away or removing empirical considerations permits Kant to transform the empirical maxim into a pure maxim that permits of comparison with the moral law.

considerations and examine the maxim one is deliberating (for empirical action) to ensure that the means by which we are acting in the world conform to moral demands. According to Kant's analysis, this process is executed by means of the understanding because it is the faculty responsible for conceptual articulation. This being the case, the understanding is certainly the faculty in which this applicative process takes place, but it cannot do so without the deleterious and projective use of imagination. Moral judgments themselves may be the product of the understanding, but the understanding could not execute its task without aid from the imagination in the process of abstraction from the empirical world and projective testing required by the universalization test.

Having determined the objective validity of the moral law and the possibility and actuality of its application, its objective reality, Kant estimates that the categorical imperative is the only a priori formulation for a moral law, one that holds for all rational agents so long as actions are governed by practical reason and no other concerns. Concluding the *Analytic of practical reason*, Kant can then turn his attention to the dialectic and the possible illusions that arise from considerations of pure practical reason. The dialectic centers around two important discussions, the idea of freedom and its relation to other regulative ideas, and, the notion of a highest good. During this transition, Kant has the opportunity to reconsider his philosophical position and his epistemic humility from the 1st Critique and offers emendations to his analysis of the regulative ideas—God, freedom, and the soul—seen from the perspective of practical reason.

A reminder concerning his determination of God, freedom and soul is in order to understand Kant's further development of these ideas in the 2nd Critique. In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant concluded that such ideas are never (and can never be) experienced, and as such cannot perform any function in determining the world of possible experience. For a concept to be determinative of the world of possible experience, they must actually be found in experience. We find examples of determinative concepts in, pure concepts, categories, which are the building blocks from which we erect a considerable repertoire of empirical concepts. These basic concepts are actually experienced as demonstrated in the above deductions. If we are to have determinative concepts of God, freedom and soul, one would need to employ the categories in conjunction with data from sensation in order to produce them as empirical concepts. However, God, freedom and the soul are not empirical concepts that are the product of the application of categories to the deliverances of the senses. They are, rather, the product of pure reason thinking imaginatively and exhaustively, to completion, about such concepts as substance, causality and community-totality. As we experience these categories in completion, Kant relegates these products of reason to a merely regulative role that provides guidance for reason and even action, but not ideas we can claim to have corresponding objective reality. Kant claims the ontological status of these concepts must be left undetermined, citing their possibility in a noumenal world, but their impossibility of being experienced phenomenally.

In the 2nd Critique, Kant wishes to return to a discussion of these regulative ideas, to support his claims from the 1st, but also to illustrate how practical reason

emends the pronouncements of his earlier work. Kant introduces the idea of freedom in relation to the will and the latter's ability to form and act upon unconditioned maxims. He writes:

Since the mere form of a law can be presented solely by reason and hence is not an object of the senses and thus also does not belong among appearances, the presentation of this form as determining basis of the will is distinct from all determining cases of events [occurring] in nature according to the law of causality, because in the case of these events the determining bases must themselves be appearances. But if, moreover, no determining basis of the will other than that universal legislative form can serve as a law for this will, then such a will must be thought as entirely independent of the natural law governing appearances in reference to one another, viz., the law of causality.

Here Kant is reminding us that all appearances are governed by the category of cause and effect. But insofar as the moral law is presented by reason alone, it is not an appearance but a principle of reason. Since no empirical conditions will be permitted into an a priori principle, the universal moral law is not under the auspices of concepts that govern appearances. As the will is the faculty to effect the moral law in application, the will may be conceived as operating outside the laws of appearances, that is, outside the law of causality. Understanding the will as free permits Kant to continue affirming the possibility of a legitimate, universal ethics, one that has freedom to act according to maxims not governed by causal determinations. Responsibility and moral worth are consequent upon denying the determinist accusation that all actions have antecedent, determining causes. Kant can thus affirm the truth of the determinism, of cause and effect, but in contemplating the moral law and deciding whether the maxim under deliberation conforms to the universality of

the moral law, the will (and the understanding) operate outside of appearances. Causality is at work in appearances, but, as the will is outside of empirical phenomena in its deliberation, the will need not be conceived as an absolutely determined faculty. In short, the will is free. This doctrine, permits Kant to continue his argument from the 1st Critique, the one that denies empirical experience of freedom, but also permits him to argue for its actuality, an actuality that applies only at the deliberative and intelligible level. Kant continues to affirm that freedom regulates our behavior, because, while we cannot ever experience freedom and affirm it from an epistemic standpoint, the transcendental argument affirms its necessity in employment of the categorical imperative. As Kant has illustrated the application of the moral law, he can affirm that it is both possible and actual, he can affirm freedom is both possible and actual, while it is never experienced as an appearance. Of importance here is theoretical reason's inability to affirm the actuality of freedom, as it only resolves the antinomy of causality and freedom by determining freedom is possible according to a noumenal/phenomenal division. It is only practical reason that affirm its actuality, and yet still affirm that it is only understood as intelligibly actual and never a phenomenal manifestation.

And while Kant's consistency with the 1st Critique is admirable, perhaps, Kant is too modest in claiming that knowledge of freedom is impossible. As Kant has argued, the intelligibility of freedom and its possibility are required for practical reason, but its actuality, he insists, is not an object to which we have access. Because one never possesses an experience of the actuality of freedom, which would provide a

corresponding object, we can never make knowledge claims about freedom.⁴⁶⁵ And yet, according to Kant's description of the application of the moral law, we may have a single instance that not only demonstrates the necessity of freedom, but also provides an instance according to which we may find an object of experience that is freedom itself. Hence, I would like to push Kant's determinations in the 2nd Critique further than Kant himself did, in order to demonstrate the actuality of freedom and not just its possibility and intelligibility. To do so, we will have recourse to the imagination and its function of image production and representation.

According to Kant's analysis, pure practical reason begins by determining an a priori principle by means of which one may weigh deliberations concerning action. Pure practical reason provides the moral law, to which one must adhere in order to have moral worth for one's actions. We have even seen the possibility of applying such an a priori principle to concrete situations and the role the imagination plays as a liaison and facilitator between the pure, a priori principle guiding maxim formation and concrete situations in which one acts. And while Kant's understanding admits no medium of the imagination proper—rather, the typic is formulated by the understanding—in order to exact the correlation between a concrete situation and the a priori principle by deleterious abstraction and projective image formation in considering the logical viability of universalizing any given maxim evidence for the imagination at work is manifest. Furthermore, one can represent this very process to oneself. In fact, one does experience the abstraction, deliberation, universalization,

⁴⁶⁵ In several passages Kant continues to maintain this argument concerning knowledge of freedom. Cf. p. 43, 66, 67

and logical judgment by which this process is enacted. In so far as one undergoes this process, one also possesses the ability to represent such activities to oneself by means of self-reflective imaging. Not only do we undergo this process, but, moreover, we do have knowledge of the process undergone. To present such an internal process, Kant has no recourse to sensibility as providing the receptive half of his formulation for knowledge. And yet if knowledge is to obtain concerning our ethical deliberations, one must have not only the conceptual half of knowledge, but also the intuitive half. The imagination, I contend, might provide just such an image of the internal process. Kant himself admits that the moral law furnishes “as a sensible nature” the form of a world of understanding.⁴⁶⁶ The world of the understanding to which the moral law, the image of it and the universalization process, provides the conceptual requirements of the good will and pure reason’s generation of an a priori principle by which one can determine moral worth. Because the understanding through reason provides the moral law, Kant’s assertion about the understanding’s role in the objective reality, application, of the moral law remains true. But one now has further recourse to illustrate the experience of the objective reality and application of the moral law through deliberation and maxim formation. It is to this end that Kant suggests one “can cognize freedom” even though one can “never become conscious of freedom directly.”⁴⁶⁷

One can never become conscious of freedom directly like we are conscious of other objects of experience because of the missing element of receptivity from the

⁴⁶⁶ CPrR, p. 62.

⁴⁶⁷ CPrR, p. 68, p. 43.

senses. And yet, in imaginative representation, we do find the presentation of an image of the process by which we are applying the moral law. In this reproductive use of the imagination, one literally presents an image of themselves enacting the deliberative process and determining whether particular maxim's conform to the moral law. Furthermore, in this depiction, the subsequent judgment and finally acting or not on the maxim itself demonstrates the will in process. Because one decides, either in conformity with the moral law or not, and acts according to such a decision, representation of the process through internal, reflective images illustrates freedom itself. Such a depiction, provides an image of the moral law, as a sensible nature, that satisfies the epistemic requirement for knowledge claims according to Kant. We become aware of ourselves as agents that determine permissibility and impermissibility of maxims that are then enacted. Literally, but also figuratively, we have an image of ourselves as free agents, and hence have an object of experience that is freedom which allows one to claim knowledge of oneself as a free agent. Thus Kant can claim to know in addition to the possibility, the actualization of freedom. According to Kant, these claims may be justified by pointing out that the moral law *determines* that which speculative philosophy had to leave undetermined. The transcendental argument for freedom is now replaced with immanent use.⁴⁶⁸

This imaginative process has interesting parallels with the role of imagination in the genesis of judgments and categories from the 1st Critique; in fact, the qualifications of the knowledge claim of freedom in the 2nd Critique parallels the knowledge claims found in the earlier work. Much as we found in the deduction of

⁴⁶⁸ CPrR, p.67.

judgments and categories above, the role of the imagination in this practical application is qualified as productive and a priori. Just like the “objects” found in the original deduction earlier in this work, the “object” produced by the imagination in practical reason is also pure a priori. Due to the process of deleterious abstraction from concrete situations to discover the maxim under consideration for practical judgment, such judgments are removed from any empirical determinations. One is merely asking whether any particular maxim conforms to the logical prerequisite(s) of the moral law. Certainly, it holds true that the motivation to determine whether maxims do conform finds its impulse in empirical experience. But, nevertheless, any empirical motivation and considerations are rendered obsolete in the application of the moral law to maxims. Hence the process by which moral deliberation obtains is an exercise of pure, practical reason and the judgments rendered are a priori. Likewise, the representation of the process of deliberation and moral judgment remains a priori and sensible (by means of the image/representation of the process). Such a pure intuition of the conditions by which moral judgments are made and application of categories to this process renders an a priori knowledge of the actualization of freedom itself. Hence Kant’s claim concerning knowledge of freedom might be overly modest. We can and do experience freedom in moral deliberation, and as such can have a priori knowledge of freedom, but only by means of the imagination and its various functions in cognition.

This line of argumentation is, I believe, Kant’s doctrine of the suprasensible substrate. Kant continually affirms a knowledge of the suprasensible substrate,

freedom, required for moral deliberations, and consistently affirms this knowledge as intelligible.⁴⁶⁹ This intelligible knowledge is precisely the a priori knowledge of freedom afforded by the imagination and thereby allows Kant to maintain the distinction between a priori, synthetic, that is metaphysical knowledge, and knowledge that pertains to the world of experience and the world as we experience. Kant's purpose behind this distinction was to reform metaphysics and delimit what may be safely vouchsafed as knowledge from the finite human condition. Accordingly, Kant desires to relegate all metaphysical claims produced by mere axiomatic rationalism to the transcendental dialectic of pure reason. This knowledge of a suprasensible substrate differs, however, from such illusions because it is the very experience of freedom as actualized. Freedom, understood from the standpoint of theoretical reason is only a possibility, a possibility that may only be understood noumenally. Practical reason avoids the requirement demanded of pure reason by demonstrating the use freedom and the a priori knowledge we may have of it. In short, practical reason proves freedom not merely as a possibility, but as an actuality, and has "expanded our knowledge beyond the boundaries" provided by a critique of pure reason.⁴⁷⁰ Thus the regulative idea of reason as found in the 1st Critique is transformed by pure practical reason into an object of which we can have a priori, metaphysical knowledge.

Such a determination of freedom permits Kant to comment on further regulative ideas, God and the soul from the 1st Critique, but also a new regulative idea

⁴⁶⁹ CPrR, Ak. 31, p. 46.

⁴⁷⁰ CPrR, Ak. 51, p. 70.

found in the dialectic of practical reason, the highest good. Unlike determinate freedom, however, these ideas continue to remain merely regulative and not determinative, but in so doing have a strong connection with imagination and its ability to serve the vocation of reason in thinking the totality and completion of a system. Even from a practical standpoint, reason's vocation remains dedicated to considering the infinite in a regulative employment, but still must remain skeptical regarding the actuality of these ideas. And yet, these ideas are still productive in assisting practical reason in guiding action. Each regulative idea in turn will contribute to both reason's vocation and the regulation of behavior.⁴⁷¹

To open the section entitled the Dialectic of Pure Practical Reason, Kant reminds his audience that "pure reason, whether considered in its speculative or in its practical use.... demands the absolute totality of conditions for a given conditioned..."⁴⁷² And yet, this demand leads reason to "an unavoidable illusion [which] arises from the application of this rational idea of the totality of conditions to appearances as if they were things in themselves."⁴⁷³ One such unconditioned condition is the idea of freedom that has proven the "most beneficial straying into which human reason could ever have fallen, because it ultimately impels us to seek the key to get out of this labyrinth" as the imagination aided in doing above. In its pursuit of totality of unconditioned conditions, pure practical reason is not so much concerned with God, freedom or the soul, as was pure theoretical reason, but with

⁴⁷¹ For the vocation of reason in CPrR cf. Ak. 107, 121.

⁴⁷² CPrR, Ak. 107, p. 137.

⁴⁷³ Ibid.

the practically conditioned (which rests on inclinations and natural need) likewise the unconditioned; moreover, it does not seek this unconditioned as a determining basis of the will, but even when this determining basis has been given (in the moral law), it seeks the unconditioned totality of the object of pure practical reason, under the name of the highest good.⁴⁷⁴

The notion of a highest good is the object for pure practical reason, but it is not an object that obtains in human experience.⁴⁷⁵ And hence, any epistemic claims concerning the possibility or actuality of such a concept in the world of possible experience, appearances, must only be employed with a such a disclaimer. And yet, such an idea is “most beneficial” because it delimits pure practical reason’s scope while providing distinctions by which one can reconcile “needless controversies,” namely the apparent discrepancy between the worthiness to be happy and actually being happy.

The issue centers around Kant’s formulation of moral worth and its compensation in the world. To be morally worthy, virtuous, the maxim’s of one’s actions and the actions themselves, must be in conformity with the moral law. And yet, we find that even when one acts morally, one may suffer misfortunes in life. On the other hand, we often find immoral persons enjoying every luxury and happiness. It would seem that virtue and happiness rarely find themselves in proportion. According to Kant, two traditions have arisen to settle this difficulty. The

⁴⁷⁴ CPrR, Ak. 108, p. 138.

⁴⁷⁵ NB the “object” of pure practical reason is not the goal or motivation behind acting morally. Rather, it is the object of thought to which reason naturally inclines in order to contemplate the completion of a completely moral world. Such an object cannot determine the will, lest the motivation of ethical behavior become heteronomous and the will no longer remain pure in determining the principle by which a moral law is possible. Cf. CPrR, Ak. 109, 72-87.

“Epicurean” school of thought places happiness as the highest good, and argues that one should work to ease the misfortunes of life by wanting less (or at least finding efficient means for satisfying gratification) by means of prudence. The “Stoic” school considers moral worth, virtue, the highest good, and encourages a self-satisfaction of moral worth even in inhospitable circumstances.⁴⁷⁶ In order to regulate behavior in a world where discrepancies between virtue and happiness exist, the former position affirms happiness as the goal of morality, the latter virtue. Kant, on the other hand, wishes to affirm both.

In order to affirm a state wherein “virtue and happiness together amount to possession of the highest good, and thereby happiness distributed [to persons] quite exactly in proportion to [their] morality (as a person’s worth and his worthiness to be happy) amounts also to the *highest good* of a possible world,” Kant illustrates this very antinomy and wishes to expose the presupposition employed by both. Both Stoic and Epicurean schools argue for the irreconcilability of the two because of the discrepancies found in empirical experience. Kant’s simple resolution to this problem hearkens to the resolution of the dynamic antinomies of the 1st Critique. To affirm that both are possible, Kant will argue that in the world of appearances such discrepancies are found, but such disparity need not obtain in the noumenal world. The presupposition both schools of thought rely upon is the idea that the world of appearances, in Kant’s terms, is the only way of conceiving these relationships. This

⁴⁷⁶ CPrR, Ak. 111, p. 142. Kant cites these two differing approaches found in ancient philosophy as depicting the two trends one finds in moral considerations. He does not, however, wish to imply that these are the only moral theories to be found, only that contemporary positions find themselves aligned with either the pursuit of happiness or the pursuit of virtue.

presupposition amounts to a belief that this worldly existence of appearances is the only existence. However, if one imagines a world in which empirical appearances do not exhaust the metaphysical possibilities a resolution to the antinomy beings to appear. We can, according to Kant, imagine a world in which one's virtue and one's happiness are commensurate even though we may not find such states of affairs in our empirical experience. And yet, in order to imagine such a world, Kant will need to rely upon other regulative ideas.

One possible strategy to envision the highest possible good is to think as if one's life does not end with the secession of this physical existence. Kant argues for the immortality of the soul as a postulate of pure practical reason that permits one to think of the highest good as "progression proceeding *ad infinitum* toward that complete adequacy" of virtue and happiness.⁴⁷⁷ If one considers this infinite progression, which presupposes the "existence and personality of the same rational being," an indefinite amount of time remains during which virtue and happiness can be reconciled. Such a postulate is a "theoretical proposition, though not proveable as such," but yet one that permits a resolution to the antinomy. By imagining the immortality of the soul, reason finds one explanation that can affirm the possibility of the highest good and thus render it regulatory of both thought and action.

A second strategy that admits the possibility of the highest good is the postulate of God's existence.⁴⁷⁸ If, as empirical experience informs us, there are discrepancies between person's of moral worth and those who obtain happiness, and

⁴⁷⁷ CPrR, Ak. 122, p. 155.

⁴⁷⁸ CPrR, Ak. 124, p. 157.

we are resolve this difficulty by thinking an eternity, “it must lead to the presupposition of the existence of a cause adequate to this effect i.e. it must postulate the existence of God.”⁴⁷⁹ In several ways, envisioning the existence of God resolves the difficulties of postulating immortality of the soul and imagining the process of progression from the perspective of eternity. God as the cause of immortal souls resolves the causal difficulties (as found in Descartes), but furthermore, Kant can employ the infinite perspective to address the established epistemological problem of evil. Humans interpret their moral worth and happiness, but only from a finite perspective. If one envisions an infinite perspective, the disparity can, once again, be reconciled. Indeed, Kant ultimately wishes to employ both postulates as mutually reinforcing, albeit unknowable, propositions that can allow finite humans to think the highest good as possible, thereby providing a psychological mechanism by which he can affirm the thinkability of a highest good, but remain epistemologically cautious in affirming any of these ideas. These ideas, of the highest good, God, and immortal souls, are the means by which reason regulates its own thinking in determining the scope of pure practical reason. By thinking these ideas, by imagining them as possible postulates, practical reason can seek for the unconditioned condition that is the totality of moral considerations, without compromising the previous knowledge claims of the moral law and its applicability through freedom to concrete situations. These regulative ideas are purely rational exercises that permit reason to pursue its vocation, but by exposing and illustrating their interconnectivity, Kant can counsel his audience to remain skeptical regarding their existence. In this manner, regulative

⁴⁷⁹ CPrR, Ak. 124, p. 158.

ideas in the 2nd Critique regulate thinking and perhaps actions, much as they have in the 1st Critique.

Thus we find the imagination at the heart of pure practical reason and the products of moral deliberation. By determining an a priori moral law, Kant requires a liaison between the principle of pure, practical reason with concrete situations.

Moreover, in the process of applying the moral law to these situations we find a need for abstraction from irrelevant elements in deliberations concerning maxim formation.

Much like we found in

Aristotle's deliberative imagination, we find Kant appealing to a deleterious and projective employment of imagination in applying the moral law to action through the typic of practical reason. Furthermore, when returning to the idea of freedom we find

the imagination, in its ability to represent as pure a priori intuition the process by which we apply the moral law to concrete situations, providing a pivotal

demonstration of the actuality of freedom. This basic function of the imagination provides a Kantian argument to affirm both the possibility and actuality of freedom

beyond its merely regulative use as found in the 1st Critique. One can now begin to offer an argument for a determinative use and a priori knowledge of freedom. One

final parallel obtains to demonstrate the importance of the imagination in the 2nd Critique. As with other regulative ideas, the imagination provides the means by

which reason can project an idea that remains epistemologically dialectical, but quite instructive in its use. The ideas of the highest good as well as God and an immortal

soul, assist reason in its vocation, while remaining merely regulative ideas.

Chapter Eleven: Implications and Integration II Imagination in the Critique of Judgment

Because both theoretical and practical reason produce judgments, scientific knowledge and moral knowledge respectively, Kant's attention is drawn to the nature of judgment itself. That Kant is aware of a need to explore the capacity to judge itself becomes apparent in the rapidly successive publication of the *Critique of Judgment* in 1790 (only one and a half years after the 2nd Critique and 3 years after his revision of the 1st). To complete his programmatic of exploring various ways of judging and of connecting the first two Critiques together, Kant will explore one further manner by which humans do make judgments, the aesthetic, to put into relief species of judgments made in both theoretical and practical employments of reason. This strategy allows Kant to explore one further facet of human judging while illustrating important aspects of judging itself.

In his *Critique of Judgment*, the imagination to which Kant makes reference bears distinct differences from that cited in the 1st Critique. This discrepancy has left many commentators puzzling over the use of the imagination as Kant would have it in the 3rd Critique and its commensurability with that of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Following this puzzlement, and perhaps a consequence of it, is the tendency noted by Rebecca Kukla:

For most of the twentieth century, Kant's aesthetic theory was marginalized by analytic philosophers, who systematically privileged epistemology and (to a lesser extent) ethics as the core philosophical subdisciplines and who did not see aesthetics as substantially relevant to these subdisciplines. Kant's third *Critique* received vastly less scholarly attention than the first two, and the little commentary that it did receive was insulated from the rest of the corpus of Kant scholarship.⁴⁸⁰

The focus on Kant's earlier critiques defines the imagination in light of epistemic-moral projects to the neglect and confusion of the imagination in the third. Kukla notes that as this was the case, it has, however, been ameliorated in last couple decades, and the 3rd *Critique* has enjoyed a renaissance.⁴⁸¹ And while treatment of the *Critique of Judgment* has flourished in the last 15 years, the imagination has still been relegated to the margins and is often still cast in light of the epistemic-moral understanding. It is not that commentary is not available on the imagination and its role particularly in judgments of beauty and, somewhat less exemplary, in those of the sublime. But what is lacking is a comprehensive treatment of the imagination in the entirety of the 3rd *Critique*. Lacking also is an integration of the imagination and its prominent place in the *Critique of Judgment* with that of the first two.⁴⁸² It is to these two issues I now wish to take up in this final chapter.

⁴⁸⁰ Kukla, Rebecca *Aesthetics and Cognition in Kant's Critical Philosophy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006) p. 1.

⁴⁸¹ Cf. Theodore Uehling's *The Notion of Form in Kant's Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* (1971); Donald Crawford's *Kant's Aesthetic Theory* (1974); Eva Schaper's *Studies in Kant's Aesthetics* (1979); Paul Guyer's *Kant and the Claims of Taste* (1979, 1997); Paul Crowther's *The Kantian Sublime* (1989); Hannah Ginsborg's *The Role of Taste in Kant's Theory of Cognition* (1990); Rudolph Makkreel's *Imagination and Interpretation in Kant: The Hermeneutical Import of Kant's Critique of Judgment* (1990); Sarah Gibbon's *Kant's Theory of Imagination: Bridging the Gaps in Judgment and Experience* (1994); Beatrice Longuenesse's *Kant and the Capacity to Judge* (1998); Henry Allison's *Kant's Theory of Taste* (2001); Rebecca Kukla (2006).

⁴⁸² It is often asserted that the imagination has no role in the second.

It is my contention that not only is the imagination an essential component for all reflective judgments, of the beautiful, of the sublime and of teleology, but also that by looking to the specific uses of each, illumination on Kant's proposed thesis in the preface of the *Critique of Judgment*:

to determine whether "judgment give[s] the rule a priori to the feeling of pleasure and displeasure, the mediating link between the cognitive power [in general] and the power of desire (just as the understanding prescribes laws a priori to the cognitive power and reason to the power of desire)"⁴⁸³

can be provided. Conceived and understood according to a principle of purposiveness, Kant's thesis, I intend to show, will become clear. In other words, Kant establishes in his introduction the architectonic that he believes will complete his critical enterprise. By looking to the concept of purposiveness, purported by humans in various aspects of cognizing, theoretical, practical and aesthetic, all three *Critiques* become bound together into a systematic whole. By looking to judgment itself, Kant believes he can provide the a priori principle, purposiveness, found in all manner of judgments. Thus the 3rd *Critique* is often hailed as the mediator between theoretical, concepts of nature, and practical, concepts of freedom, to form a whole. "There must after all," Kant says, "be a basis *uniting* the supersensible that underlies nature and the supersensible that the concept of freedom contains practically, even

⁴⁸³ Kant, Immanuel *Critique of Judgment* trans. Pluhar (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1987) p. 5. All citations henceforth will be provided with the page number followed by the Akademie edition of Kant's collected writings e.g. 5/168.

though the concept of this basis does not reach cognition of it either theoretically or practically.”⁴⁸⁴

Kant determines it is the idea of purposiveness that is the single a priori principle that presides over judgments. But this principle differs from those found in either of the first two Critiques. In the *Critique of Judgment*, Kant distinguishes between determinate and reflective judgments. “If the universal (the rule, principle, law) is given, then judgment, which subsumes the particular under it, is determinative.” These determinate judgments are those found in Kant’s exegesis of theoretical cognition in the 1st Critique. In the 3rd, however, Kant wishes to discuss judgments of reflection. “If only the particular is given and judgment has to find the universal for it, then this power is merely reflective.”⁴⁸⁵ Popularly understood, determinate judgments are described as cognition from concepts under which particulars are subsumed, and reflective judgments are particulars from which humans cognize universals. The signal difference between these two forms of judgments is the idea that determinate judgments are the variety employed in epistemic claims found in theoretical philosophy and its determinations about nature and moral claims found in practical philosophy and those judgments determining action guided by reason, while reflective judgments do not determine objects or actions. Reflective judgment “gives only a law to itself [human reflection on judging].”⁴⁸⁶ Thus the conclusions obtained in reflective judgment are not designations of objects nor actions, but comment on the tendencies found in the

⁴⁸⁴ CJ, 15/176. emphasis in original

⁴⁸⁵ CJ, 18/179.

⁴⁸⁶ CJ, 19/180.

function of these judgments. The suggestion that purposiveness is the a priori principle that guides all judging does not determine that all things, neither objects nor actions, do indeed have a purpose, rather it suggests that all human cognition orients itself around a thinking *terminus ad quem*.

Kant presages this demarcation of determinate and reflective judgments, when, in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, he distinguishes between the determinative and regulative judgments. Determinate judgments, as cited above, determine the particulars that are subsumed under universals for the sake of veritative knowledge claims. Regulative judgments, on the other hand, cannot be determined true or false, but, rather, are thought “as if” in order to regulate thinking. Epistemic judgments concerning God, freedom and the soul cannot be proven or demonstrated by human cognition, but can modify the ways in which thinking occurs, that is, they regulate human thinking. Kant neither differentiates nor conflates reflective and regulative judgments in the 3rd Critique, but one finds similarities in the function of such judgments.⁴⁸⁷ Both modify human thinking. Regulative judgments, often called regulative ideas, Kant believes delimit the bounds beyond which human cognition cannot trespass while still making objective claims according to his scheme of metaphysics as a science. One cannot metaphysically speculate on god, freedom, or the soul and do so within a sound critical philosophy. In similar, but different, fashion, reflective judgments present an end to which human thinking can aspire. While clearly not judgments warranting veritative epistemic claims, human cognition

⁴⁸⁷ At CJ, 237/361 Kant does, however, claim that reflective judgments of teleology are regulative and not constitutive.

can think an end and purpose to its varied enterprises. In fact, Kant claims, we find this very thinking pleasurable.⁴⁸⁸

It is within this context of species and functions of judgments that one finds Kant's thesis regarding the single a priori principle of judging itself. One finds that discovering "order is an occupation of the understanding with regard to a necessary purpose of its own."⁴⁸⁹ Kant reemphasizes here the tendency so often cited in the 1st Critique—for human reason to think of ends, often beyond its own ability, and to use these ends both to aspire to and delimit its thinking. Purposiveness found in nature cannot be verified as true, nor, as is hotly contested, is purposiveness to be found in acting morally. But humans find a pleasure in thinking a unified order of nature, all empirical laws subsumed under one guiding aegis, and positing a kingdom of ends as that to which all actions should aspire. What Kant seems to suggest is that humans do indeed find pleasure in organizing the concepts of nature and concepts of freedom into a systematic unity. These internal subjective states seem undeniable, even if the value placed on these objects does not obtain in nature or freedom itself. The fact is, humans find pleasure in this activity, and Kant wishes to evaluate these subjective conditions of experience.

And yet, the pleasure found in these varied forms of thinking purposiveness in any aspect of human cognition, itself, falls under scrutiny of its own principle. It may very well be the case, Kant accedes, that in thinking all human cognition has an end, a purpose, and unifying principle is not the state of affairs, but rather, that which must

⁴⁸⁸ CJ, 26/186.

⁴⁸⁹ CJ, 26/187.

be thought because “only through such laws do we first get a concept of what a cognition of things is.”⁴⁹⁰ This very enterprise, I would like to suggest, is quite imaginative, and as such the imagination plays a prominent role in reflective judgment. It is now to the actual examples of reflective judgment, of beauty, sublimity and teleology, that I wish to examine. We find in so doing to what extent these feelings are imaginative and what role, if any, the imagination plays in these judgments.

To begin, we must return to a peculiarity in Kant’s corpus alluded to earlier, but not characterized. In the *Critique of Judgment* we find a shift in the vocabulary of Kant’s faculty psychology from that presented in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Little to almost no mention is made of receptivity and intuition in the 3rd Critique. Rather, Kant seems to have replaced imagination for sensibility. This shift in imagination elicits some comment.

In the 1st Critique Kant introduces a dualistic model to represent human cognition. The faculty of sensibility is the receptive capacity responsible for the deliverances of the sensuous encounter humans have with the world. Sensible intuitions are the sense data received from objects in the world that are then ordered and organized according to the faculty of understanding. The understanding, on the other hand, is the spontaneous capacity that does not collect information from the world, but, rather, operates with the deliverances of the senses to organize intuitions according to pure categories. The synthesis of the deliverances of the senses with the categories of understanding affords are, Kant reports, judgments—determinative

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid.

judgments that warrant epistemic claims of objective validity, that is, knowledge. In order to enact such syntheses Kant summons a third faculty, the imagination, but presents it rather ambiguously. “Synthesis in general,” Kant reports “is the mere result of the power of the imagination, a blind but indispensable function of the soul, without which we should have no knowledge, but of which we are scarcely ever conscious.”⁴⁹¹ At this point, Kant allies the imagination with the understanding. No combination, no synthesis can be given through the senses.⁴⁹² The power of synthesis and the subsumptive act of determinate judgments are allocated to the understanding. Thus the canonical interpretation of the 1st *Critique* firmly places the imagination as a sub-function of the understanding.⁴⁹³

More recently, this standard interpretation has come under scrutiny by authors such as John McDowell and, to some extent, Henry Allison. McDowell argues against the integration of imagination into the understanding.⁴⁹⁴ He suggests that, prior to synthesis with categories, a synthesis of the deliverances of intuition must obtain in order for the intuition to appear as a unity. To appear as a manifold, McDowell contends a synthesis must take place at the level of sensation, much as we have seen in the treatments of the Transcendental Deductions in the foregoing

⁴⁹¹ Kant, Immanuel *Critique of Pure Reason* trans. Kemp-Smith (New York: Macmillan, 1965). A78/B103.

⁴⁹² Henrich, Dieter *Aesthetic Judgment and the Moral Image of the World: Studies in Kant* ed. Eckart Förster (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992) p. 36.

⁴⁹³ This interpretation is particularly common among Anglo-American scholars who favor the B-edition. The A-edition, as Dieter Henrich notes in his volume *The Unity of Reason* (1994), provides a more autonomous presentation of the imagination, but in his revision of the Transcendental Deduction Kant eliminated much of the vocabulary of the imagination to ameliorate charges of idealism.

⁴⁹⁴ Cf. John McDowell’s “Having the World in View: Kant, Sellars, and Intentionality” *Journal of Philosophy* 95 no. 9 (1998), pp. 431-50 and *Mind and World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), 1994. For commentary upon McDowell’s position, its tenability or lack thereof, cf. Richard Manning’s “The Necessity of Receptivity” in Kukla (2006).

chapters. Discussion of McDowell's (Sellars') arguments on this topic extends beyond the scope of the concerns here. But let it be said, for now, that Kant does make concessions toward this very point, indicating a "figurative synthesis" by stating "we need the imagination to combine the manifold of intuition." A unified presentation of the deliverances of the senses is necessary for us to intuit any object. What is at issue here is the role of imagination in appearing, either figuratively, that is through the senses, or intellectually, as objects of cognition. The shift in the 3rd Critique is Kant's tendency to incorporate the imagination in sensibility for the purposes of presentation. Since the imagination, whether allied with sensation or understanding, is the mediating faculty that enables judgment, if Kant is to determine the a priori principle governing judgment, imagination must be included.

This is precisely the shift we see from the 1st to the 3rd Critique. No longer does Kant make numerous and overt references to sensation and receptivity. Rather, his vocabulary shifts to incorporate the figurative synthesis of the 1st Critique as a description of sensibility that delivers material upon which we can reflect. The aesthetic half of Kant's dualism remains intact, but he moves away from calling the deliverances of the senses sensibility, instead preferring the term 'imagination.' Under the rubric of reflective judgment, it is not the object one experiences, but the presentation of the object, often in its absence. Understanding this caveat, Kant can still claim the imagination as an independent faculty, but one that is responsible for the presentation of the manifold of sensibility that is the intuition under scrutiny in judgments. This leaves the reader in a peculiar situation. The imagination presents

the deliverances of the formerly called sensibility to understanding; its role is that of delivering, but also of enabling synthesis. Thus we find what I shall call the imagination in a receptive (albeit pre-conceptually synthetic) mode, coincident with sensation as it is found in the 1st Critique,⁴⁹⁵ and as mediator between this receptivity and the understanding. Recognizing the faculty of imagination as it is called in the 3rd Critique and the continuation of its transcendental function from the 1st is vital in delineating the role of imagination as well as the nature of aesthetic judgments.

When it comes to analyzing the beautiful, maintaining this distinction proves beneficial. Not only will it provide a useful conceptualization to illustrate what Kant means by “free play of the cognitive powers”, between the imagination and understanding, but it also emphasizes Kant’s overarching connection between all aesthetic judgments and the human propensity to think in terms of purposiveness and his final conclusion concerning the subjective conditions elaborated in reflective judgment. Important to remember is Kant’s characterization of aesthetic judgments as reflective. In reflective judgment we are not dealing directly with the deliverances of sensation, but with a presentation to ourselves of such. This may explain Kant’s conspicuous shift to imagination as the presentation of the deliverances of receptivity. Kant merely does not present the imagination in this capacity in the clearest light, and the ambiguity allows him to draw a comprehensive connections with other types of judgments.

⁴⁹⁵ This amounts to the synthesis of apprehension, sometime called synopsis or figurative synthesis, found in the 1st Critique.

To begin his analytic of the beautiful, Kant turns to feelings “connect[ed] with the presentation of an object’s existence.” In determinate cognition, pleasure or displeasure is connected with the bearing such an object has on our own existence, most often in terms of utility or gratification.⁴⁹⁶ In the case of a judgment of beauty, a reflective cognizing, Kant argues that it is not the interest we take in the object regarding ourselves that elicits the feeling of pleasure. Rather, this feeling is elicited by the very object itself. In presenting an object aesthetically, we take no interest in mercenary considerations, we take no interest in the object, but find the feeling of pleasure, interest, in ourselves while contemplating the object. This disinterested interest indicates that the feelings one has regarding the object is indifferent to the existence of the object, but recognizes the feelings that the presentation elicits all the same. Kant continues by pointing out that “this contemplation, as such” is not “directed to concepts, for a judgment of taste is not a cognitive judgment (whether theoretical or practical) and hence is neither based on concepts, nor directed to them as purposes.”⁴⁹⁷ In viewing an object according to taste, aesthetically, a feeling of pleasure arises, but not from any concept or purpose— we do not wish to use, but, rather, to contemplate the object and our own presentation of the object to ourselves. By dissociating pleasure from personal interest and basing it in the presentation of an object, Kant can put forward an argument concerning universality and necessity.⁴⁹⁸

⁴⁹⁶ CJ, 47/206.

⁴⁹⁷ CJ, 51/209.

⁴⁹⁸ Two attributes most commonly associated with judgments of beauty. All judgments of beauty inherently demand others agree with our assessment. Kant takes up this normative tone and attempts to provide a critical basis rather than merely remaining dogmatic.

The universality deemed appropriate to judgments of beauty is not that of universal assent. Kant concedes that differences in era, culture and personal temperament will provide wide contestation when judging whether an object elicits a feeling of pleasure. Kant's claim of universality stipulates the possibility of universal assent, once personal interests are put aside. Furthermore, Kant insists in the necessity of universal assent in the fourth modality. But this necessity is not, once again, one that is based upon the interest of the observer. It is based upon the subjective condition that obtains in the "free play" of the faculties. Kant argues for this universality and necessity based on *sensus communis* and the common cognitive capacities all humans share. We even posit, he suggests, the objective necessity of agreement upon judgments of beauty based on the *sensus communis*.

Moreover, it is truly the "free play" of the faculties upon which Kant builds his case for the modalities of judgments of beauty and it is in the third modality that we find his exegesis most promising, but also most confusing. The third moment is pithily characterized as purposeless purposiveness. And it is in this modality that we see Kant's overarching theme of purposiveness incorporated into the particular judgment of beauty.

In the presentation of an object, a two-fold process is underway. The perception of an object is presented, but not in a unified way. The imagination synthesizes the manifold into a singular appearance, affording a remove from immediate perception and allowing for reflective contemplation. It may be the case that this imaginative organization strays from the determinate understanding normally

afforded in epistemically oriented cognition of the object presented. Yet this is precisely the freedom necessary for “free play that is afforded by the imagination in reflective presentation. In contemplation of the object one becomes aware of the pleasure or displeasure sponsored by the presentation. If pleasure arises, the process continues and the subject projects a purpose to the object presented. This purpose, as Kant calls it, remains ambiguous. It is neither the case that the purpose allotted to the presentation is a determinate cognition, nor is it entirely arbitrarily ascribed by the observer. For example, when one sees a rose, one does not think according to the empirical laws of biology, nor according to the pure concepts of the understanding. It may go without saying that in affording a unity to the presentation categories may be operative, say the category of unity, but the presentation is not guided by the categories for the determination of any particular empirical law, say of causality or community of interrelated parts. The purpose that seems to arise is the purpose of pleasing the individual. But this thinking would put the cart before the horse. It is the feeling of pleasure that gives rise to the projection of purposiveness.

This purposiveness, of giving pleasure, that is projected onto the object of reflection is generated by the spontaneity of the imagination. One can project many possible purposes onto a rose upon its presentation, many of which may be beyond determinate applicability. But the signal purpose projected upon the presentation of an object of beauty is that it serves the purpose of pleasing. This free play of the imagination corresponds to Kant’s demand of the spontaneity of the imagination. Furthermore, in organizing the material of sensation into a coherent unity, one

becomes aware that the particular instance experienced, in exemplary cases deemed beautiful, tend to present the understanding with a refined notion of the object perceived. Aesthetic presentation creates the rule by which other instances of the particular case may be judged. This movement from particular to general, and subsequently rule generation, affirms Kant's suggestion that aesthetic experience tends to the lawfulness of the imagination. By setting the bar for other possible experience, discursive thought is served in a refinement of its concepts. Moreover, discursive thought is placed in check by reflective judgment's demonstration of a different possible way of viewing a presentation. Aesthetic judgments of beauty tend to both provide the rule for subsequent concept employment, informing the understanding while setting limits to it.

One further example may prove useful. In the presentation of an architectural work, there appear to be at least two ways that humans can view the object. If taken as the presentation of a structure that houses humans, providing protection and a space to pursue actions, the judgment remains determinate. The building can subsequently be deemed either suitable or not for the purposes guided by the concept of dwelling. If viewed merely as a presentation of the deliverances of the senses organized by the imagination into a unity, several options remain. By reflecting on one's inner states, one must consider whether pleasure or displeasure obtains regardless of the so-called determinate purposes of theoretical cognition. If no pleasure obtains, aesthetic judgment does not deem the building beautiful and recourse is typically to utilitarian considerations for further judgment. If pleasure

does obtain, however, one sees the object not as a useful item for dwelling, but as an object that “quickens the cognitive faculties.” In this quickening, Kant suggests, the particular is seen in terms of its purpose, not in regard to utility, but in regard to its expansion of human cognition. The building redefines the guiding empirical concept of places of dwelling. In beauty, the particular provides the rule, rather than being subsumed under it. But the purpose of buildings, commonly understood, is not for the expansion of human cognition. The purpose reflective contemplation provides obtains not in the object but in cognition itself. Hence the purpose is really no purpose at all, but a projection by the imagination for the expansion of our cognition. The organization of imagination provides the unity, at a sensorial level, the quickening of the understanding is afforded by the work of the imagination as a harmonizer of the presentation and the lawfulness of the understanding in its delineation of the world.⁴⁹⁹ Purposeless purposiveness is thus a harmony of presentation with lawfulness, and is afforded in the free play of the imagination in its organizing and synthesizing processes. The purpose and lawfulness found in a judgment of beauty resides not in the object, but in the subject and hence is not the purpose of the object, but remains a projection of subjectivity itself.

A similar interplay between the faculties is found in a judgment of the sublime. Whereas a judgment of beauty affirms pleasure and harmony of the imagination and understanding, the sublime involves a feeling of “agitation connected with our judgment of the object,” one which concerns our faculties of reason and

⁴⁹⁹ Henrich (1992), pp. 46-54.

imagination.⁵⁰⁰ In other words, when we experience the sublime, we find a feeling of discomfort at the presentation of an object, one that thwarts our capacity to comprehend. For our purposes, I wish to treat the differences in judgments of the sublime, Kant's distinction of mathematical and dynamic, as one— not to dismiss the differences, but, rather, to see the experience of the sublime in terms of imagination and Kant's theme of reflective judgment in its role of providing a unity to human cognition. Paradigmatically, I will focus on the dynamic sublime, for it affords a poignant illustration of the reconciliation of imagination and reason.

According to Kant, the sublime is that which “arouses in us, merely in apprehension and without any reasoning on our part” a feeling “counterpurposive for our power of judgment, incommensurate with our power of exhibition, and as it were violent to our imagination.”⁵⁰¹ In other words, we judge sublime a feeling aroused in us— a feeling aroused by the apprehension of something with such great magnitude (mathematically) or with such great force (might, dynamically) that we cannot present to ourselves a unified field. The sublime defies reason's ability to comprehend, reason cannot fathom the immensity presented, even though it is a single presentation. The sublime encounter is one that denies what is perceived can be made commensurate with our reason.

Furthermore, when with the sublime “we judge an object aesthetically,” “this judging strains the imagination to its limit, whether of expansion (mathematically) or

⁵⁰⁰ CJ, 101/247.

⁵⁰¹ CJ, 99/246.

of its might over the mind (dynamically).”⁵⁰² This straining arouses in us a certain feeling—a feeling of our faculties at work—a feeling of the inability of the imagination in its presentation of an object and reason to make sense of the experience—a feeling “bordering on terror.”⁵⁰³

But simultaneous with this unpleasant sensation, one acquires a new sense of the power of one’s faculties. Because the phenomenon presented exceeds the power of imagination, and reason recognizes this situation, a new horizon, a new limitation is consequently implied. In an experience of the sublime the imagination cannot represent in a unity that which is delivered by the senses, in a manner commensurate with reason. For example, when one witnesses the Grand Canyon or a hurricane, the imagination finds difficulty in presenting the entirety of the experience as a single manifold of intuition. It is as if these experiences are too much for us. The inability to represent to ourselves what is presented in intuition stresses and strains the power of the imagination and pushes it beyond its presently denoted domain. Yet in the awareness of the limitation, one can provide a projected purpose to the experience—the expansion of our cognitive capacities, concept and rule generation.

The initial limitation of the deliverances of the senses as presented by the imagination is experienced as a negative feeling. Certainly, this thwarting of imagination to make a unity of the experience, of our faculties in general, is unpleasant. But, Kant insists, one does “feel the very power’s [the imagination’s] might” to surpass itself. This feeling of “horror” thus becomes a pleasure, a “sacred

⁵⁰² CJ, 128/268.

⁵⁰³ CJ, 129/269.

thrill—one derived from acquiring “an expansion or might that surpasses the one it sacrifices.”⁵⁰⁴ In other words, because the imagination cannot reconcile what it perceives with reason, negative feelings are aroused, but because it sees a new limit to which it can expand, it transforms this negative feeling into a delight in feeling its own expansion, a delight in cognition itself. Recognizing its own growth, and the projected growth of reason itself, the imagination transforms an “amazement bordering on terror” into a pleasurable experience, one which serves the projected purpose of expanding cognition.

By feeling the might of our own imagination we are moved by the sublime and our once unpleasant feelings of awe are transformed into admiration of our own powers. Hence it is only by reflection on our own faculties, not the object, that we can experience the sublime. This reported purpose of expanding cognitive abilities, in the representation of unity and the expansion of reason’s laws, by particular examples, are the purpose one finds in sublime experience. The purpose of expansion and the feeling of pleasure that accompanies is an awareness that, despite the initial failure of coordinating presentation and reason, experiences of the sublime may serve a purpose in the reconciliation of experience and cognition.

One suggestion, for which I will not argue here, but that seems to follow, is that once this expansion takes place, one cannot experience the object/event and feel and judge it sublime. If the concept of Grand Canyon, roughly, big hole in the ground, is expanded in such a way that it can then encompass the entirety of the presentation, the initial moment of presentation’s inability is no longer operative,

⁵⁰⁴ CJ, 129/269.

hence no terror and no sublimity. The experience is thus seen to further the purpose of expanding human cognition, and yet this purpose is merely the report of reflective introspection, not the purpose of the Grand Canyon found in nature. On this topic Kant writes: “The judging strains the imagination because it is based on a feeling that the mind has a vocation that wholly transcends the domain of nature (namely, moral feeling) and it is with regard to this feeling that we judge the presentation of the object subjectively purposive.”⁵⁰⁵ The purposiveness one finds in the experience of the sublime is, again, merely subjective purposiveness.

The final form of judgment found in the 3rd Critique, the teleological, is one that attempts to coordinate determinate judgments with purposes imaginatively suggested, but yet ones of which no determinate judgment be made. Returning to this comprehensive outlook on the idea of purposiveness as the ground for all judgments, one returns to Kant’s suggestion that the 3rd Critique is the conclusion that can unify his critical enterprise. And it is in reference to teleological judgments that Kant can unify the numerous empirical laws determined by theoretical reasoning.

Among the many types of teleological purposes we allocate to concepts of nature, Kant distinguishes between formal and material. Formal objective purposes, mathematical concepts, seem “as if [they] for our use had been intentionally been so arranged, while yet it also seems to belong to the original nature of things, without concern as to how we might use [them].”⁵⁰⁶ The a priori nature of these concepts

⁵⁰⁵ CJ, 128/268. The allusion Kant makes here between moral judgments and sublimity present a further connection between the 3rd and 2nd Critiques. Kant even goes to so far to claim a presentation of the moral law itself can be considered sublime.

⁵⁰⁶ CJ, 241/363.

differentiates them from material objective purposes. Material purposes, on the other hand, are “cases where I find order and regularity in an aggregate, enclosed within certain boundaries, of things outside me.”⁵⁰⁷ The contingency of such empirical presentations permit purposiveness, but they cannot claim a priori status, and as such are merely empirical determinations. Additionally, Kant distinguishes between intrinsic and relative ends. Kant states, “we may regard the effect [of objects of nature] either as a purpose, or as a means that other causes employ purposively.”⁵⁰⁸ The former, as in the case of a river depositing silt, is intrinsic to the function of the river for the benefit of nature itself. In the latter case, the activity is seen with other goals in mind e.g. when humans develop arable land for the purpose of agrarian cultivation. Kant questions whether the former cannot also be seen as a case of relative purpose, suggesting that nature itself might deposit silt in order for land propagation and human use, but doing so relegates this to human artifice rather than nature’s intrinsic purpose. Kant’s final distinction pertains to human activity, and he considers the multiplicity of human behavior and its ability to be intrinsic, as in the case of pursuing happiness, or relative, the means by which we attempt to attain happiness. The central theme of Kant’s evaluation of teleology concerns cause and effect, and how one should conceive the application of this pure concept in terms of empirical examples whether for nature or for human happiness.

Kant’s treatment of cause and effect from the 1st to the 3rd Critique proves grounds for some confusion, but he can and does maintain a consistent position. In

⁵⁰⁷ CJ, 241/364.

⁵⁰⁸ CJ, 245/367.

the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant affirms the knowability of cause and effect. And yet he retains a skepticism that, although cause and effect can be known a priori, when dealing with empirical examples caution should be employed. We employ cause and effect in the top-down 1st *Critique* model in order to affirm determinate concepts of nature, which make epistemic claims. The concept of cause and effect conditions human comprehension of empirical examples. And yet, this does not provide grounds to determine actual causes to effects and to subsequently determine the purpose of specific causes. He regards the examination of pure reason as found in the 1st *Critique* “a propaedeutic to the system of pure reason” which will further need supplementation in a metaphysics of natural science.⁵⁰⁹ This skepticism acknowledges and embraces the Humean skepticism that propelled Kant’s critical enterprise while providing grounds to overcome Hume’s radical position. It is in the 3rd *Critique* that we find the final articulation of such skepticism. Kant writes, “We have to judge a relation of cause to effect which is such that we can see it as law-governed only if we regard the cause’s action as based on the idea of the effect, with this idea as the underlying condition under which the cause itself can produce the effect.”⁵¹⁰ In other words, the only way one can see cause and effect is to see purposiveness, the cause bringing about the effect with a goal in view (either intrinsic or relative). In order to empirically employ the concept of cause and effect, Kant argues we must have a projected purpose that unifies why and how the cause is efficacious in bringing about the effect.

⁵⁰⁹ A11/B25.

⁵¹⁰ CJ 244/367.

Kant's treatment of empirical laws of nature in terms of cause and effect unites the properly called aesthetic portion of the 3rd *Critique* with the section on teleology. When evaluating the possibility of judgment in general, purposiveness is the essential component. In order to make human experience intelligible, humans posit purpose onto the action. But after evaluation of judging itself, we realize that we can lay no epistemic claim to these purposes. In regards to teleological judgments Kant discusses the harmony that arises when disparate empirical laws are united in the comprehensive plan of nature. The awe of the majesty of nature, once mitigated by imaginative purpose transforms from amazement to admiration. This admiration itself is "an entirely natural effect of that purposiveness observed in the nature of things," suggesting that this admiration also falls under the rubric of reflective judgment and the purposiveness created by humans to express unity. In this case it is the harmonization afforded by imaginative projection that transforms awe to admiration. The admiration we find is a product of reflection on our faculties at work in the process of unifying the concepts of nature. Purposes found in nature are not in the objects themselves, they are, rather, imaginative positings we place on experience in order to obtain meaning from experience. Kant declares that

this harmony, despite all that purposiveness, is cognized a priori rather than empirically, and that fact alone should make us realize that the space to which I had to give a determination (by means of imagination in conformity with a concept) so as to make the object possible is not a characteristic of things outside of me but a mere way of presenting [them] within me; I should realize, therefore, that when I draw a figure *in accordance with a concept*, I introduce the purposiveness into the figure, i.e. into my own way of presenting something that is given to me from outside, whatever it may be in itself rather than this

something's instructing me empirically about that purposiveness, and hence should realize that I need no special purpose outside of me in the object to account for that purposive harmony.⁵¹¹

The harmony we find in a unified system of empirical concepts, in singular instances of cause and effect, are not in the objects, but within the individual cognizer's projection of purpose. Owing to the subjective character of this form, and all forms, of reflective judgment, and the synthesis necessary in order to collate all empirical laws of nature into, at times singular purposes, but inevitably a single purpose, Kant has recourse only to the imagination, as the power of synthesis. It is in fact, the imagination that enables cognitive harmony in projecting a *telos* onto nature.

⁵¹¹ CJ, 242/365.

Conclusion

The provocation employed to summarize Kant's philosophy states: "Two things fill the heart with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the starry skies above, the moral within." To his epitaph, I would like to submit one further candidate, the imagination. For it is in the imagination that one finds a vital function that enables both theoretical and practical philosophy.

From the work presented in this essay, one finds a coherent, historical development of the imagination, one that begins with general philosophical questions pertaining to the connectivity of the deliverances of the senses and the judgments made by the powers of cognition. Beginning with ancient philosophy, continuing through the Medieval period and into modernity, the question concerning the accuracy with which we "get the world right" has long occupied philosophical investigation. Such a questioning has led various philosophical figures to both denounce and employ the imagination as a liaison between the passivity of sensation and activity of thought, often eliciting a subordination or superordination of the faculty. Such ambivalence to the imagination has led to a rather incomplete and imbalanced treatment of such a ponderous faculty. What I hope to have shown are common themes resonating throughout the history of philosophy and a possible resolution to the protracted debates. One such resolution is to affirm the activity of the imagination as a liaison, while demonstrating such a role despite changes in

metaphysical presuppositions. By providing duplex interpretations of archetypal thinkers in conjunction with projective interpretations to uncover the origins of our use of the imagination, I believe one finds the increasing importance and continuing development of the imagination. One can, I believe, affirm with Eva Brann a definitive role of imagination while accounting for the epochal shifts found in Richard Kearney's exposition. In other words, the imagination does find a fundamental role in the human cognitive processes, regardless of whether one assumes a theo-centric or anthropocentric metaphysical model. Although, depending one's metaphysical presuppositions, how one conceives this fundamental role will shift in place of emphasis, but not the role itself.

Furthermore, by Kant's time the importance of imagination becomes manifest. I have argued that Kant himself feels the need for such a faculty, even if he fails to fully develop his own insights. By providing a duplex and inversive interpretation of Kant's major works, I have demonstrated not only a consistent account of Kant, but also developed his theory of the imagination in such a way as to illustrate the fundamental employment Kant's make of this faculty, but also have illustrated its fundamentality and necessity in all aspects of cognition. When developing his own theory of human cognition, I believe Kant upholds the concerns of connecting various aspects of cognition, but also transforms the often marginalized faculty of imagination in so doing. What enables Kant's formulation is his employment of the imagination as a liaison faculty, much like it was found in philosopher's works prior to the Critique of Pure Reason. Yet Kant also transforms and radicalizes this faculty

to justify and explain the self, pure concepts and the deliverances of the senses, thus providing the objective validity required in “getting the world right”, but also the means by which we gain contact with the world. Such a projective and visionary use of the imagination and its products inform and guide our thoughts and actions. By inspecting the critical corpus, one begins to gain a sense of the fundamentality and necessity of a power that can enframe, can build, can create and can project purposive meaning in our lives, an *Einbildungskraft*.

By providing such a solution to his project, Kant expresses and fulfills the Enlightenment ideals of his own time. Not only does such a projective and visionary use of imagination enable various aspects of cognition, but the transformation and radicalization of such a faculty highlights the need for such a faculty for the sake of progress. It is only by envisioning the goals to which humans aspire, and then acting upon the teleological projection, that progress is possible. As the capstone of modern philosophy, Kant upholds the Enlightenment ideals of progress, provides the means by which it is possible, and does so by illustrating the faculty by which we ground our theoretical and moral pursuits and by which we find a purpose in our lives. The imagination is truly an awesome power, one that enables the various modes of human activities, theoretical, practical and projective.

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