

anything in itself, but rather that objects in themselves are not known to us at all, and that what we call outer objects are nothing other than mere representations of our sensibility, whose form is space, but whose true correlate, i.e., the thing in itself, is not and cannot be cognized through them, but is also never asked after in experience.

B46

The Transcendental Aesthetic
Second Section
On time.¹⁵

1)^a Time is not an empirical concept that is somehow drawn from an experience. For simultaneity or succession would not themselves come into perception if the representation of time did not ground them *a priori*. Only under its presupposition can one represent that several things exist at one and the same time (simultaneously) or in different times (successively).

A31

2) Time is a necessary representation that grounds all intuitions. In regard to appearances in general one cannot remove time, though one can very well take the appearances away from time. Time is therefore given *a priori*. In it alone is all actuality of appearances possible. The latter could all disappear, but time itself, as the universal condition of their possibility, cannot be removed.

B47

3) This *a priori* necessity also grounds the possibility of apodictic principles of the relations of time, or axioms of time in general. It has only one dimension: different times are not simultaneous, but successive (just as different spaces are not successive, but simultaneous). These principles could not be drawn from experience, for this would yield neither strict universality nor apodictic certainty. We would only be able to say: This is what common perception teaches, but not: This is how matters must stand. These principles are valid as rules under which experiences are possible at all, and instruct us prior to them, not through it.^b

A32

4) Time is no discursive or, as one calls it, general concept, but a pure form of sensible intuition. Different times are only parts of one and the same time.¹⁶ That representation, however, which can only be given through a single object, is an intuition. Further, the proposition that different times cannot be simultaneous cannot be derived from a gen-

^a The "1" is actually printed at above the center of the first line of this paragraph rather than at its beginning.

^b The text reads "*belehren uns vor derselben, und nicht durch dieselbe*." Earlier editors suggested emending the last word to "*dieselben*" but if the sentence is interpreted to mean "instructs us prior to experiences, not through common perception," it can be read without emendation.

eral concept. The proposition is synthetic, and cannot arise from concepts alone. It is therefore immediately contained in the intuition and representation of time.

5) The infinitude of time signifies nothing more than that every determinate magnitude of time is only possible through limitations of a single time grounding it. The original representation, time, must therefore be given as unlimited. But where the parts themselves and every magnitude of an object can be determinately represented only through limitation, there the entire representation cannot be given through concepts (for then the partial representations precede) but their immediate intuition must be the ground.¹⁷

B 48

Conclusions from these concepts.

B 49

a) Time is not something that would subsist for itself or attach to things as an objective determination, and thus remain if one abstracted from all subjective conditions of the intuition of them; for in the first case it would be something that was actual yet without an actual object. As far as the second case is concerned, however, time could not precede the objects as a determination or order attaching to the things themselves as their condition and be cognized and intuited *a priori* through synthetic propositions. But the latter, on the contrary, can very well occur if time is nothing other than the subjective condition under which all intuitions can take place in us. For then this form of inner intuition can be represented prior to the objects, thus *a priori*.¹⁸

A 33

b) Time is nothing other than the form of inner sense, i.e., of the intuition of our self and our inner state.¹⁹ For time cannot be a determination of outer appearances; it belongs neither to a shape or a position, etc., but on the contrary determines the relation of representations in our inner state. And just because this inner intuition yields no shape we also attempt to remedy this lack through analogies, and represent the temporal sequence through a line progressing to infinity, in which the manifold constitutes a series that is of only one dimension, and infer from the properties of this line to all the properties of time, with the sole difference that the parts of the former are simultaneous but those of the latter always exist successively. From this it is also apparent that the representation of time is itself an intuition, since all its relations can be expressed in an outer intuition.

B 50

c) Time is the *a priori* formal condition of all appearances in general. Space, as the pure form of all outer intuitions, is limited as an *a priori* condition merely to outer intuitions. But since, on the contrary, all representations, whether or not they have outer things as their object, nevertheless as determinations of the mind themselves belong to the inner state, while this inner state belongs under the formal condition of inner

A 34

B 51 intuition, and thus of time, so time is an *a priori* condition of all appearance in general, and indeed the immediate condition of the inner intuition (of our souls), and thereby also the mediate condition of outer appearances. If I can say *a priori*: all outer appearances are in space and determined *a priori* according to the relations of space, so from the principle^a of inner sense I can say entirely generally: all appearances in general, i.e., all objects of the senses, are in time, and necessarily stand in relations of time.

A 35 If we abstract from our way of internally intuiting ourselves and by means of this intuition also dealing with all outer intuitions in the power of representation, and thus take objects as they may be in themselves, then time is nothing. It is only of objective validity in regard to appearances, because these are already things that we take as **objects of our senses**; but it is no longer objective if one abstracts from the sensibility of our intuition, thus from that kind of representation that is peculiar to us, and speaks of **things in general**. Time is therefore merely a subjective condition of our (human) intuition (which is always sensible, i.e., insofar as we are affected by objects), and in itself, outside the subject, is nothing. Nonetheless it is necessarily objective in regard to all appearances, thus also in regard to all things that can come before us in experience. We cannot say all things are in time, because with the concept of things in general abstraction is made from every kind of intuition of them, but this is the real condition under which time belongs to the representation of objects. Now if the condition is added to the concept, and the principle says that all things as appearances (objects of sensible intuition) are in time, then the principle has its sound objective correctness and *a priori* universality.

B 52

A 36 Our assertions accordingly teach the **empirical reality** of time, i.e., objective validity in regard to all objects that may ever be given to our senses. And since our intuition is always sensible, no object can ever be given to us in experience that would not belong under the condition of time. But, on the contrary, we dispute all claim of time to absolute reality, namely where it would attach to things absolutely as a condition or property even without regard to the form of our sensible intuition. Such properties, which pertain to things in themselves, can never be given to us through the senses. In this therefore consists the **transcendental ideality** of time, according to which it is nothing at all if one abstracts from the subjective conditions of sensible intuition, and cannot be counted as either subsisting or inhering in the objects in themselves (without their relation to our intuition). Yet this ideality is to be compared with the subreptions of sensation just as little as that of space is, because in that case one presupposes that the appearance itself, in which

B 53

^a *Princip*

these predicates inhere, has objective reality, which is here entirely absent except insofar as it is merely empirical, i.e., the object itself is regarded merely as appearance: concerning which the above remark in the previous section is to be consulted.^{a,b}

Elucidation.

Against this theory, which concedes empirical reality to time but disputes its absolute and transcendental reality, insightful men have so unanimously proposed one objection that I conclude that it must naturally occur to every reader who is not accustomed to these considerations.²⁰ It goes thus: Alterations are real (this is proved by the change of our own representations, even if one would deny all outer appearances together with their alterations). Now alterations are possible only in time, therefore time is something real. There is no difficulty in answering. I admit the entire argument. Time is certainly something real,^c namely the real form of inner intuition. It therefore has subjective reality in regard to inner experience, i.e., I really have the representation of time and of my determinations in it. It is therefore to be regarded really not as object^d but as the way of representing myself as object.^e But if I or another being could intuit myself without this condition of sensibility, then these very determinations, which we now represent to ourselves as alterations, would yield us a cognition in which the representation of time and thus also of alteration would not occur at all. Its empirical reality therefore remains as a condition of all our experiences. Only absolute reality cannot be granted to it according to what has been adduced above. It is nothing except the form of our inner intuition.* If

A 37

B 54

* I can, to be sure, say: my representations succeed one another; but that only means that we are conscious of them as in a temporal sequence, i.e., according to the form of inner sense. Time is not on that account something in itself, nor any determination objectively adhering to things.

^a This refers to A28-30/B44-5 in § 3.

^b Inserted in Kant's copy, before the next section: "Space and time are not merely logical forms of our sensibility, i.e., they do not consist in the fact that we represent actual relations to ourselves confusedly; for then how could we derive from them *a priori* synthetic and true propositions? We do not intuit space, but in a confused manner; rather it is the form of our intuition. Sensibility is not confusion of representations, but the subjective condition of consciousness." (E XXVIII, p. 20; 23:23)

^c Kant's copy adds: "So is space. This proves that here a reality (consequently also individual intuition) is given, which yet always grounds the reality as a thing. Space and time do not belong to the reality of things, but only to our representations." (E XXIX, p. 20; 23:24)

^d *Object*

^e *Objects*

one removes the special condition of our sensibility from it, then the concept of time also disappears, and it does not adhere to the objects themselves, rather merely to the subject that intuits them.²¹

A38 The cause, however, on account of which this objection is so unanimously made, and indeed by those who nevertheless know of nothing
B55 convincing to object against the doctrine of the ideality of space,²² is this. They did not expect to be able to demonstrate the absolute reality of space apodictically, since they were confronted by idealism, according to which the reality of outer objects is not capable of any strict proof; on the contrary, the reality of the object of our inner sense (of myself and my state) is immediately clear through consciousness. The former could have been a mere illusion, but the latter, according to their opinion, is undeniably something real. But they did not consider that both, without their reality as representations being disputed, nevertheless belong only to appearance, which always has two sides, one where the object^a is considered in itself (without regard to the way in which it is to be intuited, the constitution of which however must for that very reason always remain problematic), the other where the form of the intuition of this object is considered, which must not be sought in the object in itself but in the subject to which it appears, but which nevertheless really and necessarily pertains to the representation of this object.

A39 Time and space are accordingly two sources of cognition, from which
B56 different synthetic cognitions can be drawn *a priori*, of which especially pure mathematics in regard to the cognitions of space and its relations provides a splendid example.²³ Both taken together are, namely, the pure forms of all sensible intuition, and thereby make possible synthetic *a priori* propositions. But these *a priori* sources of cognition determine their own boundaries by that very fact (that they are merely conditions of sensibility), namely that they apply to objects only so far as they are considered as appearances, but do not present things in themselves. Those alone are the field of their validity, beyond which no further objective use of them takes place. This reality of space and time, further, leaves the certainty of experiential cognition untouched: for we are just as certain of that whether these forms necessarily adhere to the things in themselves or only to our intuition of these things. Those, however, who assert the absolute reality of space and time, whether they assume it to be subsisting or only inhering, must themselves come into conflict with the principles^b of experience. For if they decide in favor of the first (which is generally the position of the mathematical investigators of nature),²⁴ then they must assume two eternal and infinite self-subsisting non-entities (space and time), which exist (yet without there being any-

^a Object

^b Principien

thing real) only in order to comprehend everything real within themselves. If they adopt the second position (as do some metaphysicians of nature), and hold space and time to be relations of appearances (next to or successive to one another) that are abstracted from experience though confusedly represented in this abstraction, then they must dispute the validity or at least the apodictic certainty of *a priori* mathematical doctrines in regard to real things (e.g., in space), since this certainty does not occur *a posteriori*, and on this view the *a priori* concepts of space and time are only creatures of the imagination, the origin of which must really be sought in experience, out of whose abstracted relations imagination has made something that, to be sure, contains what is general in them, but that cannot occur without the restrictions that nature has attached to them.²⁵ The first succeed in opening the field of appearances for mathematical assertions; however, they themselves become very confused through precisely these conditions if the understanding would go beyond this field. The second succeed, to be sure, with respect to the latter, in that the representations of space and time do not stand in their way if they would judge of objects not as appearances but merely in relation to the understanding; but they can neither offer any ground for the possibility of *a priori* mathematical cognitions (since they lack a true and objectively valid *a priori* intuition), nor can they bring the propositions of experience into necessary accord with those assertions. On our theory of the true constitution of these two original forms of sensibility both difficulties are remedied.^a

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B 57

A 41

B 58

Finally, that the transcendental aesthetic cannot contain more than these two elements, namely space and time, is clear from the fact that all other concepts belonging to sensibility, even that of motion, which unites both elements, presuppose something empirical.²⁶ For this presupposes the perception of something movable. In space considered in itself there is nothing movable; hence the movable must be something that is found **in space only through experience**, thus an empirical datum. In the same way the transcendental aesthetic cannot count the concept of alteration among its *a priori* data; for time itself does not alter, but only something that is within time. For this there is required the perception of some existence and the succession of its determinations, thus experience.^b

^a Inserted in Kant's copy: "Leibniz's system of space and time was to transform both into intellectual but confused concepts. But from this the possibility of *a priori* cognition cannot be understood, for in that case both must precede." (E XXX, p. 20; 23:24)

^b Inserted in Kant's copy: "Conclusion: That space and time of course have objective reality, but not for what pertains to things outside of their relation [*Relation*] to our faculty of cognition, but rather only in relation to it, and thus to the form of sensibility, hence solely as appearances." (E XXXI, p. 21; 23:24)

B59

General remarks
on the transcendental aesthetic.

A42

It will first be necessary to explain as distinctly as possible our opinion in regard to the fundamental constitution of sensible cognition in general, in order to preclude all misinterpretation of it.

B60

We have therefore wanted to say that all our intuition is nothing but the representation of appearance; that the things that we intuit are not in themselves what we intuit them to be, nor are their relations so constituted in themselves as they appear to us; and that if we remove our own subject or even only the subjective constitution of the senses in general, then all the constitution, all relations of objects^a in space and time, indeed space and time themselves would disappear, and as appearances they cannot exist in themselves, but only in us. What may be the case with objects in themselves and abstracted from all this receptivity of our sensibility remains entirely unknown to us. We are acquainted with nothing except our way of perceiving them, which is peculiar to us, and which therefore does not necessarily pertain to every being, though to be sure it pertains to every human being. We are concerned solely with this. Space and time are its pure forms, sensation in general its matter. We can cognize only the former *a priori*, i.e., prior to all actual perception, and they are therefore called pure intuition; the latter, however, is that in our cognition that is responsible for it being called *a posteriori* cognition, i.e., empirical intuition. The former adheres to our sensibility absolutely necessarily, whatever sort of sensations we may have; the latter can be very different. Even if we could bring this intuition of ours to the highest degree of distinctness we would not thereby come any closer to the constitution of objects in themselves. For in any case we would still completely cognize only our own way of intuiting, i.e., our sensibility, and this always only under the conditions originally depending on the subject, space and time; what the objects may be in themselves would still never be known through the most enlightened cognition of their appearance, which is alone given to us.

A43

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That our entire sensibility is nothing but the confused representation of things, which contains solely that which pertains to them in themselves but only under a heap of marks and partial representations that we can never consciously separate from one another, is therefore a falsification of the concept of sensibility and of appearance that renders the entire theory of them useless and empty. The difference between an indistinct and a distinct representation is merely logical, and does not concern the content. Without doubt the concept of **right** that is used

^a *Objecte*

by the healthy understanding contains the very same things that the most subtle speculation can evolve out of it, only in common and practical use one is not conscious of these manifold representations in these thoughts. Thus one cannot say that the common concept is sensible and contains a mere appearance, for right cannot appear at all; rather its concept lies in the understanding and represents a constitution (the moral constitution) of actions that pertains to them in themselves. The representation of a **body** in intuition, on the contrary, contains nothing at all that could pertain to an object in itself, but merely the appearance of something and the way in which we are affected by it; and this receptivity of our cognitive capacity is called sensibility and remains worlds apart from the cognition of the object in itself even if one might see through to the very bottom of it (the appearance).

A44

The Leibnizian-Wolffian philosophy has therefore directed all investigations of the nature and origin of our cognitions to an entirely unjust point of view in considering the distinction between sensibility and the intellectual as merely logical, since it is obviously transcendental, and does not concern merely the form of distinctness or indistinctness, but its origin and content, so that through sensibility we do not cognize the constitution of things in themselves merely indistinctly, but rather not at all, and, as soon as we take away our subjective constitution, the represented object^a with the properties that sensible intuition attributes to it is nowhere to be encountered, nor can it be encountered, for it is just this subjective constitution that determines its form as appearance.²⁷

B62

We ordinarily distinguish quite well between that which is essentially attached to the intuition of appearances, and is valid for every human sense in general, and that which pertains to them only contingently because it is not valid for the relation^b to sensibility in general but only for a particular situation or organization of this or that sense. And thus one calls the first cognition one that represents the object in itself, but the second one only its appearance. This distinction, however, is only empirical. If one stands by it (as commonly happens) and does not regard that empirical intuition as in turn mere appearance (as ought to happen), so that there is nothing to be encountered in it that pertains to any thing in itself, then our transcendental distinction is lost, and we believe ourselves to cognize things in themselves, although we have nothing to do with anything except appearances anywhere (in the world of sense), even in the deepest research into its objects. Thus, we would certainly

A45

B63

^a *Object*

^b Here is where Kant switches from *Verhältnis* to *Beziehung* as his topic switches from the relation of objects in space or time to each other to the relation of space and time to us. With one exception to be noted, therefore, for the remainder of the section "relation" translates *Beziehung*.

call a rainbow a mere appearance in a sun-shower, but would call this rain the thing in itself, and this is correct, as long as we understand the latter concept in a merely physical sense, as that which in universal experience and all different positions relative to the senses is always determined thus and not otherwise in intuition. But if we consider this empirical object in general and, without turning to its agreement with every human sense, ask whether it (not the raindrops, since these, as appearances, are already empirical objects)^a represents an object in itself, then the question of the relation of the representation to the object is transcendental, and not only these drops are mere appearances, but even their round form, indeed even the space through which they fall are nothing in themselves, but only mere modifications or foundations^b of our sensible intuition; the transcendental object,^c however, remains unknown to us.

The second important concern of our transcendental aesthetic is that it not merely earn some favor as a plausible hypothesis, but that it be as certain and indubitable as can ever be demanded of a theory that is to serve as an organon. In order to make this certainty fully convincing we will choose a case in which its validity can become obvious.

Thus, if it were to be supposed that space and time are in themselves objective and conditions of the possibility of things in themselves, then it would be shown, first, that there is a large number of *a priori* apodictic and synthetic propositions about both, but especially about space, which we will therefore here investigate as our primary example. Since the propositions of geometry are cognized synthetically *a priori* and with apodictic certainty, I ask: Whence do you take such propositions, and on what does our understanding rely in attaining to such absolutely necessary and universally valid truths?^d There is no other way than through concepts or through intuitions, both of which, however, are given, as such, either *a priori* or *a posteriori*. The latter, namely empirical concepts, together with that on which they are grounded, empirical intuition, cannot yield any synthetic proposition except one that is also merely empirical, i.e., a proposition of experience; thus it can never contain necessity and absolute universality of the sort that is nevertheless characteristic of all propositions of geometry. Concerning the first and only means for attaining to such cognitions, however, namely through mere concepts or *a priori* intuitions, it is clear that from mere concepts no synthetic cognition but only merely analytic cognition can be attained. Take the proposition that with two straight lines no space

^a *Objecte*

^b *Grundlagen*

^c *Object*

^d The question mark replaces a period in the text.

at all can be enclosed, thus no figure is possible, and try to derive it from the concept of straight lines and the number two; or take the proposition that a figure is possible with three straight lines, and in the same way try to derive it from these concepts. All of your effort is in vain, and you see yourself forced to take refuge in intuition, as indeed geometry always does. You thus give yourself an object in intuition; but what kind is this, is it a pure *a priori* intuition or an empirical one? If it were the latter, then no universally valid, let alone apodictic proposition could ever come from it: for experience can never provide anything of this sort. You must therefore give your object *a priori* in intuition, and ground your synthetic proposition on this. If there did not lie in you a faculty for intuiting *a priori*; if this subjective condition regarding form were not at the same time the universal *a priori* condition under which alone the object^a of this (outer) intuition is itself possible; if the object (the triangle) were something in itself without relation to your subject: then how could you say that what necessarily lies in your subjective conditions for constructing a triangle must also necessarily pertain to the triangle in itself?^b for you could not add to your concept (of three lines) something new (the figure) that must thereby necessarily be encountered in the object, since this is given prior to your cognition and not through it. If, therefore, space (and time as well) were not a mere form of your intuition that contains *a priori* conditions under which alone things could be outer objects for you, which are nothing in themselves without these subjective conditions, then you could make out absolutely nothing synthetic and *a priori* about outer objects.^{c,28} It is therefore indubitably certain, and not merely possible or even probable, that space and time, as the necessary conditions of all (outer and inner) experience, are merely subjective conditions of all our intuition, in relation^d to which therefore all objects are mere appearances and not things given for themselves in this way; about these appearances, further, much may be said *a priori* that concerns their form, but nothing whatsoever about the things in themselves that may ground them.^e

^a Object

^b Question mark added.

^c Objecte

^d Verhältniss

^e Kant adds three paragraphs and a conclusion following this point in the second edition (B 66–73). In his copy of the first edition, he here inserted the following note, which to some extent outlines the additions to be made in the second:

“On the necessity of space and time as *a priori* conditions belonging to the existence of things – On the effort nevertheless to remove both from a being that is no object of the senses, God – Mendelssohn.

“On the theory of nature: how it is to be seen from that that bodies are mere *phenomena*.” (E XXXII, p. 21; 23:24)