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Subject, Self-Consciousness, and Self-Knowledge in Kant's Transcendental Philosophy

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Аннотация

Kant points to two forms of self-consciousness: the inner sense, or empirical apperception, based on a sensory form of self-awareness, and transcendental apperception. Through the notion of inner sense, Kant also allows for an introspective account of self-awareness; nonetheless, Kant holds an utterly sophisticated notion of basic self-consciousness provided for by the notion of transcendental apperception. As we will see, the doctrine of apperception is not to be confused with an introspective psychological approach: in reality, it is a formal model for the thinking activity itself which explains the most central concepts regarding subjecthood.

Ключевые слова: Kant, self-consciousness, self-knowledge, transcendental apperception, empirical apperception

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¹ There is probably no formulation on the nature of subjectivity and how the self-conscious subject represents itself through the word 'I' that is more effective and closer to the questions posed in contemporary debate than the famous first paragraph of Kant's

Anthropology: “The fact that the human being can have the “I” in his representations raises him infinitely above all other living beings on earth. Because of this he is a *person*, and by virtue of the unity of consciousness through all changes that happen to him, one and the same *person* - i.e., through rank and dignity an entirely different being from *things*, such as irrational animals, with which one can do as one likes. This holds even when he cannot yet say “I,” because he still has it in thoughts, just as all languages must think it when they speak in the first person, even if they do not have a special word to express this concept of “I.” For this faculty (namely to think) is *understanding*” (Anth 7: 127, 15)¹.

² In this passage Kant points out the linguistic achievements that make possible for a subject to think about itself in a special way—to think about itself self-consciously. If self-conscious subjects are conscious of the world, they are also conscious of the relation between themselves and the world. It’s not clear if the linguistic device of self-reference is a necessary condition for thinking about itself, i.e., if it is a condition to entertain “I”-thoughts, thoughts about oneself. In Kantian perspective it would seem not, but it’s clear that in this passage the linguistic order is to assess just in its expressive dimension of mental dimension. In fact, the condition to have the representation/concept *I* is considered a necessary condition to raise the human being “above all other living beings on earth.”

³ The fundamental notion of self-consciousness at the stake can be referred to as *basic self-consciousness* and consists of two specific features. Firstly, self-consciousness can be said to be grounded in a first-person perspective, whereas due to the second feature, self-consciousness must be regarded as a consciousness of the self as subject rather than a consciousness of the self as object. Both peculiarities are grounded in the possibility of using the term or concept *I*, which presents a few specific epistemic and semantic features: essential indexicality and immunity to error through misidentification. The former is relative to the meaning of the term/concept *I*, any expression of self-consciousness being based on indexical terms such as “I” or “me”; the latter, on the other hand, refers to the fact that certain singular judgments involving the self-ascription of mental and physical properties are immune to error through misidentification relative to the first-person pronoun (IEM). The subject formulating such judgments in given epistemic contexts cannot be mistaken as to whether it is she herself who is attributing a particular mental property to her own self. Briefly stated, the capacity for self-consciousness depends on the possibility of producing I-thoughts, which, as such, employ an indexical self-reference immune to error through misidentification relative to the concept *I*. The general point that has been developed in the contemporary Kantian debate is that Kant’s approach to self-consciousness seems to succeed in explaining these features of the concept *I* in the terms of transcendentalism in some way.

⁴ Generally, Kant points to two forms of self-consciousness: the inner sense, or empirical apperception, based on a sensory form of self-awareness, and transcendental apperception. Through the notion of inner sense, Kant also allows for an introspective account of self-awareness; nonetheless, Kant holds an utterly sophisticated notion of basic self-consciousness provided for by the notion of transcendental apperception. As we will see, the doctrine of apperception is not to be confused with an introspective

psychological approach: in reality, it is a formal model for the thinking activity itself which explains the most central concepts regarding subjecthood.

⁵ Kant's views on the mind and self-consciousness are mainly developed in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Other important points are expounded in the late *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, first published in 1798, worked up from notes for popular lectures, and in several other passages dating to the critical period. In KrV, the mind and self-consciousness are only discussed in relation to major projects – epistemic and metaphysical in particular – but never in their own right. Therefore, the arguments appear to be somewhat dispersed. The two parts of KrV containing Kant's main remarks about the mind and self-consciousness are the chapters on Transcendental Deduction and Paralogisms; as is well known, Kant completely revised both chapters for the second edition. At the same time, for this topic it's fundamental to point out Kant's ethics and the concept of freedom. The 'transcendental freedom' that underlies practical reason is related to the 'transcendental unity of apperception' that underlies our knowledge of nature. In this way, thanks to the unity of consciousness and the transcendental freedom, two distinct aspects of our perspective on the world can be singled out: they are transcendental in the sense that they cannot be deduced from our knowledge of the empirical world, but they are a priori as conditions of the experience and knowledge. Particularly, the knowledge of our own freedom is a part of the 'apperception' (A 546–7, B. 574–5.)

⁶ According to Kant, the mind consists of two fundamental capacities (*Fähigkeiten*), namely 'receptivity' (*Rezeptivität*) and 'spontaneity' (*Spontaneität*). While the former is the mind's capacity to be affected by something, be this itself or something outside of itself, the power of spontaneity can initiate its activity by itself without external triggers. From both the affection of receptivity and the activity of spontaneity, 'representations' (*Vorstellungen*) can be regarded as the discrete mental events or states, as well as the vehicles and results of all mental activities.

⁷ Moving from these two very general aspects of the mind, Kant introduces three specifications of receptivity and spontaneity, three faculties or 'powers' (*Vermögen*): 'sensibility' (*Sinnlichkeit*), 'understanding' (*Verstand*) and 'reason' (*Vernunft*). The power of judgment (*Urteilkraft*) is, in turn, a central cognitive faculty of the human mind; it is a *spontaneous* and *innate* cognitive "capacity" (*Fähigkeit*). As a "faculty of judging" (*Vermögen zu urteilen*) (A69/B94), Kant also considered it to be the "faculty of thinking" (*Vermögen zu denken*) (A81/B106).

⁸ These characterise specific cognitive powers that have a particular cognitive task: While sensibility is the faculty through which human beings – as well as other animals – are receptive, the faculties of the understanding and reason characterise spontaneity as a form unique to human and rational beings. Such faculties deal with and produce different representations: one particular passage, generally referred to as the *Stufenleiter* ("stepladder") passage from the Transcendental Dialectic of KrV, explains and classifies the varieties of representation. 'Sensations' (*Empfindungen*), 'intuitions' (*Anschaungen*) and 'concepts' (*Begriffe*) are the main kinds of representation. While sensibility is the faculty of sensory representations, sensations and intuitions, because they are affected either by entities distinct from the subject or by the subject itself, the faculty of understanding deals with conceptual representations in a spontaneous way.

Reason is also a spontaneous faculty that is concerned with concepts, called ‘ideas’, the objects of which can never be met in ‘experience’: in fact, some of these ideas include God and the soul.

⁹ Concepts and intuitions² can be pure as well as empirical; in particular, an empirical intuition is the product of both ‘sensation’ (*Empfindung*) – the effect produced by an external object on the capacity of sensible representation, i.e., the matter of sensibility – and pure intuitions, namely time and space, i.e., the *a priori* pure forms in which the sensible matter is organised. At the empirical level, it seems possible to contend that an object is only given through sensibility, which produces intuitions by virtue of a relationship with the object. Such a relationship depends on the sensations forming the matter of the intuition; they are articulated before the intervention of thought through the pure forms of sensibility – time and space – in order to produce a singular representation that is immediately linked to the object.

¹⁰ Due to the pure forms of sensibility, the formal element of an empirical intuition is either spatial-temporal or temporal. Kant connects the two forms of intuition to two distinct spheres or senses: the ‘outer sense’ and the ‘inner sense’. The outer sense – the form of which is space – involves the spatial world of material objects, whereas the inner sense – the form of which is time – involves the inner intuition that orders the states of mind (A22/B37; cf. Anth 7:154) temporally: “*Sensibility* in the cognitive faculty (the faculty of intuitive representations) contains two parts: *sense* and the *imagination* [...]. But the senses, on the other hand, are divided into *outer* and *inner* sense (*sensus internus*); the first is where the human body is affected by physical things, the second is where the human body is affected by the mind” (Anth 7:153; 45).

¹¹ If concepts and intuitions are two distinct types of objective representations, then they are both necessarily involved in the judgment for the determination of objective knowledge from an epistemic perspective: according to the well-known adage, “Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind”.

¹² At this point, it is necessary to recall the two theoretical dimensions under discussion and the relative distinction between the transcendental and the empirical dimensions. While the latter concerns the formation of empirical concepts and intuitions, the former accounts for both the *a priori* principles of sensibility – the pure forms of sensibility, i.e., time and space – and the *a priori* principles of the intellect. These are the twelve categories discussed in the *analytic of concepts* and listed in the *metaphysical deduction* under four titles (‘quantity’, ‘quality’, ‘relation’, ‘modality’). Their use is also legitimised in the Transcendental Deduction through the ‘transcendental apperception’ and is associated with the logical function of judging, whereby a cognition can arise.

¹³ The categories, that is the pure concepts of the understanding, are employed by the faculty of judgment (*Urteilkraft*), seen as “the capacity to subsume under rules, that is, to distinguish whether something falls under a given rule” (A132/B171). The question here concerns the application of the categories to the intuitions of the sensibility, marking a difference between the faculty of understanding and the faculty of judgement. While the former is the faculty of the rules (*das Vermögen der Regeln*), the latter is the capacity to subsume under rules. This shift takes place through the synthesis of the imagination: As it mediates between the faculties of sensibility and understanding,

the synthesis of the imagination plays a key role in the application of the concept. Kant calls this mediating role the “transcendental function” of the imagination (A124). Even though the faculty of judgment is a *non-basic* faculty, is nevertheless the *central* cognitive faculty of the human mind. In fact, judging combines all the acts and contents of intuition, conceptualisation, imagination and reason via transcendental apperception in order to generate a single cognitive product. As Hanna points out, for Kant, rational humans are *judging animals*.

¹⁴ Similar to Hume and Locke’s view, according to which *internal sense* is *reflection*, i.e., “the notice which the Mind takes of its own Operations” (Locke, II,1, § IV), Kant’s theory of inner sense uses an introspective account of self-consciousness and, in part, this approach to self-knowledge is subject to the same transcendental conditions as the knowledge of an object given in the outer sense. As we have just seen, Kant associates the two pure forms of intuition with two distinct spheres or senses, the ‘outer’ and the ‘inner sense’. While the former is grounded in the pure form of space and regards the spatial world of material objects, the latter is grounded in the pure form of time and concerns the inner intuition, which orders the mental states temporally (A22/B37). With regard to this specific point, Kant distinguishes the different functions of inner and outer sense. Due to the pure forms of sensibility, appearance – the object of the empirical intuition – will be either spatial-temporal or temporal.

¹⁵ In the a priori formal condition of time, all possible representations are revealed; in space, however, there is only one specific sub-class of representations – those referring to sheer external objects. Due to space, the form of the outer sense, objects are represented as something real and different from the subject. It is only through a spatio-temporal allocation that the object is knowable in the strict sense, and the relative representations become *Erkenntnis* through the application of the conceptual-discursive dimension. As a result of time – the form of the inner sense – the subject can become aware of the representations as its own: As with the condition of all appearances in general, time is the immediate condition of the inner intuition – “of our souls” – and the mediate condition of outer appearances.

¹⁶ In A22-3/B37, Kant seems to be assigning two distinct and yet deeply connected roles to the inner sense, as also summarised in passage A33/B50, in which time is described as a form of the inner sense: “Time is nothing other than the form of inner sense, i.e., of the intuition of our self and our inner state” (cf. also B55, where Kant states that the objects of “our inner sense” are “myself and my state”). With regard to the first role, the subject intuits itself through the inner sense, whereas with the second, it intuits its representations or states; in other words, due to the capacity to be affected by the determinations of inner states, the subject can recognise them as states of itself. These two points are extremely important and have generated much controversy among scholars (cf. Allison 2004, Valaris 2008 and Schmitz 2013).

¹⁷ With regard to the former, Kant specifies a Humean approach by introducing a few different and, at first sight, contrasting features of the inner sense. Even if Kant asserts that the subject can intuit itself due to the inner sense in more than one passage, in the above-mentioned passage A22-3/B37, it is just as evident that the subject cannot intuit its soul or mind – its essential nature – as an object, since no object encountered in the inner experience can be singled out. The point is made again in one of the most

famous Kantian passages about the inner sense, which brings to mind Hume's approach³: "The consciousness of oneself in accordance with the determinations of our state in internal perception is merely empirical, forever variable; it can provide no standing or abiding self in this stream of inner appearances, and is customarily called **inner sense** or **empirical apperception**" (A107).

¹⁸ According to Hanna (in this issue) on the grounds of textual evidence, it's very important to invoke a distinction in empirical order between (i) a first-order unreflective reflexive consciousness of the phenomenal contents (whether objectively representational or merely sensory) of one's own mental state, and (ii) a second-order reflective consciousness of first-order consciousness. This distinction is very important also for his reconstruction of Kant's metaphysical doctrine of *transcendental idealism* and above all for his *essentially embodied Kantian selves thesis*: "This difference between two levels of consciousness is crucial to Kant's argument against problematic idealism. To use some non-Kantian terminology borrowed from William James and Thomas Nagel, inner sense is not only a "stream of consciousness", but also captures "what it is like to be, for an organism": inner sense is a constantly-changing succession of unreflectively reflexive egocentric phenomenal states in a human or nonhuman animal cognizer. In other words, inner sense is the *phenomenal consciousness* of an animal cognizer. Empirical apperception, by contrast, is a second-order judgmental consciousness of myself as a singular or individuated first-order stream of unreflectively reflexive representations" (Hanna, in this issue).

¹⁹ The particular feature of what is referred to as *empirical subject* or *self* has been considered several times in the debate. Actually, Kant introduces two Is: The 'I as subject of thinking' relating to pure apperception, and the 'I as object of perception', or empirical subject, relating to the inner sense, which contains various determinations that make inner experience possible. If apperception is the intellectual consciousness of thinking or spontaneity, the inner sense is the sensory consciousness of the self and its thoughts. At the same time, Kant restricts the use of the empirical kind of self-consciousness, particularly in his main philosophical concerns: Even though a subject can be aware of its own states via the inner sense as a temporally ordered series of mental states, it cannot be aware of the series as a whole. In a Kantian passage, the inner sense is said to contain "the mere form of intuition, but without combination of the manifold in it, and thus it does not contain any determinate intuition at all" (B154). This entails that the mere form of intuition does not establish what representations represent; in other words, what they are representations of.

²⁰ For this reason the synthetic unity of apperception must be regarded not only as the supreme principle in the whole of human cognition (B135) and the objective condition of all cognition (B138), but also as the only principle whereby an exhaustive account of basic self-consciousness can possibly be developed. The double nature of apperception – regarded as the principle of both human cognition and basic self-consciousness – stays at a particularly high level of generality (Rosenberg 2005, 121-2), every perception or experience has the same form as an encounter between subject and object. Transcendental apperception is defined in the first edition of the Transcendental Deduction at A107: "Now no cognitions can occur in us, no connection and unity among them, without that unity of consciousness that precedes all data of the intuitions, and in

relation to which all representation of objects is alone possible. This pure, original, unchanging consciousness I will now name **transcendental apperception**".

²¹ It is in the famous passage (B 131-2) in the B-Deduction that Kant introduces *I think* in the context of the *transcendental unity of apperception*. For Van Cleve (1999, 79), it is important to underline that it indicates both a property and a principle; namely, a principle attributing the property to certain collections of representations of being apprehended by the act of apperception: "The **I think** must **be able** to accompany all my representations; for otherwise something would be represented in me that could not be thought at all, which is as much as to say that the representation would either be impossible or else at least would be nothing for me. That representation that can be given prior to all thinking is called **intuition**. Thus all manifold of intuition has a necessary relation to the **I think** in the same subject in which this manifold is to be encountered" (B 131-2).

²² Soon after, Kant associates *I think* with spontaneity and the pure or original apperception or self-consciousness in order to distinguish it from the **empirical** one (B 132). Later, Kant calls it *transcendental unity of self-consciousness* to mark it as the condition for the possibility of cognition: "For the manifold representations that are given in a certain intuition would not all together be my representations if they did not all together belong to a self-consciousness; i.e., as **my** representations (even if I am not conscious of them as such) they must yet necessarily be in accord with the condition under which alone they **can** stand together in a universal self-consciousness, because otherwise they would not throughout belong to me. From this original combination much may be inferred" (B 132-3).

²³ This fragment condenses three important points. In order to represent something to a subject, the subject must be able to think that every representation is its own. Obviously, the point here is not that *de facto* representations are accompanied by the *I think*, but concerns the necessity of the possibility of representation of self-ascriptions (Allison 2004, 163). In this regard, Ameriks (1997, 58) refers to a *personal quality* assigned to individual representations in order for them to display the form (E): "I think that x, I think that y, I think that z". Similarly, Carl (1997, 153) refers to one's ability to make judgments from a first-person perspective, holding that "the very first sentence or '§ 16' gives an account of what is involved by the notion 'my representations' in terms of the notion of 'I' and the ability to make judgments from the first-person point of view".

²⁴ The second point consists of the complex thought based on synthetic unity: The different representations merge into one single consciousness as a thought ascribable to a subject, i.e., (T) I think that (I think that x, I think that y, I think that z, etc.). The several uses of *I* are co-referential – the *I* thinking x is identical to the *I* thinking y, and so forth – and the identity of the *I think* also concerns the higher-ranking *I think* upon which depends the synthesis of various representations in a single complex thought.

²⁵ Taken together, these two points set up the necessary synthetic unity of apperception, whereby the representations of a complex thought are connected in such a way that they are linked to a single thinking subject, which ultimately entails that they make up a synthetic unity. As highlighted several times throughout the first *Critique*,

Kant asserts that the analytical unity of apperception presupposes synthetic unity: The consciousness of the *I think* identity requires not only a synthesis, but also a consciousness of the synthesis identity.

²⁶ The single constituents of a complex thought must be combined in a synthetic unity to allow their ascription to a single thinking subject. In particular, a single complex thought requires a unified thinking act through which the single representations *x*, *y*, *z* are brought into synthetic unity. Even if the *I* that thinks *x* is the same *I* that thinks *y*, this does not imply an *I* thinking a single, complex thought; for the subject to think them together, a single act must be involved and, through this, the thinking subject brings the components of a complex thought into a synthetic unity and ascribes them to its identical self. One is the condition for the other and *vice versa*: The condition of possibility for the self-ascription of single representation relies on the fact that these can be brought into a synthetic unity, and the condition of possibility for such a synthetic unity is determined by the fact that the representations composing it can be ascribable to a single, thinking subject.

²⁷ If a single complex thought logically involves a single thinking subject, then every single component of this complex thought must be ascribable to an identical thinking subject; in turn, the thinking subject must be aware of its identity in the synthetic unity of such a complex thought. Again, in the famous excerpt (B 134), all this can be reformulated by stating that the analytical unity of apperception presupposes a synthetic unity.

²⁸ Two points are at issue here. The consciousness of the identity of *I* contains the synthesis of the representations, i.e., the '*I*' that thinks *X* = the '*I*' that thinks *Y* presupposes the synthetic unity of apperception, namely '*I think*' (*X* + *Y*) (Rosenberg 1986, 511). Nonetheless, the consciousness of the '*I think*' identity requires not only a synthesis, but also a consciousness of such a synthesis.

²⁹ Regarded as a 'synthetic unity of apperception', apperception is the foundation of representational synthesis in order for knowledge to occur; this calls the claim that categories have objective validity into question, and that they are predicates for objects in general; it follows that judgments can be formed wherever knowledge arises. On the other hand, regarded as an 'analytical unity of apperception', the representation *I* produced by apperception is a feature of every representation, precisely because *I think* must be able to accompany every representation.

³⁰ *I think* is mainly regarded as the formal condition for all thinking: *I* is the representational correlate of the thinking being in the self-consciousness; as such, it designates an existence devoid of properties because it is analytically contained in the synthetic unity of apperception as the representation of "a something in general" or "a transcendental subject". If the self-consciousness summarised by *I think* does not display any property, then it is not possible to determine whether that something exists as a persistent substance to produce knowledge due to the absence of intuition (B157, B278): The thinking being is merely represented as a something general, unidentifiable from an epistemic perspective. All the subject is able to know is that it exists as a thinking activity (A346/B404), but it is not able to know what it is (Capozzi, 2007): Its being is inaccessible from an epistemic angle, and what is given is nothing more than thoughts

that are regarded as its predicates, which do not allow us to grasp the thinking subject's nature. In the well-known passage from *Paralogisms concerning a transcendental doctrine of the soul* (A346/B404), Kant states: "At the ground of this doctrine we can place nothing but the simple and in content for itself wholly empty representation I, of which one cannot even say that it is a concept, but a mere consciousness that accompanies every concept. Through this I, or He, or It (the thing), which thinks, nothing further is represented than a transcendental subject of thoughts = x, which is recognized only through the thoughts that are its predicates, and about which, in abstraction, we can never have even the least concept".

³¹ A few peculiarities concerning the self-referential apparatus involved in the transcendental apperception are revealed. The act of reference performed by the subject to refer to itself entails no mediation of knowing; in other words, the notion of *transcendental designation* involves no identification through the properties ascribable to the subject. At this level, the intellectual representation *I* is a simple representation bearing no content, and it only designates transcendently; that is, without any conceptual mediation. With the notion of *transcendental designation*, Kant anticipates some of the self-reference without identification features as Brook (2001, 15) has pointed out in several works: "In order to apply the categories to oneself, i.e., in order to make 'any judgment upon' oneself or know oneself as an object, one must already and independently be aware of oneself as subject, i.e., as oneself. But this is nothing less than the core of the idea of the essential indexical [. . .] Kant seems to have been aware of two features of reference to self that Shoemaker views as distinctive: 1. Kant was clearly aware of what Shoemaker calls reference to self without identification; in his jargon, we designate the subject «transcendentally, without noting in it any properties whatsoever», and, 2. There are indications that Kant was also aware of the idea of the essential indexical. In his terms, awareness of properties as properties of oneself presupposes awareness of oneself as subject, as oneself". With a careful re-examination, Brook in this issue returns to this specific topic and raises some precise doubts about this reconstruction.

³² The condition of possibility for all judgments relies on the act 'I think'; at this level, the intellectual representation 'I' only designates transcendently because no conceptual mediation is involved: It is a simple representation that has no content and merely refers to something in general, i.e., the concept of the transcendental subject – "[I]ts properties [of subject] are entirely abstracted from if it is designated merely through the expression 'I', wholly empty of content (which I can apply to every thinking subject)" (A355). As an empty or bare form (A443/B471), 'I' designates but does not represent: "For in that which we call the soul, everything is in continual flux, and it has nothing abiding, except perhaps (if one insists) the I, which is simple only because this representation has no content, and hence no manifold, on account of which it seems to represent a simple object, or better put, it seems to designate one" (A381)⁴.

³³ It is in the Transcendental Dialectic, specifically in the section on the Paralogisms of Pure Reason, that Kant focuses more explicitly on *I think* as a concept or representation and assigns certain features to it. In this section, Kant denies that we can have any knowledge of the ontological nature of the thinking subject by dismissing the possibility of the pure or empirical apperception to be the object of knowledge

regardless of the conditions of possible experience. No psychological idea can be associated with a knowable content: In Kantian terms, transcendental ideas are necessarily produced by reason; hence, unlike the categories of the intellect, they have no objective reference in experience. With regard to the first transcendental idea – the psychological idea proper – by introducing the idea of an ultimate, unconditional subject, the reason attempts to find a suitable object in “I myself, considered merely as thinking nature (soul)” (A682/B710). At the beginning of both editions of the chapter on Paralogisms (B399), Kant defines the *I think* as a concept: Even if it has no place in the general list of transcendental concepts, and despite the fact that it has no special title, *I think* is a transcendental concept in its own right – it is the vehicle for all concepts, including the transcendental ones, and serves the purpose of introducing the whole of thinking to the sphere of consciousness.

³⁴ Kant attacks all metaphysical approaches that attempt to find a ‘rational doctrine of the soul’ (*rationale Seelenlehre*) based on the inferences that employ the concept *I* independently of experience. By means of such inferences, and without the conditions for the applicability of the categories to the intuitions, the *rationale Seelenlehre* claims to know the nature of the subject as a soul or as a thinking substance by the *a priori* ascription of the categories, considered as transcendental predicates, to the ‘I’, or soul, taken as noumenal object.

³⁵ In particular, due to a systematic connection (*Zusammenhang*), Kant outlines the dialectical propositions to reject Rational Psychology’s claims and all related topics produced following the *Leitfaden* of categories. As a result, a thinking entity is assigned these intrinsic features: 1) the soul is substance, 2) in its quality, simple, 3) in the different times in which it exists, numerically identical, i.e., unity (not plurality), and 4) in relation to possible objects in space (A345/B403). The categorical titles do not follow the standard method in that they begin with the category of relation and proceed to quality, quantity and mode – Kant’s chief aim is to analyse Rational Psychology’s propositions without the intrusion of experience or the intervention of a perceived existence.

³⁶ In the A-version, Kant highlights the paralogistic nature of the four propositions of topics: In his view, the application of these characteristics can only result in delusive knowledge, which may eventually take the form of a fallacious syllogism – a paralogism proper. With regard to the B-version, Capozzi (2007) points out two distinct arguments: In the first argument, Kant examines the soul based on pure apperception and discloses that a) analytically, the topics of the rational doctrine of the soul are not attainable, and b) synthetically, the first proposition of the topics referring to the substantiality of the thinking being as such, from which the others stem, is not attainable. With regard to the second argument, Capozzi highlights how, in fact, Kant proceeds from a different assumption, i.e., a *rationale Seelenlehre* constructed via an analytical method, the object of which is the perception of an existence – the Cartesian *cogito ergo sum* – is groundless. In this case, Kant refers to the empirical apperception, namely the inner sense, and applies his analysis to ‘I think’: Since this is assumed to be real, it is perceived as something existing in the stream of consciousness.

³⁷ The two arguments are based on the distinction between the proposition ‘I think’ from a Cartesian perspective, which entails the perception of an existence, and the

proposition ‘I think’ assumed problematically; that is, in “its mere possibility, in order to see which properties might flow from so simple a proposition as this for its subject (whether or not such a thing might now exist)” (A347; cf. B406).

³⁸ This is associated with a further distinction between transcendental and empirical apperception, establishing “how the I that I think is to differ from the I that intuits itself [...] and yet be identical with the latter as the same subject”, and therefore “I as intelligence and **thinking** subject cognize my self as an object that is **thought**, insofar as I am also given to myself in intuition, only, like other phenomena, not as I am for the understanding but rather as I appear to myself” (B155).

³⁹ Two kinds of self-knowledge can be identified, one concerning the just-mentioned *I* of empirical apperception, and the other the *I* of transcendental apperception; they are both grounded in the two ways of representing the subjective dimension. The following passage from *Fortschritte* summarises the question, recalling the distinctions introduced in these pages. Firstly, the subject, here referred to as *person* by Kant, presents two ways or *senses* of representing itself; as in the *Anthropology*, Kant points out that, if the subject appears to us as double, this does not imply that there are two Is. On the contrary, “I as a thinking being am one and the same subject with myself as a sensing being”: “That I am conscious of myself is a thought that already contains a twofold self, the self as subject and the self as object. How it should be possible that I, who think, can be an object (of intuition) to myself, and thus distinguish myself from myself, is absolutely impossible to explain, although it is an undoubted fact; it demonstrates, however, a power so far superior to all sensory intuition, that as ground of the possibility of an understanding it has as its consequence a total separation from the beasts, to whom we have no reason to attribute the power to say ‘I’ to oneself, and looks out upon an infinity of self-made representations and concepts. We are not, however, referring thereby to a dual personality; only the self that thinks and intuits is the person, whereas the self of the object that is intuited by me is, like other objects outside me, the thing”.

⁴⁰ On one hand, Kant’s conception of the inner sense is influenced by Descartes and Locke’s views. Moving from the famous *Meditations on First Philosophy* and its first-person methodology, Descartes’s use of the acquaintance theory calls attention to the fact that self-knowledge is epistemically special because it also serves to ground other types of knowledge. Instead, the inner sense theory points out the similarities between self-knowledge and perceptual knowledge: Inner sense is construed through the process of introspection, considered to be on par with the outer sense based on a causal process that is broadly similar to that involved in perceptual awareness. However, both Descartes and Locke employ, *mutatis mutandis*, a model of introspection regarded as observational; in both cases, the introspecting subject can be passive to herself due to the thoughts she introspects.

⁴¹ As just seen, Kant points out that some kinds of self-knowledge can be achieved observationally through the inner sense or empirical apperception, but he acknowledges that the observational model depends on the apparatus of the transcendental apperception. Kant contrasts the observational model based on inner sense with a grasp of the activity of thinking based on pure apperception through a form of agential model in which, by means of the thinking activity, the thinking subject realises that it is the

agent that has the intellectual power that forms the thoughts. It is the consciousness of the faculty of representational combination that introduces an agential self-knowledge, which is different from the observational model of inner sense. Kant inspired the rationalist theory of self-knowledge: Agential self-knowledge is related to the subject's knowledge of her own rational agency considered as the thinking subject's activity since the subject is conscious of her existence as an intelligence based on her power of combination. Therefore, the subject is aware of her own agency through agency, i.e., by performing thinking acts, and at the same time the subject is able to attribute the power to say 'I' to oneself. This is a form that makes all the difference, as Kant acknowledges in the famous passage that opens the *Anthropology*: "The fact that the human being can have the "I" in his representations raises him infinitely above all other living beings on earth."

Примечания:

1. I have developed some aspects of these topics in Forgione (2018). Kantian English quotations are from the *Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant*, ed. P. Guyer and A. Wood (Cambridge University Press, 1992ff.). As is customary, references to Kant include the volume and page numbers in the Akademie edition of Kant's works, followed by the corresponding page numbers of the English translation (if available): *Kants gesammelte Schriften*, hrsg von der Deutschen (formerly Koniglichen Preussischen) Akademie der Wissenschaften, 29 vols. (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1902ff.). *The Critique of Pure Reason* is cited by the usual A/B method.

2. Moving from the mathematical-philosophical debate initiated by Hintikka (1967, 1969, 1972) and Parsons (1969, 1984, 2012), there are certain conditions that must be met for a representation to be an intuition or concept: Kant contrasts the 'immediacy' (*Unmittelbarkeit*) and 'singularity' (*Einzelheit*) (cf. A19/B33, A68/B93; JL 9:91) of the intuition with the mediacy and 'generality' (*Allgemeinheit*) of the conceptual representation (A68/B93; Log 9:91).

3. In the first book of his *Treatise of Human Nature*, Hume (1739-40, 364) dismisses the idea that the subject can perceive a persistent self through the introspective consciousness: "For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call myself, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never can catch myself at any time without a perception, and never can observe any thing but the perception". We may reach a metaphysical thesis of exclusion: the thinking subject is not a substantial object in the world. This thesis is obtained as a conclusion of the previous elusive epistemic thesis: Given that, in introspection, the thinking subject cannot manifest itself to itself; nor can it be known as an object (epistemic argument); thus, the subject is not a substantial object (metaphysical thesis).

4. In this introduction I can't examine the semantic features of transcendental designation in depth; for instance, it would be necessary to ascertain whether the *I* of *I think* designates at all. In Kant, this issue is closely connected with the epistemic features involved in the question of self-identification: Even though several passages seem to be quite clear on this point – «the subject of inherence is designated through the I» – the lack of identification has led some commentators to detect a close proximity between Kant and Wittgenstein on the elusive *No-ownership Reading*, whereby the *I* does not refer at all. I have excluded this reading in Forgione (2018).

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Subject, Self-Consciousness, and Self-Knowledge in Kant's Transcendental Philosophy

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Abstract

Kant points to two forms of self-consciousness: the inner sense, or empirical apperception, based on a sensory form of self-awareness, and transcendental apperception. Through the notion of inner sense, Kant also allows for an introspective account of self-awareness; nonetheless, Kant holds an utterly sophisticated notion of basic self-consciousness provided for by the notion of transcendental apperception. As we will see, the doctrine of apperception is not to be confused with an introspective psychological approach: in reality, it is a formal model for the thinking activity itself which explains the most central concepts regarding subjecthood.

Keywords: Kant, self-consciousness, self-knowledge, transcendental apperception, empirical apperception

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