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Apperception and Related Matters in Kant's Critique of Pure Reason and Opus Postumum

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Аннотация

In the Critique of Pure Reason (1781/7), Kant laid out a deep-running and largely original picture of the apperceptive mind, including a claim that in consciousness of self, one does not appear to oneself as an object and that consciousness of self is presupposed by consciousness of other things. As a result, consciousness of oneself does not provide knowledge of oneself and the referential apparatus of consciousness of self is radically different from other kinds of referential apparatus. The main purpose of this paper is to summarize this picture and then explore how much of it is still to be found in his late, unfinished Opus Postumum (1800/04).

Ключевые слова: Critique of Pure Reason, Opus Postumum, apperception, consciousness of self – one does not appear as an object in, presupposed by other consciousness, referential apparatus of.

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¹ In Kant's work, apperception is one's consciousness of oneself as the single common subject of one's experience (A350). (That is what he meant by the term most of

the time, anyway [Brook 2021a]). In some widely separated passages in the *Critique of Pure Reason* at the beginning of his Critical Period, Kant paints a complicated and penetrating picture of apperceptive consciousness of oneself (AppCS) – how one is presented in such consciousness, what one is conscious of in oneself, and what the ‘machinery’ of such consciousness of self is like. I have tried to lay out Kant’s views on these matters a number of times (Brook 1993, 2001, 2004/2020).

² Here I will examine a different issue: How did Kant’s views on apperception stand at the end of the Critical Period (or, for those who date the end of the Critical Period to the publication of the *Critique of Judgment*, a dating that Kant himself encouraged), at the end of his work? Here one might look to two works, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* and the *Opus Postumum*. Since I have said something about *Anthropology* elsewhere (Brook 1993, 2001), in this paper I will focus on *Opus Postumum* (hereafter OP).

³ *OP* is difficult. It exists only as bundles (fascicles) of drafts, often highly repetitious – it is only a slight exaggeration to say that many passages of, let us say, 30 pages read more like a three-page passage repeated with revisions ten times. Because it was far from finished when Kant stopped working on it, gauging the status of what Kant says is often difficult. In particular, for many scribbles in the margins, it is unclear whether he endorsed what he wrote or was merely making a note to himself (we all make notes that we would never endorse). Or again, when *OP* contains only an undeveloped sketch of an idea, is that all that Kant would have said in a completed manuscript or would he have developed a detailed account of the idea?

⁴ Why compare what Kant said about AppCS early in his Critical period to what he said about it near the end? The question is interesting in its own right, I think, but there is a more particular reason. On some topics, Kant laid out contradictory views about the mind in different works at different times. The relationship between simplicity of the ‘soul’ (i.e., the mind not being a system of components) and unified consciousness is a good example. In the first-edition *CPR* chapter on the paralogisms, he argued (against Descartes, Leibniz, Wolff, and maybe Reid, cogently, in my view) that consciousness being unified does not entail that the subject of that consciousness is simple. As he put it,

⁵ Since a thought consists of many presentations, its unity [that is to say, it being a single unified thought] is collective and can ... refer just as well to the collective unity of the substances co-operating on the thought ... as it can refer to the absolute unity [here he has to mean, indeed in the next sentence says, simplicity] of the subject (A353)

⁶ However, pre-Critically, he had argued that unity does require simplicity and after *CPR*, especially in popular lectures, he slid back to his earlier view (unfortunately, as I see it). Indeed, it became his dominant view, as Wuerth (2014, esp. Ch. 5.3) has shown. Given this example (and there are others: whether we can show that the mind is immaterial is another), a comparison of his early Critical views on the mind with his final views is well worth doing. Kant does not discuss simplicity in *OP*,¹ so we cannot compare *CPR* and *OP* on simplicity, as nice as that would be, but we can compare the two works on consciousness of self. He also mentions immateriality in both works. Though the comments are very short and sparse in *OP*, near the end we will briefly compare his views on that topic, too.

Apperceptive Consciousness of Self in the *Critique of Pure Reason*

8 Before we launch into *OP*, let us remind ourselves of some of Kant's claims about consciousness of self in *CPR* – penetrating and often highly original claims. I will order them so that they will connect readily to *OP*. Kant made at least four major claims. They are all in the two versions of the chapter on the paralogisms and two passages in B derived from the chapter in A, §24 (the last half) and §25 of the B-edition Transcendental Deduction. The first is this:

9 1. In AppCS, one is conscious of oneself as other than an object (presumably, other than as an object among other objects). Rather, one is conscious of oneself (and of space and time) as the 'form of all experience' (A346/B404, A402; see also B421).

10 Kant held that we are conscious of ourselves in two very different ways. We are of course conscious of ourselves as a middle-size chunk of tissue – an object – standing in complicated relationships to other middle-sized objects. This is consciousness of ourselves in inner sense. However, says Kant, though we are conscious of, "... the rest of nature solely through the senses" and we have that kind of consciousness of ourselves, too, we are also conscious of ourselves,

11 through pure apperception; and this, indeed, in acts and inner determinations which [we] cannot regard as impressions of the senses (A546/B574).

12 Or again, "Synthesis ..., as an act, ... is conscious to itself, even without sensibility." (B153)

13 Now, in 'pure [i.e., non-sensible] apperception' (AppCS), one is not conscious of oneself as an object. Some examples of this claim:

14 Consciousness as such [he means consciousness of oneself as oneself] is not a representation distinguishing a particular object but a form of representation in general (A346/B404).

15 [The representation] 'I' is ... as little an intuition as it is a concept of any object (A382).

16 It is ... very evident that I cannot know as an object that which I must presuppose to know any object (A402).

17 The subject of the categories cannot by using the categories [i.e. applying them to objects] acquire a concept of itself as an object of the categories (B422).

18 Reasons for making the claim, all given or suggested by Kant, include the following:

19 a) To be conscious of myself as an object, I would need a representation with a content different from the content of other representations, namely, of me rather than of something else. However, as subject I am presented as the same subject and in the same way in all representations and in representation as a whole, all representations of which I

am conscious anyway.² If so, there would be no representation in which I as subject am presented differently to myself from how I am presented in any other representation – nor any conscious representation from which I am absent.

²⁰ b) As a result, when one is conscious of oneself as subject, this consciousness is not experience-dividing, to use a term of Bennett's: "i.e. [statements expressing it have] no direct implications of the form 'I shall experience C rather than D'".³ In a statement such as, 'I find Kant puzzling', the verb expression and the object expression may divide experience but the subject expression does not.

²¹ If presentation of self does not divide experience, then one cannot be presented to oneself as an object. A representation is differentiated from other representations in part by its object. But no representation of mine is made different from any other representation of mine by the fact that it makes me conscious of myself as its subject (A343/B401). So being conscious of myself as subject is not being conscious of myself as an object.⁴

²² c) Says Kant, "if I want to observe the mere 'I' in the change of all representations, I have no other correlatum to use in my comparisons except again myself" (A366; see A346/B404, B422). If so, in AppCS, one could not be conscious of oneself as an object among other objects, not just as such an object anyway. As Wittgenstein once put it (1935–6/1968, pp. 241, 253, 255–6), in consciousness of oneself as subject, one 'has no neighbours.'

²³ d) As Kant tells us in the Appendix on the Amphiboly of the Concepts of Reflection, objects interact: severe pain cancels pleasure, for example (A265/B321). And experiences of objects preclude other experiences of objects: If this thing is seen as here, it cannot simultaneously be seen as somewhere else. But no consciousness of oneself as subject conflicts with any other consciousness of oneself as subject.

²⁴ In sum, presentation of self in AppCS does not function in experience in the way that experiences of objects function. Kant had good reasons for holding that in AppCS, one is not conscious of oneself as an object. Indeed, consciousness of myself as an object would require not only "spontaneity of thought," that is, acts of apperception, but also "receptivity of intuition"; that is, it would require "the thought of myself applied to the empirical intuition of myself" (B430–31). The second claim that we will examine is this:

²⁵ 2. In AppCS, "I am conscious of myself, not as I appear to myself, nor as I am in myself, but only that I am" (B158; see B423n, B429). By contrast, one knows anything about oneself only as one appears to oneself, not as one is (B152–3, B158; see B423n).

²⁶ Kant's idea here, first fully articulated in the B-edition passages just cited, is that in AppCS one is conscious of one's self, not just an appearance of it, but one is not conscious of its properties (beyond the purely formal and uninformative property of being oneself, the subject of one's experience) and so one has no knowledge of oneself. A better way to put the point might be: One is conscious of oneself but does not know even something as basic as whether it is one's actual self of which one is conscious or

just an appearance of oneself. In this “bare consciousness” (A346/B404), “nothing manifold is given” (B135). (Later on the same page, Kant allows that one is conscious at least of one’s “power of combination” (B158). This may appear to be a significant concession but I don’t think that it is. Though this has seldom been noted, Kant held that we are conscious of all kinds of functions of the understanding as it is.⁵) All knowledge of myself is of myself “as I appear to myself” (B158). So at least in the B edition, Kant felt that he had to allow that one is conscious of one’s actual self, not just of appearances of oneself. With the move just discussed, he could nonetheless continue to claim that one knows nothing about oneself as one is.

²⁷ These claims about the content-barrenness of apperceptive consciousness of self give rise to a question: How is it possible to refer to oneself as oneself? Does reference not require description? Kant has a deep-running answer to this question, though we find it, strangely enough, only in the A-edition. The machinery of reference to oneself in AppCS is very different from the machinery of reference under a description. This idea is the third claim of Kant’s that I will examine:

²⁸ 3. The referential acts by which one achieves AppCS, Kant calls these acts *transcendental designation* (A355), can achieve reference to oneself without ascription of properties to oneself.

²⁹ The crucial text is this:

³⁰ in attaching ‘I’ to our thoughts, we designate the subject ... only transcendently, without noting in it any quality whatsoever, nor are we acquainted with or know anything about this subject at all (A355).

³¹ In such cases, reference to self has to be entirely non-ascriptive.⁶ I can refer to myself using ‘I’ without ascribing properties to myself. I refer to myself in a variety of ways, of course: As the person in the mirror, as the person born on such and such a date in such and such a place, as the first person to do X, and so on, but one way of referring to myself is special. It does not require that I ascribe properties to myself. Kant made the same claim in other ways: Such references to self “denote” but do not “represent” (A382). The phrase, ‘I think’, “... can have no special designation” (A341/B399), that is to say, does not pick out its referent as one kind of thing rather than another.⁷ In the B-edition Deduction, Kant says things that seem at least to imply the same view, in particular: “the I that I think is distinct from the I that it ... intuitively ...; I am given to myself beyond that which is given in intuition” (B155), but Kant does not use the term ‘transcendental designation’ or any cognate.

³² What is the consciousness of self that transcendental designation yields like? “Through the ‘I’, as simple representation, nothing manifold is given” (B135). The reason, of course, is not that the self is some strange, indefinable kind of thing. It is because in non-ascriptive reference to self, consciousness of oneself need not be consciousness of properties of oneself. This point was important to Kant for two reasons: (i) It opened the way to (2) above, the proposition that consciousness of oneself need not yield knowledge of oneself, and, (ii) this gave him a powerful way to reject Rational Psychology.

33 The fourth idea concerns presupposition, broadly construed. The idea does not occur often and when it does, it takes a number of forms. One statement of it is very well known:

34 To make any judgment upon the self in [AppCS], we must make use of its presentation and thus will “revolve ... in a perpetual circle” (A346/B404; see also B422).

35 I have changed my view of this statement and the others related to it recently, so I will spend a bit of time on them. There are three such passages in A and two in B, all in the two versions of the chapter on the paralogisms.

36 I excerpted the first in (4) above. The passage begins with the famous statement,

37 Through this I or he or it (the thing) which thinks, nothing further is represented than a transcendental subject of the thoughts = X.

38 and then goes on:

39 It is known only through the thoughts which are its predicates, and of it, apart from them, we cannot have any concept whatsoever, but can only revolve in a perpetual circle, since any judgment upon it has always already made use of its representation (A346/B404).⁸

40 In two of the others, Kant speaks explicitly of presupposing:

41 I cannot cognize as an object that which I must presuppose in order to cognize objects at all (A402).

42 The subject of the categories cannot by using the categories [i.e. applying them to objects] acquire a concept of itself as an object of the categories. For in order to think them, its pure self-consciousness, which is what was to be explained, must itself be presupposed (B422).

43 It is easy to think that there are riches buried in these oracular sayings. I myself thought for many years that they presaged the idea of the essential indexical as explored by Shoemaker and Perry, the saying about circularity in particular. Upon close re-examination, however, not only am I no longer sure of that, I am no longer sure that I have ever understood them, including now!

44 Start with A402: Why can something that I must presuppose to cognize objects not itself be experienced as an object? Kant does not give a reason. A346/B400 and B422 are even more peculiar. B422 talks about *acquiring a concept* of oneself as subject, *explaining* pure self-consciousness. But that is not what the chapter on the paralogisms is about. It is about whether one can gain *knowledge* of oneself from certain sources. To gain such knowledge, of course we would use our consciousness of self and maybe we must use it (i.e., presuppose it). But this would not be revolving in a circle. So what is going on?

45 The switch from what we can know of the self to acquiring a concept of it, explaining it, may provide a clue. If Kant had in mind here that a concept or explanation must be built out of non-self materials, i.e., that we must compositionally *reduce* the

self to some combination of non-self elements, then if we presupposed or had to make use of a representation of self in doing so, we would indeed be going in a circle. That may be what Kant had in mind in A346/B400, too. The trouble is, as I said, that is not what the chapter is about. It is about what we can know about the self, not what it would take to acquire a concept of the self or to explain the self using non-self materials (whatever the latter might be).

⁴⁶ So these three passages are peculiar. They do show where I got the idea that Kant might be claiming that something like an essential indexical is involved: In acquiring the concept of self and in trying to explain it, says Kant, we “must make use of its representation”, i.e., we cannot eliminate its representation in our concept or explanation. Since the canonical way of expressing this representation is the phrase, ‘I think’, this ineliminable element would indeed be indexical-like. *However*, (a) acquiring concepts of, and/or explaining, the self are not the topics of the chapter, and, (b) his target in the chapter, rational psychology, did not concern itself with either topic. Their topic was what we can know about the self. Kant says nothing to the contrary. The fourth,

⁴⁷ We know the unity of consciousness “only ... because we cannot but make use of it, as indispensable for the possibility of experience” (B420).

⁴⁸ like the last three, is talking about presupposing, but it is different from them – and easier to assess. To claim that we know the unity of consciousness only in this way is simply false, or at most is limited to the first person. There are all sorts of way to know about the unity of consciousness that are not constrained by the fact that “we cannot but make use of it”.

⁴⁹ Finally for this discussion, the fifth:

⁵⁰ If I want to observe the mere ‘I’ in the change of all representations, I have no other correlatum to use in my comparisons except again myself (A366).

⁵¹ has the same base as the other four but the claim it makes has nothing to do with circular reasoning or presuppositions – and it seems to be right. We examined it earlier in the context of Bennett’s idea that AppCS is not experience-dividing.

⁵² In sum, we have isolated four claims about consciousness of self that Kant makes in *CPR* (the last of the four turned out to be a group of claims). The third and the claims clustered together as (4.) were new to *CPR*, so far as I have discovered. How do the four fare in *OP*?

⁵³

The Shape of *Opus Postumum*

⁵⁴ Before I look at consciousness of self in *OP*, I need to say a little more about the manuscript itself. Kant wrote *OP* to forge a transition from the metaphysical foundations of natural science (discussed mainly in the work of that name (*MFNS* 1786)) to physics. In his view, *MFNS* had uncovered necessary (so *a priori*) features of matter as a whole (forces of attraction [gravity] and repulsion [magnetism], as well as centrifugal and like forces) but it did not lay out the framework of specific configurations of matter, which vary enormously but have a common necessary structure of their own, nor therefore for

the empirical element in physics (p. 13, 42).⁹ As he put it, attraction and repulsion “furnish no specifically determined, empirical properties and one can imagine no specific [forces] ...” (1993, p. 100).¹⁰ Förster suggests, plausibly (p. xxxiv), that the problem is that objects in nature are interrelated systematically, that systematicity is not perceptible so must be supplied *a priori*, and that *MFNS* does not show how this is possible.

⁵⁵ Late in the collection of fascicles, in the middle of this transition from metaphysics to physics Kant introduces a new topic, *transcendental philosophy* (p. 195). This suggests that by the end, his interest had gone well beyond the particular problem of showing how physics is possible. Indeed, by the end he seems to have been searching for a new general title for the work. Förster suggests this (1993, p. xliii); evidence can be found on, for example, pp. 237 and 244.

⁵⁶ The writings bundled as *OP* bring together topics whose main discussion was spread out over a number of works in the early Critical writings, including the mind (active and passive), knowledge, free will, morality, and God. Thus, the drafts and notes connect to Kant’s Critical works at many points. The following connections stand out.

⁵⁷ Kant refers to the official project of *CPR*, how is synthetic *a priori* knowledge possible?, much more frequently in *OP* than he did in *CPR* and starting about halfway through the fascicles, he says some new things about synthetic *a priori* knowledge from concepts (pp. 131, 167, 173–4, 179, 188, 191, 192 (linking to transcendental philosophy), 224, and 254). There are a couple of sketches, at least, of transcendental deductions (pp. 112, 114–5) similar to those in *CPR*. Kant emphasizes much more forcefully than in *CPR* that there are not experiences, only a single unified experience (pp. 98, 196, 198, and elsewhere). In *CPR*, amphibolies were relegated (by name at least) to a single obscure appendix but in *OP*, they enter into Kant’s analysis a number of times (pp. 102, 108, 110, 112, 114, 138, 199, and 226). (Amphibolies are mistakes about the sources of knowledge, for example taking ourselves to have receptive sensible intuitions of our unifying acts rather than the *a priori* representations that we in fact have (p. 108).) While still allowing that one is (rationally) free to be agnostic about the existence of God (p. 237), Kant talks about God’s existence much less guardedly in *OP* than in *CPR* and seems, apparently inconsistently, to endorse the ontological argument a couple of times (pp. 221, 252). Kant is more unabashedly an idealist in *OP* (p. 252, but compare p. 251) than in *CPR* and at least a couple of times flirts with solipsism (“the world is only in me (transcendental *idealism*)” (p. 195, his emphasis). Shades of the *Tractatus*! The thing in itself (*ding an sich*), especially the subject of experience in itself, plays a larger role and Kant grants us a lot more knowledge of it than he did in *CPR* (e.g., on pp. 106, 113, 168, 172, 176, 181, 182, 183, and 221). We will return to this topic.

⁵⁸ Finally for now, free will, our being autonomous, spontaneous, self-legislating – an ability of oneself as one is, not as one appears to oneself (p. 172) – plays a much larger role especially in the later fascicles than it ever played in *CPR* (pp. 130, 172, 213, 227–8, 237, and elsewhere). Indeed, Kant builds one main bridge from metaphysics to physics on this ability. It may not be the only line of argument in *OP* but it is prominent. We can see the argument as having three steps.

⁵⁹ Step I. Having objects (of experience) is not optional for conscious beings: “I must have objects for my thinking; otherwise, I am *unconscious* to myself” (p. 248, emphasis in the original). But to have ‘objects for my thinking’, items in a field of experience must be held together by “attractive, repulsive, and centrifugal forces, which make experience as a system possible at all” (p. 193; see p. 165), indeed held together systematically by forces specific to the kinds of object involved. If so, the world as we experience it must be open to capture in physics. That is to say, physics is possible.

⁶⁰ Step II. For the self to have objects, including to be an object to itself, it must make those objects (pp. 114, 167, 179, 180, 195, and many other places). This is an act of spontaneity, a “cause with freedom” (p. 198). Physics is a body of necessary truth, therefore in part *a priori*, and therefore in part a product of the mind. In particular, space, time, and categorial structure are *a priori* and supplied by the mind. We do not perceive these ‘forms of representation’. Rather, we become conscious of them by imposing them (p. 111, 167-8). To this extent at least, the self must make its objects.

⁶¹ So far this analysis is an extension of Kant’s Copernican revolution (*CPR* 2nd-edition Preface, Bxvi-vii), so it is not entirely unexpected. In *OP*, however, he adds something new:

⁶² Step III. For the subject to construct the objects of its experience, the subject must *make itself* into an object for itself. (Beginning a bit less than halfway through the collection of fascicles, versions of this idea appear at least twenty-five times (pp. 108, 109, 111, 114, 117, 118, 121, 125, 126, 131, 149, 167, 168, 179, 180-1, 182, 193, 195, 221, 227, 240, 245, 248, 253, and 254, very evenly distributed).) Kant says, for example: “Consciousness of itself (*apperceptio*) is an act through which the subject makes itself ... into an object” (p. 180). The part of an object that is made out of the subject is “the formal element of the composition of the *manifold of intuition*” (p. 180, my emphasis; see p. 179), i.e., the formal element of the contents of experience. “A judgement ... ‘I am existing’ ... makes myself into an object of intuition in space and time”, where by ‘object of intuition’ he means “the whole of the objects of intuition – the world”, “something outside me” (p. 195; see pp. 167, 184, 196, and so on). “The understanding begins with consciousness of self... . To this, the manifold of outer and inner intuition attaches itself ..., and the subject makes itself into an object ... ” (p. 189). And so on. The subject’s spontaneous activities make it into an object (a framework of objects anyway).

⁶³ His argument for III? Well, it is hard to find any even *prima facie* plausible ones. For Kant, the subject does construct objects out of elements of itself, namely, space, time, and the categories. But it is not clear why he thinks that the subject must make *its whole self* into ‘the whole of the objects of intuition’, as he put it. One argument is that the subject learns about objects by making itself into an object and seeing how it interacts via attraction and repulsion with other objects (pp. 107, 117, 131, 148). Whatever the other strengths and weaknesses of this argument, the most that it could show is that the subject must make itself into one or a few objects, which would be far short of ‘the whole of the objects of intuition’.

⁶⁴ Once in three contiguous pages, Kant gets a bit more specific, at least. He said that what the subject builds itself into is “the thing in itself (*objectum noumenon*)” and

that what it builds “is ... only a thought-entity (*ens rationis*) without actuality [an idea which need not be true of anything] ..., in order to designate [create?] a place for the representation of the subject [as object].” (p. 173), a “thought-entity (*ens rationis*) which precedes everything material in the object”. (p. 174) These remarks help with the question of what exactly the subject makes itself into (roughly, the form of objects but not their matter). However, they do nothing, so far as I can see, to support the claim that the subject creating objects is a matter of it *making itself* into objects. And that is where I will leave the issue.

⁶⁵ My aim in this quick overview of *OP* was not to discuss the central argument of *OP* fully. It was to lay out the context in which Kant’s remarks about consciousness of self occur. To that topic we now turn.

⁶⁶

Apperceptive Consciousness of Self in the *Opus Postumum*

⁶⁷ For consciousness of self, the key part of *OP* is what Förster has labelled *Selbstsetzungslehre* and the passages immediately before and after it.¹¹ Förster’s most frequent English term for ‘selbstsetzungs’ is ‘self-positing’ – “consciousness of self is an act through which the subject makes itself into an object” (p. 180).

⁶⁸ The notes and drafts pulled together in the *Selbstsetzungslehre* have some unity. They are all taken from Fascicle VII (except for four and half pages toward the middle (pp. 179–85), which were taken from fascicle X). Indeed, the material from Fascicle VII is even in the original order, though a lot of material has been left out. Förster does not explain why he inserted the passages from fascicle X but thematically they fit. Unlike the material in some earlier fascicles, this thirty-page passage is not repetitive. It unfolds as a single discussion from beginning to end.

⁶⁹ So, how do the four claims about AppCS (apperceptive consciousness of self) that we extracted from *CPR* and discussed earlier fare in *OP*? The first was this:

⁷⁰ 1. In AppCS (apperceptive consciousness of oneself), one is not conscious of oneself as an object (presumably, among other objects). One is conscious of oneself as the ‘form of all experience’ (space, time and the categories are also parts of this form) (A346/B404, A402; see also B421).

⁷¹ Thus, one is presented in AppCS as something very different from an object among objects, the way in which one appears to oneself in inner sense.

⁷² Some passages in *OP* appear to conflict with this view. If one makes oneself into something in the way reconstructed in the last section, what does one make oneself into? Kant’s answer: “Consciousness of self (*apperceptio*) is an act through which the subject makes itself into an object” (p. 180, my emphasis; there is a related statement on p. 98 but there Kant appears to have had in mind a very special, formal-element kind of object). If we make ourselves into an object, presumably we are conscious of ourselves as an object. It is a problem.

⁷³ Fortunately, Kant offers a solution. For consciousness of self to make something, this consciousness must pre-exist what it makes. If so, there is a kind of

consciousness of self in which one is not conscious of oneself as an object. What is it like? Kant could be clearer here (and was in CPR) but he offers clues and suggestions: “Space and time are not objects [of intuition (p. 171), of sensible representation (p. 173), but forms of the representation ... of objects.” (p. 168). What is true of space and time is presumably also true of oneself as subject of experience (p. 183; see p. 161 and 168; Kant also gestures in this direction on p. 178). Thus, in *OP*, too, Kant held that in AppCS, we are not, or not only, conscious of ourselves as an object.

⁷⁴ Kant does not take the idea any further in *OP* (Underdevelopment of ideas is a short-coming of much of *OP*; we will see another instance shortly. The work was far from finished.) That said, we can do some work with even the little that Kant gave us.

⁷⁵ In the B-edition Transcendental Deduction, Kant identified a puzzle about how one can identify oneself as subject, a feature of all experience (all experience of which we are conscious, anyway) and of experience as a whole, with the middle-sized chunk of tissue, an object of only a few experiences. In *OP*, Kant says that the former is a *person* (pp. 202, 213), the bearer of rights and responsibilities, the latter is a man (p. 221). This may add to the importance of the subject side but it does not resolve the puzzle. In *CPR*, Kant sets up the puzzle this way:

⁷⁶ I ... am given to myself beyond that which is given in intuition [we examined this statement earlier], and yet know myself, like other phenomena, only as I appear to myself, not as I am to the understanding. ... How the I that I think is distinct from the I that it, itself, intuits and yet, as being the same subject, can be identical with the latter ... these are questions that raise no greater or lesser difficulty than how I can be an object to myself at all, and, more particularly, an object of intuition and inner perceptions (B155; compare *OP* p. 221).

⁷⁷ Kant’s hand-waving to the contrary, the question is real: How can one identify oneself as subject, including moral subject, a feature of at least all one’s conscious representations, with oneself as a middle-sized object, a man, the object of a few representations? Hand-waving is not solving a problem.

⁷⁸ In *OP*, he offers more. If the subject *makes itself* into an object (p. 180), then there is no gap to be bridged. What is ‘given beyond intuition’ and what appears in intuition is one and the same object. Indeed, we could in principle track the thing through the transition from subject to object. Then we would know that the one is the other. However, if Kant had the makings of a solution in *OP*, it is also true that did not reintroduce the problem. So he probably did not see that he now had a solution. But he did.

⁷⁹ To sum up. In *OP*, Kant clearly continued to believe that in AppCS, one is not conscious of oneself as an object, not solely and initially anyway. Now the second claim:

⁸⁰ 2. In AppCS, “I am conscious of myself, not as I appear to myself, nor as I am in myself, but only that I am” (B158; see B429). By contrast, one has knowledge of oneself only as one appears to oneself, not as one is (B152–3).

⁸¹ On knowledge of oneself as one is, Kant’s view in *OP*, as we have already seen, is radically different from this. Some examples: The subject of which we are conscious when we are conscious of spontaneity is the subject *in itself* (p. 181). Or again, when the subject is given through understanding, what is given is the subject *in itself* (p. 183). Or this: The “being who is the founder and originator of its own self” is the subject *in itself* (p. 221).

82 If one reads mainly *CPR*, *OP* would appear to be a dramatic departure from his earlier view. It is not. As Wuerth (2014, pp. 76-9, Chs 7 and 9) has shown, Kant's dominant view was that one is conscious of oneself as one is, even if, as Kant insists in *CPR*, all we know of the self is how it appears to us. The chapter on the paralogisms was, among other things, a brilliant attempt to save the doctrine of the unknowability of the self as it is from the all-too-plentiful knowledge of the functions of the self apparently achieved by the Transcendental Deduction, especially the A-edition version, but the view in *OP*, that one is conscious of at least some features of oneself as one is, was the view that Kant most often took.

83 The third *CPR* claim being compared to what Kant said in *OP* is this:

84 3. In AppCS, the referential acts by which one gains this consciousness, Kant calls it *transcendental designation* (A355), can achieve reference to oneself as oneself without ascription of properties to oneself (A355).

85 In *OP*, Kant retained the idea that we are conscious of ourselves in other than intuition, not as spatial and/or temporal, thus, not as an object among other objects, and as the form, or formal element, of all experience. Since the same entity is given by all experience, we would not be conscious of properties of it, properties being states of affairs that are objects of some parts of an experiential field but not others, states of affairs that can change over time. It would seem to follow from that that reference to oneself could not require ascription of properties to oneself. ... In short, *OP* retains the main sources of the doctrine of transcendental designation.

86 That said, it cannot be denied that Kant never so much as mentions the doctrine in *OP*, neither by name nor by the distinctive features of reference to self behind it. On this issue, *OP* does not go nearly as far as *CPR*.

87 The fourth and final position from *CPR* was five claims that jumped off from this assertion:

88 4. To make any judgment upon the self as presented, we "must make use of its presentation" and thus will "revolve ... in a constant circle" (A346/B404).

89 As we saw earlier, of the claims that we are examining, the statements grouped as (4) are the least developed in *CPR*. In *OP* they play no visible role at all.

90 In general, *OP* shows few signs of the interest in the nuts and bolts of the machinery of cognition that is so impressive a feature of *CPR*. Indeed, in *CPR* the interest extended to more topics than have been mentioned so far. Others include the nature of space and time and their role in the mind, the three-fold doctrine of synthesis, and how we use concepts to acquire knowledge. Few remnants of any part of this interest are to be found in *OP*.

91 However, he did not actually change his mind about very much. In what we have examined so far, the only example is the unknowability of the soul as it is. I know of at least one more, whether we know that mind is immaterial. The longest discussion of the issue in *CPR*, the second half of the critique of the second paralogism in A, concludes with a careful agnosticism on the issue. In *OP*, by contrast, and in other later

works, Kant cheerfully assumes that the ‘soul’ is immaterial (pp. 182, 214, and especially 149). But he did not change his mind about much.

92

Final Thoughts

⁹³ I will close with some thoughts on a biographical issue: Why is *OP* on the mind so sketchy and general compared to *CPR*? One can think of two possible, very different, explanations.

⁹⁴ One is this. The most dazzling of Kant’s writings on the mind in *CPR* is the chapter on the paralogisms in the A-edition. Maybe this chapter was a one-time flash of brilliance forged in the white heat of the need to show, against Rational Psychology, that we do not have the knowledge of the soul as it is that would be needed to prove that the soul is immortal. Evidence for this explanation is that few of the remarkable ideas laid out there ever became settled parts of Kant’s ongoing work. Indeed, the idea of transcendental designation never appeared in his work again, to my knowledge, and, as we saw, the insight that unity does not require simplicity fared even worse: Kant actually backslid to his pre-Critical view that unity does require simplicity (Wuerth 2014, Ch. 5.3). Similarly with respect to whether we know that the mind is immaterial.

⁹⁵ The second relates to the ugly question whether Kant was in cognitive decline by the time he wrote at least some of the bits of *OP*. In general, it seems clear that he was not. The drafts and notes in the fascicles were mostly finished more than two years before he passed away and he was not in general decline by then. To the contrary, up until his final few months, the people in his life reported that he functioned well. Certainly *OP* does not read as a product of cognitive decline – perplexity, struggle, maybe feeling short of time, but not cognitive decline.

⁹⁶ However, there is a very particular kind of minor but painful decline that can afflict people who do intensely difficult things such as create theoretical physics, play world-class chess and, one would think, write ground-breaking philosophy, namely, losing one’s edge. This is a matter of no longer being able to achieve quite the same depth of insight, no longer being able to see quite as much farther than others, as before. Losing one’s edge is entirely compatible with functioning normally in everyday life. In Kant’s case, it may have started well before *OP*.

⁹⁷ Of course, both explanations could be right – they are not incompatible. Or wrong.

Примечания:

1. He may mention it briefly a couple of times (pp. 118 and 149 of the Forster selections [see note 9]).
2. Kant held that we are not conscious of most of our representations. I explore this idea in Brook (2021b).
3. Bennett (1974, p. 80). He uses the notion in the context of imagining one's own non-existence, but it has applications much wider than that.
4. Shoemaker (1966, p. 563) once discussed the idea that one is not conscious of oneself as an object.
5. Colin McLear has pressed this point. I am not sure that he would be happy with what I say about it.

6. Transcendental designation is similar to what Shoemaker calls reference to self without identification. ‘Reference to self without ascription’ would be a better term, at least in the context of Kant, because the act of reference can take place without ascription of any properties, not just identifying properties.

7. Note that all the comments on transcendental designation in the A edition are from no earlier than the Paralogism chapter. Kant seems not to have developed his theory of reference to self until he needed it to attack rational psychology. Note, too, that they are all from A. In the second edition, Kant moved his discussion of consciousness of oneself as subject to the Transcendental Deduction — and, regrettably, left out a lot of the interesting details. A different but even more stripped-down version can be found in “The Psychological Idea,” §46 of the *Prolegomena* (1783; Ak. IV: 333–4).

8. This passage is part of Kant's concluding remarks in the Introduction to the chapter on the Paralogisms and thus appears in both A and B. Kant saw this passage and the ones from A402 and B422 just below as arguments for (1), so we also looked at them in that context.

9. The most widely used version of *OP* in English is Eckart Förster's selections, translated by him and Michael Rosen and published in the Cambridge edition (1993). All references from now on will be to this volume unless otherwise noted. Because Förster arranges things quite differently from how they are arranged in the Academy edition, I will use the page numbers of this volume. Academy volume and page numbers are given there.

10. This is only one of the ways in which *MFNS*, according to Kant, left a need for a transition to physics but it is the most accessible one.

11. ‘The passages immediately before and after it’: Dividing *OP* up into chapter-like sections is Förster's doing, not Kant's; in the original, topics, themes, arguments criss-cross and overlap and there is sometimes no more reason to draw a line between sections at one place than at another. Carving up *OP* into sections is similar to the attempts that have been made to carve Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* up into sections – it can be done but it is not how the author structured his work.

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Apperception and Related Matters in Kant's Critique of Pure Reason and Opus Postumum

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Abstract

In the Critique of Pure Reason (1781/7), Kant laid out a deep-running and largely original picture of the apperceptive mind, including a claim that in consciousness of self, one does not appear to oneself as an object and that consciousness of self is presupposed by consciousness of other things. As a result, consciousness of oneself does not provide knowledge of oneself and the referential apparatus of consciousness of self is radically different from other kinds of referential apparatus. The main purpose of this paper is to summarize this picture and then explore how much of it is still to be found in his late, unfinished Opus Postumum (1800/04).

Keywords: Critique of Pure Reason, Opus Postumum, apperception, consciousness of self – one does not appear as an object in, presupposed by other consciousness, referential apparatus of.

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