

TRANSCENDENTAL APPERCEPTION AND KNOWING THAT I AM

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TRANSCENDENTAL APPERCEPTION AND KNOWING THAT I AM

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Arzu Gökmen, certify that

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ABSTRACT

Transcendental Apperception and Knowing That I Am

In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant makes an enigmatical assertion that in the transcendental apperception “I am conscious of myself not as I appear to myself, nor as I am in myself, but only that I am.” This thesis is an analysis of this interesting existential claim which is denied to be either of phenomenon or of noumenon. In the first part of the thesis, I consider the implications of this existential claim together with the subject’s necessary consciousness of himself as an identical self in apperception, which Kant claims to be a transcendental requirement for cognition to be possible. In the second part, I discuss the relation between the apperceptive *I think* and I exist since Kant’s enigmatic existential assertion is grounded on the *I think*. Then, I claim that Kant’s making use of the *I think* to show that I exist is similar to Descartes’ *cogito ergo sum*, as what yields the knowledge that I exist is the subjective consciousness of the activity in thinking; and I appeal to Jaakko Hintikka’s interpretation of *cogito* as performance to show this similarity between Kant’s apperceptive *I think* and Descartes’ *cogito*. Finally, the thesis of *subjective-active intuition* is presented in order to supply an explanation of the unique cognitive status that subjects have of themselves and about the epistemic nature of the knowledge of their own existence.

ÖZET

Transandantal Kendilik Bilinci ve (Var) Olduğumu Bilme

Kant, *Saf Aklın Kritiği*'nde, transandantal kendilik bilincinin özneye, kendine dair (fenomen veya numen) herhangi bir bilinç sunmaksızın, (var) olduğu bilincini sağladığı şeklinde muammalı bir sav öne sürüyor. Bu tez, Kant'ın bu ilginç savının bir incelemesidir. İlk kısımda, bu sav ile öznenin tek ve özdeş olduğuna dair transandantal bilinci bulunduğu savının çelişip çelişmediği tartışılır. İkinci kısımda ise, önce Kant'ın transandantal kendilik bilinci ve 'ben varım' önermesi arasında kurduğu bağ incelenir, sonra da Kant'ın kurduğu bağ ile Descartes'ın *cogito ergo sum* argümanı arasındaki benzerlik ortaya çıkarılır. Kant ve Descartes'ın teorilerinde, öznenin var olduğu bilincinin kendi düşüncesindeki aktifliğine eşlik eden öznel bilinç ile mümkün olduğu gösterilir.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Can the subject of cognition cognize himself? What can the subject cognize about himself? Can I know that I exist? How can I know that I exist? How can I know that I exist as the single subject of my cognitions? And what kind of cognition does a subject have of himself; is it empirical, or a priori? If it is empirical, then should this imply that we experience ourselves? Hume explicitly claims that we never encounter a self through our experiences and this made him conclude that there are no such things as selves.¹ To Hume, what we misconceive as a self is nothing but a bundle of perceptions and there is no clue for the existence of an identical self through these perceptions.

Kant agrees with Hume that we never encounter a self in our experiences, however he objects to Hume's conclusion of the denial of selves. (Kant, 1787) Instead, in his *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant offers a theory of apperception, which claims the necessary identity of the subject that is distinct from the representations, for cognition to be possible. My aim is not to show how, in the *Transcendental Deduction of Pure Concepts of Understanding*, his argument from transcendental apperception supplies his ultimate project, in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, of giving a transcendental justification for the objective use of the categories by examining the necessary conditions for cognition to be possible; rather I'll focus on his sub-theory of transcendental apperception and how it relates to the problem of cognition of the subject himself. I'll mainly focus on the B edition of the *Transcendental Deduction*

¹ David Hume, *Treatise on Human Nature*, 1739, Book I, 4.6.

but also occasionally refer to the A edition to supply more evidence concerning some of the enigmatic discussions of the *Deduction*.²

The ways in which the transcendental apperception thesis is to ground Kant's project of giving a transcendental justification for the objective use of the pure categories of understanding are taken to be "obscure and controversial, and continue to generate lively philosophical discussion even after two centuries of interpretation" by Kant scholars as Guyer and Wood stated in the introduction of the *Critique of Pure Reason*.³ While its relation to the defense of the categories is ambiguous and controversial, transcendental apperception thesis delivers an interesting claim about the subject of the cognition and his knowledge of himself which is my main interest in this thesis.

That is, through the transcendental apperception, the subject cognizes nothing about himself either as phenomenon or noumenon, but he is conscious that he exists.⁴ However, from this peculiar existential claim there arise some important and interesting questions by taking into consideration Kant's following two claims about the subject, together with the existential claim. First of all, while Kant denies any knowledge of the subject besides the consciousness that I exist he also commits himself to the assertion that the I is an identical self through the manifold of cognition and this I is conscious that it is an identical self where this consciousness is presented to be placed necessarily in the transcendental apperception.⁵ Thus, it seems

² The editions of the *Critique of Pure Reason* that are published in 1781 and in 1787 are referred as A and B editions respectively. Kant has almost rewritten the *Transcendental Deduction* in the B edition; thus the *Deduction* chapters in both editions are also referred to as *A Deduction* and *B Deduction*. Accordingly, the paragraphs of the *Critique* are referred to by A and B numbers. Throughout the thesis, references to *Critique* are in A and B numberings and from Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Translated by Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

³ Introduction by Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood, pg. 9. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

⁴ B157

⁵ B135

that the subject knows something about himself more than that he exists which seems to be contradictory with the first assertion of the mere knowledge of existence claim.

Second, Kant strictly and repeatedly denies that we have an intuition of the I in the transcendental apperception⁶; however, his theory requires that any existence claim has to depend on the intuition of the existent object that is given in experience;⁷ thus the claim must have an empirical basis. Then, how can he assert that both I know that I exist through the transcendental apperception while at the same time there is no intuition of I in this apperception. Kant mentions an unusual and interesting notion of *indeterminate perception* to supply the empirical ground for the assertion of the existence.⁸ However, rather than removing the questions that arise because of the mere existence claim, *indeterminate perception* brings more questions to his theory that Kant left unsolved. I'll discuss what *indeterminate perception* is and how Kant expects it to give an empirical ground to existence claim of the subject himself.⁹ Moreover, Kant makes use of the *I think*, which has almost the most important role in his deduction of the categories, in order to show that I know that I exist where he claims that these two propositions are identical. What is it to assert that *I think* is identical with I exist? How can thinking be same thing with existing? What does Kant mean by this? Didn't Descartes already present an exhaustive relation between I exist and I think, which Kant explicitly denies Descartes argument from I think to I exist?¹⁰ What makes the relation that Kant takes

⁶ Bxl fn., B135, B157, B404, B408, B422, B423 fn.

⁷ B629

⁸ B423 fn.

⁹ In the footnote to B423 he introduces the notion of *indeterminate perception* and says that "hence it proves that sensation, which consequently belongs to sensibility, grounds this existential proposition", where the existential proposition he talks about is the *I exist*.

¹⁰ B422 fn.

to be between *I think* and I exist different from the one Descartes holds? Why is Kant justified in making this assertion while Descartes is not, according to Kant?

In this thesis, my aim is to show that Kant's three assertions that, with the transcendental apperception: i) I can only know that I am; ii) I know that I am necessarily an identical self through the manifold of my representations; iii) I have no intuition of myself, altogether seem to lead to contradictions and they need to be explained. In the first part of the thesis, I'll deal with the seeming contradiction of i and ii, and then in the second part I will show that i and iii either lead to a contradiction or must be considered in a different epistemic structure. There, I'll conclude that what leads Kant's theory to commit these seemingly contradictory set of claims is that the subject of cognition has a special epistemic relation to himself and Kant's theory doesn't capture this relation. I claim that the subject of the cognition has an active-subjective intuition of himself which grounds the basis of subject's knowledge of his existence without any intuition of himself as object. Therefore, I am conscious that I am and I don't need to have a normal objective intuition of myself to have this knowledge while it is still rooted in intuition.

To conclude that my knowledge of my existence has this distinct feature I'll focus on Kant's assertion that I am conscious that I am without knowing myself either as I am or as I appear to myself. What is it to know that I am without knowing anything else about myself? Why does apperception yield no other knowledge about myself than that I exist? Moreover, how can apperception yield this knowledge that I exist at all? In this thesis, my aim is to discover this peculiar knowledge of my existence that is supplied by the consciousness which is claimed, by Kant, to be present in the transcendental apperception. Is this knowledge empirical? Or, is it an inference from the theory of unity of apperception? How can the knowledge of my

existence that is supplied by an apperceptive consciousness be an inference; what kind of a consciousness is this then, if it is not empirical? Kant explicitly says that the proposition *I think* is an empirical proposition and contains the proposition I exist in itself,¹¹ but he still denies any empirical ground in intuition to find this I,¹² which is the subject of both of the propositions. Therefore, I'll demonstrate his reasons to take this proposition to be empirical and still give no empirical ground for the subject 'I'.

We will see that *I think* plays almost the most important role in Kant's theory of apperception. In the very famous quote from B132, he says that it "must **be able** to accompany all my representations". What is the aim of the 'must' in this principle of the *I think*? What is indispensable about the accompanying *I think*? What is the role that 'I' plays in the *I think*? Moreover, how can this *I think* represent to me that I exist as Kant asserts in the footnotes to B157 and B422? Is this somehow related to Descartes' *cogito* argument? Even though Kant's general position about our knowledge of ourselves is radically different from Descartes', I think his theory makes use of the *I think* in a similar way as Descartes' *cogito* did. But my reading of *cogito* is not as an inference but more like a performance as Hintikka has argued in his article *Cogito, Ergo Sum: Inference or Performance?* (Hintikka, 1962). Indeed, the most peculiar nature of the I representation, which Kant gives as an empty representation which at the same time yields me the knowledge that I am, I think, is

¹¹ He says: in B421, that the *I think* is an "empirical but in regard to all kinds of intuition indeterminate proposition"; in the footnote to B422 that "The "I think" is, as has already been said, an empirical proposition"; and in the footnote to B423 that "it is to be noted that if I have called the proposition "I think" an empirical proposition, I would not say by this that the I in this proposition is an empirical representation"; in B428 that "The proposition "I think, " or "I exist thinking," is an empirical proposition."

¹² He says in the footnote to B423 that "if I have called the proposition "I think" an empirical proposition, I would not say by this that the I in this proposition is an empirical representation; for it is rather purely intellectual".

somehow similar in the sense that *cogito* argument has a relation to the first person singular pronoun. That is, *cogito*, in my reading, works only for the subject, *I*, who attempts to doubt his own existence. Hintikka thinks that this attempt to doubt is the key to the *cogito*, as the very performatory nature of *cogito* and trying to doubt his own existence immediately demonstrates to one his existence and this is why it is not an inference, which I'll explain in detail in the third chapter. Therefore, the *cogito* must yield the knowledge of existence only for the performer as he does the performing.

In a similar way, it is not that my representations must be able to be thought, but that it must be I whose thinking is able to accompany the representations and all of the representations; therefore I'm able to deduce that they are my representations and I am. That is, it is crucial for Kant's theory of apperception that the subject himself is aware of himself as the first person I who has the representations and is able to synthesize them. There Kant says that this awareness is the ground of human understanding and it represents the subject that he exists. I'll explain how Kant brings the subject "I" to the picture in his defense of the categories which are the a priori grounds of our cognition and how this subject I is conscious that he exists where this knowledge is held only by the subject, the first person I, which is similar to the *cogito* argument as the *cogito* only works for the first person I who attempts to doubt his own existence.

Thus, in both Kant's and Descartes' theories, the knowledge that I exist is presented to be special to the subject of cognition and they both make use of the I think to reach this knowledge; and I claim that this is because the subject of cognition has an subjective-active intuition of himself that immediately supplies him the consciousness that he exists.

What is subjective-active intuition? It is the intuition of myself while I am the subject of any subjective act. The active nature of this intuition has two sides: that neither the I that is intuited nor the I that intuits becomes passive in this intuition and the I that is intuited doesn't become the object of the I that intuits. There aren't indeed two I's in this intuition as both the subject and object position of intuition are held by the same active subject I. Active intuition of the subject emphasizes that the subject has a possibility to have this intuition only if he engages in a subjective act; that is, only if he is actively producing a thought and then has the possibility to be aware of himself. Thus, if I am passively intuiting an object that I am exposed to, but if I don't yet produce a thought about it so that *I think* doesn't accompany it, then I am also lacking my active intuition of myself as I don't have any thought yet.

The only thing that the subject can intuit through this way is himself; thus he cannot have an active-subjective intuition of anything other than himself. Therefore, it is radically different from the intellectual intuition of God which Kant contrasts with our type of intuition. Indeed, intellectual intuition, just by intuiting, creates the object that it intuits. However, I cannot create any object by my active intuition, and I don't create myself through this way either; rather, by being active, I get the chance to intuit myself which is already given. This given-ness is integral for active intuition. That is, our intuition of objects requires that objects are given. In the same way, I take ourselves to be given, but in a different way than objects are given, for subjective intuition to be possible.

Therefore, what radically distinguishes my mere thinking of myself (without any objective intuition of myself) from my mere thinking of some object that is not given in intuition, let's say my mere thinking of a golden mountain, is that I am the subject and given as the subject unlike the golden mountain; and I am using myself

to think which means I am involved in the mere thinking as the subject unlike the mere thinking of the golden mountain. Thus, I am unable to get any idea whether the mountain exists just by thinking about it; but, I am indeed able to say that I exist through mere thinking, as I am the one who is doing the thinking and demonstrates its existence as it is given. Therefore, I claim that the subject doesn't need to be an object of himself in order to have the knowledge that he exists. Thus, the subjective-active intuition can explain the way in which the knowledge of my existence is given through transcendental apperception (which is the representation of the subject of thinking, the I) without any objective intuition of the I.

Through the thesis I deal with what the subject of knowledge can know of himself and what the subject can know through the *I think* of apperception. This is not an investigation of the true nature of the selves, if any; rather, an investigation of the subject's epistemic and cognitive relation to himself. I take 'I' to be neither a concept nor any object of experience. In order not to confuse my study with any other rational or empirical considerations of the substantial subject, I will try not to mention the following words: self, soul or mind; but only the I or the cognitive subject who is having the experiences. Indeed, the point of my investigation is not the question of the true nature of the noumenal self, if any. And it is not whether we have any knowledge or any intuition of an immaterial, immortal, single, substantive soul, if any. My question is concerned with the I that is the subject of experience and cognition, and the expression *I think*, in the same manner that Kant has approached. But, unlike him, I think that we have to carefully ask again whether we have any intuition of this I that thinks and knows that he exists. And I suggest it shouldn't be expected to find an objective intuition for subject as he holds a different position towards himself.

CHAPTER 2

TRANSCENDENTAL APPERCEPTION

Kant argues that through the transcendental apperception the subject doesn't have any cognition of himself as an object but the subject is conscious only that he exists.¹³ On the other hand, his argument for the unity of the transcendental apperception, which is the ground of the possibility of human understanding, rests on the claim that the subject is an identical self through the manifold of representations and the subject is conscious that he is an identical subject. Thus, it seems that Kant commits himself to two contradictory claims about the knowledge of ourselves, which we have through apperception, that we only know that we exist but we also know that we are identical selves. Why does he treat these two pieces of knowledge differently since he doesn't accept my knowledge of my identity as my knowledge of myself while he accepts that I have the knowledge about myself that I exist? Aren't these two about the same subject?

In the third one of the *Paralogisms of Pure Reason*,¹⁴ Kant shows that there is no objective empirical basis to assert that the subject of cognition is an identical self; then, how, through transcendental apperception, can the subject himself know that he is identical and know this necessarily while there is no objective ground for this knowledge? What he claims is that my being an identical self is known only subjectively as it is already about the representation I which is a formal condition of my cognition; and it seems that he doesn't count this to be a genuine objective knowledge. But, shouldn't he also deny my knowledge of my existence, as it is too

¹³ B157

¹⁴ *Paralogisms of Pure Reason* is the chapter of the *Critique of Pure Reason* in which Kant shows that the arguments of the rational psychology for the nature of the soul rest on an inferential mistake: that they use two different senses of the word "I" in the major and minor premises of their arguments. For a detailed explanation of the *Paralogisms* see section 2.3.

through the transcendental apperception and it is also subjective in the sense that my knowledge of my identity is subjective? Instead he says the only consciousness that I have through apperception is that I am. In this chapter, I'll show that Kant doesn't contradict himself by asserting that I am conscious that I am an identical self and at the same time I know nothing about myself but only that I am through transcendental apperception; rather he reveals the distinct status that the subject holds toward his existence. That is, we will see that my knowledge of my being an identical self only concerns a logical requirement; this knowledge of the identity is about the mere representation I and it doesn't say anything about the subject (that this I refers to). But, my knowledge of my existence is about the referent of the I that this subject (that the I refers to) exists and the most interesting aspect of this knowledge is that it implies that I don't need to know anything about myself to know that I exist.

First of all, I'll show how the subject of cognition comes into the picture through the original synthetic unity of transcendental apperception. I'll present his argument, in the *Deduction*, for the necessary identity of the subject of cognition through the manifold representations he has. Then, I'll show how to read his argument for the denial of the identity of the self in the third paralogism of the *Paralogism* chapter together with the *Deduction* where he asserts that it is necessary that the subject has the consciousness that he is an identical self. Finally, I'll show why Kant claims that my knowledge of myself in transcendental apperception is neither of phenomena nor of noumena but only of my existence. What it is to assert that I know that I exist without having any knowledge of myself either as appearance or as I am in myself will be left to be discussed in the next chapter.

Kant takes our cognition to be a whole of compared and connected representations which would never be possible if there were no ground for them to be

united and they were left as isolated.¹⁵ Thus, what is to be explained is what supplies this unity to our cognition. In the third one of his threefold doctrine of synthesis, namely in the ‘synthesis of recognition in the concept’, Kant first brings the transcendental apperception into discussion where he says that we must seek a transcendental ground for the unity of consciousness that is necessary for both the synthesis of any manifold of representations and also for the concepts to be possible.¹⁶ He immediately contrasts the transcendental apperception with the empirical apperception which he also calls inner sense. The reason why he begins with this contrast is obviously that he aims to deny any empirical ground or any association of the objects independent from the understanding which otherwise is easily objected to skepticism. That is, as the main presupposition of his defense of the objective use of the categories is that objects are given to us only as appearances, thus he needs to show that objects are not associated empirically and cannot be given as associated unities by the empirical apperception in sensibility. Instead, all we have is the discrete appearances of the objects and what holds together these discrete appearances can only be explained by a transcendental unity and synthesis. This unity has to be supplied transcendently, as being the necessary condition of experience it cannot be found in the experience it conditions. There Kant introduces his theory of the transcendental apperception and its necessary unity as the ground of all human understanding and thus the ground of experience which requires both sensibility and understanding. Why does he submit the role of unifying the discrete appearances (thus, the role of unifying our thought) to the transcendental apperception? The reason behind this is that if the appearances that are combined by the understanding do not belong to the same subject (that is, if they don’t appear to

¹⁵ A97

¹⁶ A106

the same subject) and the subject doesn't have the unity in his apperception, then he wouldn't be able to combine them. Consider, for example, that I have an empirical awareness of the blue intuition of a lilac and you have the empirical awareness of the smell of the lilac and another subject has the empirical awareness of the shape of the lilac; then it wouldn't be possible for any of us to have the experience of a blue lilac that smells and it wouldn't be possible for any of us to judge that there is a blue lilac over there. But if all of the intuitions of the shape, the color and the smell of the lilac belong to the same subject, then he is able to combine them and have the unified cognition of the lilac. However, it is not enough that the very same subject has the empirical awareness of these intuitions as his empirical awarenesses are already dispersed¹⁷ and without relation to each other as in the case that the intuitions belong to the distinct subjects. What is required is, then, a transcendental awareness of the subject that makes him be able to be transcendently aware of all of the intuitions which he has, as his representations and this is possible by the transcendental self-consciousness that he has, which Kant calls transcendental apperception.¹⁸ Therefore, what enables me to synthesize the discrete representations I have, and cognize the objects that are represented, is the awareness of myself as the single subject of these representations as transcendental apperception.

My main question is not how the transcendental apperception fits into Kant's defense of the categories; but rather, I aim to question what can the transcendental apperception, as it is what makes cognition possible, tell about the cognition of the subject himself. Thus, I'll begin with an analysis of the concept of synthesis as the consciousness of the subject is presented within the consciousness of the synthesis of

¹⁷ B133

¹⁸ B133

a given manifold of representations, then I'll consider the original synthetic unity of apperception as it is what supplies me the consciousness that I am, as the single subject of my representations.

2.1 Synthesis and combination

Kant prologues his discussion of the transcendental unity of apperception, which begins in §16 of *Transcendental Deduction*, by first introducing the concept of combination in general in §15. This introduction is far from being dispensable or redundant as his whole theory of the unity of apperception is based on the consciousness of the synthesis and that grounds the rest of his defense of objective use of the categories. Indeed, in the passage where he initially gives his definition of the synthesis, he places the synthesis at the top of the concepts that are to be attended to in order to have an account of the necessary conditions of human cognition as he says that “..the synthesis alone is that which properly collects the elements for cognitions and unifies them into a certain content; it is therefore the first thing to which we have to attend if we wish to judge about the first origin of our cognition” (B103).

The integrality that Kant submits to synthesis is not trivially but immediately to be appreciated as his theory of cognition claims that our cognition is of appearances. That is, we are not given the objects that are empirically associated but only the particular appearances scattered without any association that can be supplied by sensibility; on the other hand, we have the cognition of these appearances as if they are united under concepts; thus, he has to supply an explanation of how we have the unified cognition of these (without understanding) irrelevant and scattered particular appearances. Therefore, what makes unity out of discrete appearances directly brings synthesis into discussion. In the beginning of the passage that I quote

above, Kant defines the synthesis in terms of two aspects: that is, the very act of synthesizing and the being aware of the outcome of this action as it is a synthesis of the previous particulars. Then in the beginning of §15, he introduces synthesis as the combination that is an act of understanding. The point of calling this combination of understanding is to make an emphasis on the point that without initial combination of the understanding, nothing (analytically or associatively) can be found in the objects as combined.

Indeed, the first notice Kant makes about his use of combination is that it is, unlike association of empiricist picture, not to be found in the objects, but rather it is an act that understanding performs upon the distinct and scattered appearances. Thus, the sensibility cannot supply anything combined but only the spontaneity of the understanding can afford a synthesis out of the manifold of intuitions that sensibility delivers. But, what is this act that understanding performs on the manifold of intuitions? Kant doesn't explicitly spell out what this act is, but only says that this action "must originally be unitary and equally valid for all combination". We will see what he means by this originality of this act in the next part where we also come to understand what he means by saying this act is the action of producing the '*I think*' of apperception.

The last important thing about the combination he addresses, in §15, is that the concept of combination has three requirements and he gives them by a conceptual analysis. That is, what is necessary for there to be a combination is that there must be (i) a manifold of intuitions (thus, not a single intuition) to take part in combination; (ii) a synthesis of these manifold intuitions; and most integrally, (iii) the manifold must be a unity.

What is this unity? This unity of the manifold is prior to the unity that is represented by the synthesis; indeed it must be prior as it grounds the possibility of synthesis; and it is distinct from the synthetic unity of the manifold that is represented by the combination after the synthesis has been done. While he was denying any unity that is to be found in the appearances of the objects, prior to combination of understanding, he places one unity even before the combination as the ground of any combination and thus the understanding itself. This unity is not to be found in the objects, but rather it is the unity that is to be found only and necessarily in the subject.

Kant calls this unity the qualitative unity as it is distinct from the category of unity. Indeed, this unity is supposed to ground the combination and it cannot be category unity as the category already presupposes combination; which it would then be taking the conclusion as the premise. Then, Kant says that “we must therefore seek this unity (as qualitative, § 12) someplace higher, namely in that which itself contains the ground of the unity of different concepts in judgments, and hence of the possibility of the understanding, even in its logical use” (B131).

What does he mean by this qualitative unity? He talks about the quality of the concepts that enable our cognition as a transcendental requirement. That is, this unity is a formal logical requirement of the cognition and it is distinct from the category unity that applies to the objects and is the qualitative unity that applies to the concepts. What this unity is about is the manifold representations I have that are united by the concepts as he says:

This unity is used in a merely formal sense, as belonging to the logical requirements for every cognition.. In every cognition of an object there is, namely, unity of the concept, which one can call qualitative unity insofar as by that only the unity of the comprehension of the manifold of cognition is thought, as, say, the unity of the theme in a play, a speech, or a fable. (B114)

That is, for a concept to necessarily possess the qualitative unity means that it brings together the distinct intuitions of an object and represents them as a unity. Let's consider one of his examples, the unity of the theme in a fable. What he means is that the theme of the fable is not to be found directly in the individual words or any of the characters or the parts of the fable. Rather, the theme is not a word not a sentence (even if the theme can be expressed by a word or a sentence, the theme itself is something different from being a word), and not a character in the fable; but it is represented by all of the words and characters together and the theme becomes possible when the sentences, events and characters of the fable are put together. Thus, the theme as it unites the fable is also represented as a unity. Consider a lilac, for example, it has a shape, a color, a smell etc. While none of these properties are the lilac itself, they all together enable the lilac to be a lilac, this is the qualitative unity of the concept lilac.

Therefore, this unity is not of objects and cannot be found in the objects empirically and it cannot be category unity as this unity must already be there for any category to be possible. This unity is of concepts but we still need to answer what is the ground of this unity that is possessed by the concepts? The answer is the unity of the subject whose identity is the ground of the categories as we will now see. That is, the unity of the manifold of appearances must be that they appear to the very same identical subject. Kant's emphasis of the identity of the subject comes after his main discussion of the unity of the apperception of the subject, which itself is what makes the subject know of his identity through the manifold representations that are given to him in intuition.

2.2 The original synthetic unity of apperception and being conscious that I am an identical subject

It would be better to begin this part by giving an exact definition of what transcendental apperception is in Kant's picture. Unfortunately, he didn't give any exact and explicit definition but only presented it in contrast to empirical apperception and told us why it is necessary and how we make use of it in cognition. While it is unfortunate that he didn't say explicitly what this apperception is, it is also understandable as to give a definition for the apperception is almost to tell what consciousness is, which however is almost the most controversial and mysterious phenomenon in the lively debates of the 21st century. I don't mean that he never defines the apperception, he indeed did, in A107 where he first takes apperception into the picture, as he said that it is the "pure, original, unchanging consciousness" that the subject has. Similar definitions and interpretations are also supplied by Kant many times; however these definitions give only the properties of this consciousness that the subject has, but don't tell us what this consciousness is or how any subject can possess it. Indeed, Kant seems to give a definition-like account for apperception, in A116, as he says that the pure apperception is "the thoroughgoing identity of oneself in all possible representations"; again what he means is the consciousness of this necessary identity and doesn't tell us what this consciousness is; but his appealing to the identity of the subject is integral both for his purpose of examining the transcendental conditions of the possibility of cognition and also for my aim of examining the cognition of the existence of the subject himself.

Kant's usage of the apperception is not some introspective self-consciousness or something directly addressed to the 'self' which might be experienced through inner sense as an object in the pure form of inner intuition, time, according to Kant's

Transcendental Aesthetic.¹⁹ Rather, apperception is not the experience or consciousness of ourselves as an object but it is the consciousness of ourselves as the subject of our representations whenever we have a cognition. He is using apperception to explain how the subjective source of the cognition, namely the understanding, works and how it enables the subject to communicate with his distinct appearances. And most importantly, by appealing to the idea of apperception, he discovered the way to bring the subject and its identity into the picture of how cognition is possible through scattered appearances which don't empirically possess any association among themselves.

Let's now consider what he means by originality, purity and identity of the apperception that he uses to define the features of transcendental apperception; and how the subject can be conscious of his faculty of apperception and its unity. The passage where Kant gives the mentioned properties of apperception begins with his famous *I think* principle in B132. That is,

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. (B132)

This *I think* is an act of spontaneity and he calls the spontaneity which produces this *I think* an act of itself, apperception. This apperception, as it is the producer of the *I think* which is the very first awareness I can have as it cannot be accompanied by any further representation, is called original. There we have the basic move that brings the subject in the picture. That is, this original apperception possesses an original

¹⁹ B50-53

synthetic unity which means that the *I think* makes the original synthesis through the manifold by representing the as belonging to the same subject.

This unity which Kant calls original is about my being an identical subject through the manifold of intuition that I synthesize. Indeed, Kant appeals to the unity of the apperception in every step of the deduction of the categories to ground the unity of the cognition, but, when he mentions the original unity of the apperception, he talks about the basic synthesis of the *I think* that shows the identity of the subject by describing the manifold as belonging to me; and this representation of them as belonging to me is possible only because I can add and synthesize them and be aware of their synthesis.²⁰ And what enables me to make this synthesis is the transcendental consciousness, which is the same unitary *I think* that accompanies my representations as Kant says the empirical consciousness doesn't represent my identity to me as it is "by itself dispersed and without relation to the identity of the subject".²¹ Therefore, "all empirical consciousness, has a necessary relation to a transcendental consciousness (preceding all particular experience), namely the consciousness of myself, as original apperception."²² He doesn't emphasize here that my representations must be related to *my consciousness*, as that would be by my empirical consciousness of an intuition, but he rather says that my empirical consciousness that accompanies my individual representations must have a relation to the transcendental *consciousness of myself*, which means that I am transcendently conscious to myself, distinct from my consciousness of an intuition in the manifold representations I have.

²⁰ B134, B135

²¹ B134

²² A117 fn.

Thus, this consciousness of myself, the apperception, that is not empirical is the pure apperception which doesn't present myself as an empirical object and which doesn't present any object empirically through the senses. But, it represents myself through the *I think* (which is the product of spontaneity and doesn't belong to sensibility) as the logical subject of my cognition, as a transcendental requirement that cannot be found in the experience through this apperception; thus it is pure.

Now we see that the transcendental apperception is pure and original and it is also identical through the manifold representations as the *I think* that it produces is the same and one through the manifold. Moreover we have begun to see how this *I think* and its identity brings the identity of the subject into the picture. I'll now focus more on the identity of the subject that presents itself to the consciousness in the transcendental apperception.

Through the original synthesis that is possible by the transcendental *I think*, which is the product of original apperception, "I am therefore conscious of the identical self in regard to the manifold representations that are given to me in an intuition because I call them all together my representations" (B134). Kant calls this synthesis (the synthesis by calling the representations mine) the original combination²³ that our understanding does. This original synthesis is what represents the subject of consciousness, the logical representation I, as an identical self. He says that "only because I can comprehend their manifold in consciousness do I call them all together my representations; for otherwise I would have as multicolored, diverse a self as I have representations of which I am conscious." (B134) This is to say that I am not a diverse self for each of my representations but I am an identical self who has all of the representations in the manifold and for me to represent and be

²³ B133

conscious of this identity is only because I can add these representations one another and accompany this synthesis with one *I think* which wouldn't be possible if for every distinct representation I have I would also a distinct self who has that representation.

Therefore, this basic original synthesis and the identity of the subject that the synthesis represents is the ground of any other unity that is to be needed for cognition to be possible. That is, if I wouldn't be an identical self then I wouldn't be able to make any synthesis out of distinct representations that are held by distinct selves and it wouldn't be possible to cognize these representations where the cognition is a unified whole of these representations. "Thus the synthetic proposition that every different empirical consciousness must be combined into a single self-consciousness is the absolutely first and synthetic principle of our thinking in general" (A117 fn). This principle is called the "transcendental principle of the unity of all the manifold of our representations"²⁴ and is not to be found in experience but it grounds the possibility of cognition a priori as it refers to the principle that "we are conscious a priori of the thoroughgoing identity of ourselves with regard to all representations that can ever belong to our cognition, as a necessary condition of the possibility of all representations (A117).

We see that the basic unity that grounds our cognition, thus grounds the pure concepts of the understanding, is the identity of the subject of the cognition through the manifold of representations it has and his consciousness to this identity of himself. But, what is this identity of the subject supposed to mean? How can the subject know about his identity? Why is it not enough that I am an identical self through the manifold, but it is also necessary that I am conscious of the identity of

²⁴ A117 fn.

myself? It seems that the unity that is needed to supply the ground of cognition is the unity and the identity of the subject; but why is this identical subject required to have the consciousness that he is an identical subject through the original apperception? Moreover, Kant denies that the subject possesses any knowledge of himself through the apperception but has only the consciousness that he exists. Also, isn't Kant arguing in the third paralogism that we don't have an intuition of the subject I as an object, so we cannot apply the category identity (of the person) to the I; thus we cannot know that we are identical persons in this way of identical consciousness? So how should we read these contradictory claims together? Why do the apperception and its unity seem to cause these contradictory claims about the subject of cognition? Let's now see what Kant rejects in the third paralogism and how it doesn't contradict my consciousness of myself as an identical subject.

2.3 Third Paralogism

Paralogisms of Pure Reason is the part of the *Critique of Pure Reason* that is present in both first and second editions but is shortened in the second edition by Kant. In the *Paralogisms* Kant deals with the rationalist misconceptions of the apperceptive representation of the subject I as a ground to conclude about the nature of the subject. Kant shows that the inferences of rational psychology from the logical subject I to the nature of the soul are fallacious. This fallacy of their inferences is a special kind of fallacy as it is because of the equivocation of the subject term, I, in their argumentation. That is, there are two different senses of the I and their arguments apply one of the senses of the word in the major premise and the other sense in the minor one, therefore their conclusion from their premises is not valid. Kant thinks that their mistake is because of the fact that they misconceive the one sense of the

subject term as empty representation I of the apperception as the logical subject for the other sense of the substantial subject or soul, if any.²⁵

There are four paralogisms that Kant discusses. For all of them Kant presents the inferential argumentations of the paralogisms and then shows that the usage of the term I in the premises are equivocated. The four paralogisms are about the subject's being a substance, subject's being simple, and subject's being an identical person that persists over time and about dualism, respectively. After showing that those argumentations of rational psychology have invalid inferences, then Kant claims that in order to reach the conclusions of these argumentations about substantiality, simplicity or personality, it is needed that there is an intuition of this subject I to apply these categories. That is, he shows that these conclusions can only be reached by a synthetic knowledge that applies the category substance, or person, to the intuition of the object I which however, according to Kant, we don't have the intuition of in the pure apperception, which presents the I only as the logical subject.

Now, since our concern is the subject's consciousness in the transcendental apperception that he is an identical self through the manifold and how Kant accepts this while at the same time he denies in the third paralogism that we can know from apperception that we are identical persons, I'll only consider the third paralogism in detail. Moreover, how should we read these arguments of identity from *Paralogisms* and from the *Deduction* together with the interesting existential claim of the *Deduction* that I don't have any cognition of myself either as appearance or as I am in myself in transcendental apperception; but I am only conscious that I am? And

²⁵ B404

since I'm considering these claims from the *B Deduction*, I'll consider the third paralogism as it is in the *B Deduction*.

The third paralogism begins with the premise that the identity of a person is "the consciousness of the identity of its own substance as a thinking being in all changes of state" (B408); and the I is conscious that it is an identical self in manifold representations it has; thus, I is a person; and Kant rejects this conclusion. His main rejection is that to apply this concept of the person to the subject I requires the intuition of this I as an object and its consciousness of its identical substance must be grounded on its intuition to conclude a synthetic judgment that this I is a person, which is to go beyond the mere representation *I think*. However, in my representation of myself as an identical self in the mere logical function *I think* in apperception, I don't extend synthetically beyond the concept of thinking to the personality as it is not supplied by an intuition of myself. Indeed, Kant says about the identity of myself in apperception that "this identity of the subject, of which I can become conscious in every representation, does not concern the intuition of it through which it is given as object, and thus cannot signify the identity of the person" (B408). Thus, this consciousness cannot constitute the ground for the application of the concept 'person' which requires the intuition of the I. Thus, my consciousness of my identity through the manifold of representations that I have is only a formal condition of my understanding and what this identity represents is the representation I which doesn't take us to the represented substantial subject which can only be given in intuition in its manifoldness.

Therefore, my consciousness that I am an identical self that is established in the original unity of apperception is about the formal logical representation I, and this consciousness doesn't imply anything about the substantial self, or the person,

(and its identity) that is represented by the I; then I don't have any synthetic knowledge about my nature through the apperception. Thus, my transcendental consciousness of my identity is just a transcendental requirement for cognition to be possible and this doesn't contradict the assertion that through the apperception I have no knowledge of myself either as phenomenon or noumenon. Indeed, in order for me to have a knowledge of myself as phenomenon I need to have the intuition of myself as appearance; thus, the logical representation I and its identity is not a knowledge of myself as appearance as I don't appear in the apperception which lacks the intuition of myself as object. Moreover, this consciousness of myself as an identical self is not a knowledge about myself as noumenon either, as this identity is of the logical subject, the mere representation I, but not about myself in I am in myself. Thus, transcendental apperception doesn't yield any knowledge about the identity of myself as I can be known either as appearance or as noumenon in this apperception as Kant asserts in B157. But, he says that, in addition to his denial of any phenomenal or noumenal type of knowledge of myself, I am conscious that I exist. Now, I'll introduce what Kant means by this denial of any phenomenal or noumenal knowledge in apperception but accepting that I am conscious that I exist through the apperception.

2.4 The consciousness of the subject in transcendental apperception as only "that I am"

We have seen that the transcendental apperception is the ground of human understanding and cognition. But, shouldn't this self-consciousness, as it is that powerful to ground the cognition, yield a cognition about the subject of cognition that it enables by the unity it possesses? However, one of the points that Kant is very cautious about is that the apperception is different from the inner sense and it doesn't

yield any knowledge about the thinking self. His reason to be very cautious on this point is the exhaustive theories of apperception by his predecessors from rational psychology. That is, Kant has already been aware that the consciousness of the subject in thinking is taken to be a basis for the claims of the true nature of the self and, in his Paralogisms, he elegantly revealed what is mistaken as a basis in these claims. But, he didn't leave this discussion just to the Paralogisms chapter; instead in §25, he deliberately -being aware of the false expectations from transcendental apperception- presented his position about the apperceptive knowledge of the self and the requirements of his theory just after he has given his deduction of the objective use of the categories which he grounded on apperception.

There is a point that I want to make before moving on to his negative theory of apperceptive knowledge of the self in the *Deduction*, which I call negative because of the fact that he presents it to prevent and to disagree with the claims of the rational psychology and presents us only what apperception doesn't yield as knowledge and not what it actually yields in detail. The point I need to make is that my reason to expect apperception to yield cognition of the subject is unlike the claims and expectations of the rational psychology. That is, my expectation is due to Kant's transcendental theory which grounds the possibility of cognition on the transcendental self-consciousness and I ask what this necessary and powerful consciousness can tell about the subject. And it would be interesting to find out whether Kant had already begun with a similar question, what is this self-consciousness that the rational psychology derives too much from, and then he discovered that this self-consciousness is not to deliver any cognition about the subject but it is only the necessary condition of the cognition of the objects. However, the apperception seems to be more than being the necessary condition for

the possibility of cognition since it somehow gives consciousness of my existence. Now, let's see how Kant's theory of apperception yields only the existence of the subject.

After showing how through inner sense I can know myself only as I appear to myself, Kant declares, unlike the claims of the rational psychology, that "in the synthetic original unity of apperception, I am conscious of myself not as I appear to myself, nor as I am in myself, but only that I am" (B157). Thus, he secures the transcendental apperception from misconceptions of his predecessors that he presents in the *Paralogisms of Pure Reason*. Apperception yields only the knowledge of my existence and nothing further than that. How can the consciousness in apperception be this poor about the knowledge of myself? It is because of the fact that the representation of myself in apperception is "a thinking, not an intuiting" (B157). Indeed, as my knowledge of other phenomena requires me to have both an intuition and thought of the phenomenon,²⁶ it is also needed that there must be an intuition of myself as object and thought of myself for me to cognize myself.²⁷ However, I have the intuition of myself as an object only in inner sense and I don't have any intuition of myself as object in apperception.²⁸ What apperception supplies me is the thought of myself and "to think of an object and to cognize an object are not the same" (B146); since to cognize requires, in addition to the thought, the intuition of the cognized object. Thus, I cannot say that this thought of myself in apperception is a cognition of myself as it lacks the intuition.

²⁶ B75-76

²⁷ B158

²⁸ B158

Therefore, this representation of myself through apperception is an empty representation as it lacks the intuition and is just a mere thought of the I.²⁹ Thus, it is clear why apperception doesn't give me the knowledge as I appear to myself, as Kantian cognition requires intuition and thought, percepts and concepts respectively. It is also clear why through the apperception I don't have a knowledge of myself as I am in myself. Indeed, through the apperception the only faculty at issue is the understanding, not sensibility. Since our kind of understanding is not capable of intuiting by itself, it cannot present myself to myself as I am in myself.³⁰ Thus, through our kind of understanding we can only think, which is not sufficient by itself to cognize things in themselves.

Now, as he has demonstrated his reasons to take apperception as it doesn't give me the knowledge of myself either as phenomenon or as noumenon he must then close the discussion of knowledge that apperception can give. Indeed, in his theory, the cognitions are either of phenomenon or of noumenon (which our cognition is closed to that area), what other type of thing can one have as an object of the cognition? Kant, thus, makes one of his most interesting claims about the I of the apperception that through the apperception I know that I am which is denied to be either phenomenal or a noumenal knowledge about myself.

What is this consciousness of my existence yielded by the apperception then? How can apperception have this peculiar stand that belongs to neither of the areas of knowledge that Kant's theory posits? Again, what we have only given about the knowing that I am is that this "representation is a thinking, not an intuiting" (B157). But, as Patricia Kitcher, in her analysis of the transcendental apperception in *Kant's*

²⁹ B404

³⁰ B307

Thinker, has also noticed, “any existence claim must be synthetic and so rooted in intuition.. However, he seems to link continued existence to mere thought” (Kitcher, 2011, p. 194). That is, the interesting stand of this existential claims not only that it seems to be denied as being either phenomenal or noumenal, but it also seems to contradict the requirements of the assertions of existential knowledge which must be rooted in intuition of the existent.

Therefore, we have to ask how an empirical type of knowledge, which must be rooted in intuition, can be yielded by a mere thought which is denied to have any corresponding intuition. What is special about the apperception to have the access to empirically grounded knowledge of existence of the subject via mere empty thought? What does it mean to say that I exist without any intuition and without knowing anything about myself? What is the content of this consciousness of existence? Why did Kant bring this weird type of knowledge into discussion? Moreover, is it necessary for Kant’s theory that a subject of cognition has this knowledge of existence via apperception? Unfortunately, Kant doesn’t directly address these questions in the *Deduction* and doesn’t say any more about the properties of knowing that I am; but he supplies two footnotes which are supposed to help us deal with the peculiar empty representation I in apperception and how it gives me the consciousness that I am. But again, the footnotes are raising more questions rather than dissolving the ones that were already raised. I’ll have detailed discussions of these footnotes and try to address these questions together with the discussion of the I of *I think* in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

I THINK AND I EXIST

In this chapter I argue that Kant's two claims that I am conscious that I am in transcendental apperception and that I have no intuition of this I in this apperceptive consciousness seem to contradict each other; or else Kant commits himself to a different type of existence that doesn't fit his twofold theory of cognition that requires both percepts and concepts. The explanations that Kant gives for his assertion that, through the transcendental apperception, I have the knowledge of my existence without any intuition doesn't violate the requirements of his theory that any existence claim has to be related to some kind of intuition are not satisfactory. Moreover, I think that his explanations for the peculiarity of my consciousness of my existence imply that the subject has an interesting intuition of himself which I call subjective-active intuition that is different from his intuition of objects and I think that both Descartes' and Kant's appealing to the proposition I think to show that I exist is because subject's knowledge of his existence is grounded by the subjective intuition which is possible only if there is a subjective act of thinking.

I will, first of all, give Kant's account of what an existence claim is and then discuss Kant's assertion of the consciousness that I exist in the transcendental apperception. He claims that I exist already is given with *I think* where the *I think* is an empirical proposition and it represents an *indeterminate perception*. For each of these claims, I will present what he means by them. Then, I'll show that his explanations are not together satisfactory to place the consciousness of I exist in apperception without violating the requirements of his theory of cognition and his account of the knowledge of the existence of the objects. Then, I'll present Hintikka's interpretation of Descartes *cogito* argument which claims that *cogito* is a

performance rather than being an inference and the subject demonstrates to himself that he exists through his act of doubting. There I think this demonstration is possible because the subject has a subjective intuition of himself when he performs the act of doubting and necessarily demonstrates to himself that he exists. Thus, I will finish with explaining what subjective intuition is and how it is supposed to supply an answer for how I have a special knowledge of my existence.

3.1 Kant's account of existence

Kant gives his account of the existence and what does it mean to assert the existence of a thing in the chapter of the *Critique of Pure Reason, The Ideal of Pure Reason* where he shows the impossibility of the ontological, cosmological and theological proofs of the existence of a highest being, God. The section four of that chapter is called '*On the impossibility of an ontological proof of God's existence*' and Kant shows in that chapter what existence is.

His main claim is that the existence is not a real predicate. What is a real predicate? He says that a real predicate is "the determination of a thing" (B626) and is a "concept of something that could add to the concept of a thing" (B626). That is, 'red' is a real predicate and it determines any red object as red and it adds any concept that it applies. For example, if the concept red adds to the concept flower, then it enlarges the concept of flower as making it the concept of a red flower. Thus, a red flower is analytically different from the concept flower and it is different from the concept blue flower as well.

However, existence is not a real predicate that can analytically add to the concept of an object. Because otherwise the concept that I have in my understanding

wouldn't be the same as the concept the existent object falls under as the existence adds to its concept analytically as Kant says in the following:

When I think a thing, through whichever and however many predicates I like, not the least bit gets added to the thing when I posit in addition that this thing is. For otherwise what would exist would not be the same as what I had thought in my concept, but more than that, and I could not say that the very object of my concept exists. (B628)

This is to say that a possible hundred dollars³¹ cannot be analytically different from an actual hundred dollars for otherwise actuality would enlarge the concept of the possible hundred dollars and we wouldn't be able to say that the actual hundred dollars are the extension of the concept hundred dollars as the two concepts then analytically differ.

What is the function of the existence predicate then? It is a logical predicate that doesn't add analytically to the concept of the object but adds it synthetically as the existence of the object is not included in the concept of the object.³²What is added synthetically through existence then? Kant says that,

For although nothing at all is missing in my concept of the possible real content of a thing in general, something is still missing in the relation to my entire state of thinking, namely that the cognition of this object should also be possible a posteriori. (B628)

That is, existence shows my empirical relation to the object that I cannot have through mere analysis of its concept. "Thus through connection with the content of the entire experience the concept of the object is not in the least increased, but our thinking receives more through it, namely a possible perception." (B629) That is, to empirically relate to the object, which means to have the possibility to experience it as it supplies a perception of the object, is not to add its concept but it is to have the possibility to apply the existence predicate to the object. Moreover he says that,

³¹ This is Kant's own example to illustrate why existence is not a real predicate, in B627.

³² B627

Thus whatever and however much our concept of an object may contain, we have to go out beyond it in order to provide it with existence. With objects of sense this happens through the connection with some perception of mine in accordance with empirical laws, but for objects of pure thinking there is no means whatever for cognizing their existence, because it would have to be cognized entirely a priori, but our consciousness of all existence (whether immediately through perception or through inferences connecting something with perception) belongs entirely and without exception to the unity of experience, and though an existence outside this field cannot be declared absolutely impossible, it is a presupposition that we cannot justify through anything. (B629)

He says that our consciousness of existence is a posteriori and we cannot be conscious of any existent a priori. Therefore, we have to go beyond our analysis of a concept to see whether the object of that concept exists. And going beyond the concept to get a posteriori consciousness of the existent object is by sensibility which supplies us a possible perception of the object. Thus, we cannot have any knowledge of existence beyond what sensibility supplies us.

3.2 The *I think* of the transcendental apperception and I exist

We have seen in the previous chapter that the transcendental apperception supplies the subject the consciousness that he exists. Let me quote the precise phrase of the passage where Kant makes this interesting claim:

In the synthetic original unity of apperception, I am conscious of myself not as I appear to myself, nor as I am in myself, but only that I am. This representation is a thinking, not an intuiting. (B157)

What is this *consciousness that I am* supposed to mean? He denies that this consciousness alone is a cognition of myself as to cognize myself I also need an intuition of myself together with the consciousness of myself, just like in the case of my cognition of other phenomena. However, he denies that there is an intuition of I in this apperceptive consciousness. He also denies that this consciousness presents me some noumena as I cannot know myself as I am in myself through this

consciousness. Thus, what this consciousness presents is only that I exist and this consciousness is necessarily present in every cognition as it is the ground of any cognition.

What is it to assert that I exist if there is no intuition of this I, as to assert the existence requires the perception of the existent as we have seen in the previous part? That is, I have an awareness of some existent, I, but have no intuition and thus no cognition of it which means that I have no way to determine this existence. Before moving on to what it means to determine the existence of something, let's see what Kant means by 'determination'.

First of all, he defines experience as "an empirical cognition, i.e., a cognition that determines an object through perceptions. It is therefore a synthesis of perceptions" (B218) Thus, in the concept of experience, the determinable is the object and it is determined through the pure intuitions of sensibility, i.e. in space and time. The determining, on the other hand, is the thinking that applies the concepts of understanding to the objects of the senses. Therefore, cognition, by applying the concepts to the objects of senses determines the objects; and to cognize is to differentiate the cognized object from other objects as Kant says "be able to cognize.. determinately, i.e., be able to anticipate that through which its empirical intuition is differentiated from others." (B221) We know that Kant's theory of cognition requires both percepts and concepts, therefore both the intuitions and the concepts that apply to the object determines the object of cognition. Thus, he says that "Every **thing**.. stands under the principle of **thoroughgoing determination**; according to which, among **all possible** predicates of **things**, insofar as they are compared with their opposites, one must apply to it." (B600) This principle says that even if the objects are determined in space and time, their determination through concepts goes as far as

there are concepts that can apply to the objects. But, the principle says that, for every concept, even if it is not determinate whether that concept applies to the object yet (hence the object is indeterminate in regard to that concept) is still certain that either the concept or its opposite is to be applied to the object.

3.2.1 Determining the existence of I requires intuition

Now, we see that to assert the existence of an object means that there is a concept that this object falls under and to know that it falls under that concept is by having the intuition of the object. Indeed, when I have an intuition of red I know that there is something red which is to say that red thing exists. Therefore, the concept red determines the way the red object exists; or, when I have an intuition of the smell of a lilac, I know that there exists something that smells like a lilac; thus the intuition of the smell of the object determines the way the object exist. Notice here that this determination doesn't mean that in order to judge that some object exists I need to have the exact empirical concept that it falls under. All I need is to have some intuition of the object. Thus, if I have an intuition of some body without possessing the empirical concept it belongs to, it is enough that I judge that it is a body that I see it and have the intuition of it through sensation. However, in my consciousness of myself in apperception there is no intuition of the I as an object to relate this I to any concept. Therefore to determine the way this I exist is not possible since to determine requires having the intuition of the determined. This is why Kant says that in order to determine the way I exist I need my intuition of myself as an appearance which is possible only through inner sense. He says that:

The I think expresses the act of determining my existence. The existence is thereby already given, but the way in which I am to determine it..is not yet thereby given. For that self-intuition is required, which is grounded in an a priori given form, i.e., time, which is sensible and belongs to the receptivity

of the determinable. Now I do not have yet another self-intuition, which would give the determining in me, of the spontaneity of which alone I am conscious, even before the act of determination, in the same way as time gives that which is to be determined, thus I cannot determine my existence as that of a self-active being, rather I merely represent the spontaneity of my thought, i.e., of the determining, and my existence always remains only sensibly determinable, i.e., determinable as the existence of an appearance. (B157-158 fn.)

The note says that as I don't have the intuition of myself like a self-active being, which doesn't need to determine the way it exists. Indeed, it intuits itself as the determining without being in need to have its self-intuition as a determinable object. But, I am not a self-active being and all I can have is passive intuitions that are given to me in sensibility and then I determine them in the pure forms of intuition. What is left is that I need to determine my existence in the way I do for other phenomena, i.e., by having the intuition of myself. But my intuition is possible only through inner sense, thus I need to determine my existence in inner sense through the pure form of inner sense, time. Therefore, there is no difference in my determining my existence and my determining the existence of other objects, as both are determined through intuition; thus it seems there is nothing against his general theory of cognition in my knowing that I exist in inner sense. However, his interesting assertion that we are investigating wasn't already placed in inner sense that I know that I exist through my intuition of myself in inner sense; but his interesting claim of my consciousness of my existence was through the apperception where there is no intuition of myself. Indeed, what he asserts is that while I have no cognition of myself either as an appearance or as a thing in itself in apperception; but I am conscious that I exist in apperception which has nothing to do with my intuition of myself in inner sense. Therefore, even if the footnote supplies an explanation of the way in which I am to determine my existence in inner sense, it doesn't say anything about the way in

which this existence is given before the determination in inner sense; thus the very second sentence of the footnote that “the existence is thereby already given” is left unexplained which however requires the most attention.

Kant doesn't say more about this peculiar type of given existence, without any intuition, in the *Deduction*. However, in the *Paralogisms* he refers to the same problem of determining my existence. The passage where he brings the problem of determination of my existence is the passage where he refutes the assertions of the rational psychology as he accuses them of making synthetic claims about the subject of cognition without there being an intuition of this subject as an object. Indeed, these synthetic claims, as they go beyond the concept of the subject by adding a way of existing for the subject, I, where this addition normally requires the intuition of the I, are not valid as there is no intuition of the I. He detects that the synthetic assertions of the rational psychology confuse the formal logical representation of the subject I in the pure apperception, for an intuition of the I as an object which can only be given empirically. Thus, he denies these synthetic claims, and then he shows that by tearing apart analytically the only proposition that rational psychology has, namely the *I think*, we only get that this *I think* means that I think as i) simple ii) identical iii) subject in all my thinking.³³ These only give the formal requirements for thinking to be possible and they don't determine anything about this subject of the *I think* as there is no intuition of the I as an object. Thus, the simplicity and identity are the quality of the apperception and the representation I, and they don't apply to the substantial subject, that is represented by the I, as we have no intuition of it as an object.

³³ B419

There Kant says that, besides the analytical implications of the *I think*, it is an empirical proposition and it contains the determinability of my existence but in regard to all kinds of intuition, it is an indeterminate proposition³⁴ and it expresses an *indeterminate perception*.³⁵ But, the assertion he makes by this existence claim through the indeterminate proposition *I think* seems not to fit his account of existence predicate as there is no intuition of the I in the I think which is asserted to exist. Moreover, this assertion of existence comes to the stage just in the passages where he definitely denies that if there is no intuition then there is no determination and thus there is no cognition of the subject I. Thus, he should have given us explanations for what he means by this existence claim where there is no intuition of the I and what he means by the *indeterminate perception*, if there is no intuition of I. But, he doesn't spare a place to give explicit explanations for this *indeterminate perception* and how does it relate to my consciousness of my existence even before any determination? He only gives a footnote which is supposed to clarify his position, but I don't think it does. In the next section I'll discuss this footnote that Kant mentions the notion of *indeterminate perception* that is supposed to ground empirically the assertion my existence.

3.2.2 The notion of the *indeterminate perception*

In this section, I discuss the footnote in which Kant mentions his interesting notion of indeterminate perception and then show that Patricia Kitcher, who is one of the scholars who interpret Kant's transcendental apperception, misinterprets his notion of *indeterminate perception* and thus she misses what is to be attended to in the assertion of the I exist.

³⁴ B420, B421

³⁵ B422-23 fn.

First of all, the footnote of the *Paralogisms* chapter that is about the relation between the *I think* and I exist is as follows:

The "I think" is, as has already been said, an empirical proposition, and contains within itself the proposition "I exist." ..my existence also cannot be regarded as inferred from the proposition "I think,".. but rather it is identical with it. It expresses an indeterminate empirical intuition, i.e., a perception (hence it proves that sensation, which consequently belongs to sensibility, grounds this existential proposition), but it precedes the experience that is to determine the object of perception through the category in regard to time; and here existence is not yet a category, which is not related to an indeterminate given object, but rather to an object of which one has a concept, and about which one wants to know whether or not it is posited outside this concept. An indeterminate perception here signifies only something real, which was given, and indeed only to thinking in general, thus not as appearance, and also not as a thing in itself (a noumenon), but rather as something that in fact exists and is indicated as an existing thing in the proposition "I think." For it is to be noted that if I have called the proposition "I think" an empirical proposition, I would not say by this that the I in this proposition is an empirical representation; for it is rather purely intellectual, because it belongs to thinking in general. Only without any empirical representation, which provides the material for thinking, the act I think would not take place, and the empirical is only the condition of the application, or use, of the pure intellectual faculty. (B422-23 fn.)

As this is the only passage through which we can understand what this interesting notion of *indeterminate perception* is, I'll try to analyze it in detail and then present Patricia Kitcher's reading of the footnote, in which I think she didn't give any more clear and descriptive explanation than the one Kant implicitly gives. Moreover, she misinterprets Kant's usage of the notion of *indeterminate perception* as she takes this perception to be of the objects that the subject cognizes; while, as I'll show, Kant means this perception to be of the subject.

Before I move on to what this footnote says I want to make a notice again here that the *I think* that expresses the *indeterminate perception* here is the mere logical function of the apperception. Kant takes this apperceptive *I think* to be as thinking taken in itself which implies no more than the *I think's* being a logical

representation.³⁶ However, he also talks about the I think as it says *I exist thinking* which determines my existence in inner sense. This I think is too an empirical proposition but now the subject I of this I think is an empirical representation as it is intuited in inner sense as an appearance. “Thus in this proposition there is already no longer merely spontaneity of thinking, but also receptivity of intuition, i.e., the thinking of myself applied to the empirical intuition of the very same subject” (B430). Therefore, the way in which inner sense determines my existence is through thinking as the proposition only says that I exist thinking.³⁷ But, when *I think* is taken to be the thought itself, the logical apperceptive *I think*, then he again claims the same thing with his claim in the *Deduction* that, “in this way I represent myself to myself neither as I am nor as I appear to myself, but rather I think myself only as I do every object in general from whose kind of intuition I abstract” (B429).

Thus, the footnote which we are discussing here talks about this *I think* which is the mere logical function and includes the proposition I exist without determining the way in which I exist. We have given the following assertions about this *I think*: it is an empirical proposition, but this doesn't mean that the subject I is intuited in this proposition. The I think's being empirical means that this apperceptive *I think* comes on to the stage only if there is some manifold of intuitions of some object for the *I think* to accompany the intuitions. This already is expected from Kant's theory as his *I think* principle, which we have seen in the part one of the previous chapter, requires. However, then we have the following assertions: I exist is identical with it and it is not inferred from the *I think*; this existence is not the category of existence as the category existence requires the intuition of the object which exists; and this *I*

³⁶ B428

³⁷ B430

think expresses an *indeterminate perception* which signifies something real.

Considering the *Transcendental Aesthetic* this *indeterminate perception* cannot mean that it is not given through space and time as how can I have a perception of something that is not given to me in space and time through intuition? However, if it would be given through one of this pure forms of intuition, space and time, it then be a determinate perception. Then, if it is a perception then we must ask how can this perception be possible? Can there be anything else that the *indeterminate perception* applies to? Or, does it only apply to the subject? By calling it *indeterminate* Kant doesn't remove the mystery of its being a perception without intuiting. Moreover, we can understand that if it is not determinate, it cannot be the category existence, but what type of an existence is then that, if it is not the category?

Patricia Kitcher, in her book *Kant's Thinker*, gives her analysis of Kant's unusual notion of *indeterminate perception*. I don't agree with her interpretation as she takes the indeterminate perception to be of objects that I am to cognize; however, as I'll show, Kant uses this notion to be of the I, which the existential proposition I exist refers to. Let me, first of all, present her understanding of the *indeterminate perception* and its relation to my knowledge that I exist.

She discusses subject's knowledge of their existence according to Kant's theory of transcendental apperception, in the section of *Kant's Thinker*, 'Does the Analysis of Cognition Imply the Existence of a Thinker?' (Kitcher, 2011, p. 193). She begins with quoting the passage in which Kant makes his assertion of my consciousness of my existence in apperception, without cognizing myself either as I appear to myself or as I am in myself, in B157; and she considers this passage and the footnote to this passage (B157 fn.), that we have just discussed, to be

enigmatic.³⁸ Her reasons to take these passages to be enigmatic are to be appreciated as she says:

According to several aspects of his cognitive theory, any existence claim must be synthetic and so rooted in intuition. In passages added to the second edition, however, he seems to link continued existence to mere thought. Besides the apparent conflict with the cognitive theory that requires perception for any cognition, including that of existence, this passages seems to burke the exclusive and exhaustive metaphysical distinction between the phenomenal and the noumenal. (Kitcher, 2011, p. 194)

Moreover, after quoting the footnote to B157, she says that;

The note doesn't so much clarify as deepen the mystery. Instead of explaining what type of existence something enjoys which is neither phenomenal nor noumenal, it seems to raise the possibility of some type of 'bare' existence that is of no determinate kind. (Kitcher, 2011, p. 194)

She is reflecting on Kant's assertion, in B157, that my consciousness of my existence in apperception is a thought rather than being an intuition. Also, I have this consciousness without having any other type of knowledge of myself, which however doesn't seem to fit Kant's theory of cognition as she points out and leaves us with a mysterious position towards subject's knowledge of his existence. Thus, she considers the footnote to B422-23 which is one of the rare passages where Kant addresses the issue; the other ones are B157 and the footnote to B157 that are already considered. Therefore, she expects this passage to solve the enigma of the mysterious assertion of I exist. Then, considering the last part of the passage (the footnote to B422-23), she says that

The note does not deny or even waffle on Kant's basic claim that cognition requires the application of concepts to materials originally provided by sensation. In the last sentence, he reaffirms the doctrine with which he begins the introduction: No thinking can precede the receipt of sensory materials. With nothing to combine, the intellectual powers would lie dormant. (Kitcher, 2011, p. 195)

³⁸ Kitcher, 2011, p. 194.

Indeed, Kant says in the last sentence of the footnote that the *I think* comes to the stage only if there are representations to accompany. However, this is about the way in which the *I think* is an empirical proposition and not about its relation to I exist; and it doesn't say anything about the notion of *indeterminate perception*. But, she takes the *indeterminate perception* to be of the representations that the *I think* is able to accompany as she says the following:

The need for some sensory materials to think cannot be abstracted from. Nevertheless, since the 'I-think' refers only to the form of cognition in general (A346/B404), and not to any particular cognition or to any particular kind of cognition, on its own it expresses only an indeterminate perception. Having abstracted everything from his sensations or, perhaps, perceptions except their givenness-and their ability to be thought-a human cognizer can consider thinking something through such 'bare' perceptions.

The Paralogisms note is also helpful in dispelling any suggestion in the earlier passages that it is possible to consider thought alone, thought without any sensation or perception at all. Some indeterminate perception is required to supply materials for thinking.

Through the device of an indeterminate perception, Kant can offer what he takes to be an acceptable version of Descartes' *cogito*. His predecessor's idea that pure thought could establish the existence of the thinker was mistaken, but it was not far from the truth, thought can establish the existence of a thinker-but the thought has to take place.

She thinks that Kant's emphasis on *indeterminate perception* is on I think's being the mere logical function that applies to the given perceptions. Thus, she thinks that by having been abstracted from those perceptions, the *I think* implies the *indeterminate perception* of those representations. Therefore, she says that Kant doesn't talk about a mysterious form of existence as the following passage indicates:

He is not suggesting some odd sort of existence that is neither phenomenal nor noumenal nor determinate in any way. He is maintaining only that when considered in abstraction from any particular form of intuition-as it can be-but not from all given perceptions (which it can't be), self-conscious thought implies existence, though not any particular kind of existence. There is no indeterminate form of existence, but merely abstraction from determinate forms. (Kitcher, 2011, 196)

The first question we need to ask Kitcher is how my abstraction from the perceptions I have implies my existence that is abstracted from the determinate forms. That is, if the *indeterminate perception* is of the objects, then the abstraction should imply the indeterminate existence of the objects; if I, by abstraction, end up with the mere *I think*, then I should conclude that there are indeterminately perceived objects that exist as the *I think* took place by accompanying the representations of those objects. However, *indeterminate perception* signifies my existence, and not the existence of objects as the subject of the footnote is already my existence, not the existence of the objects; thus this perception cannot be of objects. Indeed, Kant explicitly says in the footnote that,

An indeterminate perception here signifies only something real, which was given, and indeed only thinking in general, thus not as appearance, and also not as a thing in itself (a noumenon), but rather as something that in fact exists and is indicated as an existing thing in the proposition "I think".
(B422-23 fn.)

Whatever it is that the *indeterminate perception* is of is something real and given to my thought in general; and, as being neither an appearance nor a noumenon, it cannot be an object as the objects that I perceive are given to me as appearances through sensibility. What is only given to thought without being an appearance or a noumenon is the representation I am, as he says in B157. Moreover, he says this thing that the *indeterminate perception* signifies is indicated as an existent in the proposition I think and we know that what I think indicates as an existent is the I, not the objects. This is obvious already from the place where Kant chooses to mention the notion of *indeterminate perception* as he mentions it just after he says that the *I think* is identical to I exist and the reason he mentions this notion is to supply an empirical ground for the proposition I exist; indeed, he says that the *indeterminate perception* "proves that sensation, which consequently belongs to sensibility,

grounds this existential proposition” (B422-23 fn.). Moreover, later in the footnote, Kant repeats that what is given to thought in general that the indeterminate perception signifies is the I, which is “purely intellectual, because it belongs to thinking in general” (B422-23 fn.).

Therefore, this notion of *indeterminate perception* cannot be the abstraction from the perceptions that the *I think* accompanies as Kitcher misinterprets. Rather, it signifies the logical representation I of *I think* and of I exist. Then we end up with the question we begin with: what is to perceive this logical representation indeterminately? We have seen that Kant says that the determination of my existence is through inner sense via the proposition ‘I exist thinking’. But, before this determination, I am conscious that I exist in apperception without any determination. This is to say that I cannot say I exist as red, I exist as body, I exist as substance or anything as a determination in apperception as I lack the intuition of myself in apperception (but in inner sense, I have the intuition of myself that is determined in time and I determine my existence). However, still I can say that I exist and this implies that I have the awareness of a real existent thing without having any idea about it. Thus, the problem is still not dissolved: how can I know that I exist without knowing the way in which I exist? It seems that myself which is to be determined in inner sense is already present (or given) in apperception, but cannot yet be determined in apperception as there is no form of intuition of myself in apperception. This is the difference between my mere thought of some object and the mere thought of myself. That is, through mere thinking I cannot be conscious of any existent object, but I am conscious of my existence in this way; as, I am given as the subject in mere thought before any determination unlike any other objects that can only be given through determinate perceptions. However, Kant doesn’t say this explicitly or

imply this difference in any explicit way. Therefore, what Kant aims at through this *indeterminate perception* is still not clear, but all these statements imply is that I am given to myself as an existent without having any way to determine what type of an existent I am through apperception, which represents a peculiar kind of awareness of myself in this way.

Thus, Kant's *indeterminate perception* does not solve the contradiction of my knowing that I exist without having any intuition of myself as an object in apperception. Moreover, this peculiar notion that he uses brings integral questions directly targeted to main principles of his critical philosophy while he supposes this notion to supply an explanation of claiming existence without intuition.

Therefore, we are still left unexplained how through the apperception I know that I am but we only know that what is integral about apperception is that I become aware of myself through an act that I produce and through the active synthesis of original unity of apperception. Thus, we need to seek for a clue in this active nature of apperception in order to have an explanation why it presents a consciousness of my existence without the intuition of myself as an object. I'll come back to this point after I show that Descartes' *cogito* also makes use of the active nature of the subject to show that I can know that I exist while having no intuition of myself as an object.

3.4 *Cogito* and I exist

Kant thinks that he is justified in his assertion of existence of the subject as he thinks he demonstrates an empirical basis for this existence claim and shows that it is directly given with the *I think* while he denies the validity of Descartes' *cogito* argument from I think to I exist; this is because Kant takes Descartes' move from *cogito* to I exist as an inference.³⁹ Let's see first of all, how the *cogito* is considered to

³⁹ B422 fn.

be an inference which means deducing a conclusion from given premises. The interpretations of *cogito* as inference take I think (*cogito*) to be a premise and I exist to be the conclusion from this premise and the deduction of this conclusion requires the mediate premise *everything that thinks exists*, thus it is supposed to have the following form:

Premise 1: Everything that thinks exists.

Premise 2: I think.

Conclusion: I exist.

This reasoning is taken to be having the form that if it is true that everything that is A is B, and if X is A, then X is B, which is a valid inference; thus, if the premises that are given for the deduction of the I exist above are true, then it is a sound inference.

Now, we take I think to be true (and to discuss the ground of its being true is already beyond the subject of this study), thus all we need to check is the truth of the first premise that says *everything that thinks exists*. However, as the second predicate (B) is existence in this premise, then things become complicated and it seems that we beg our question when we start to think about the truth of this premise. That is, while we are to look for a ground to conclude existence, it seems our ground already presupposes the existence. I do not want to give a detailed analysis of this premise one here but only to say that whether it is taken to be true in some way of interpreting the existence predicate or it is taken as false, it still misses the most important point of the *cogito* argument: that it is not of something that thinks; but it is about I. That is, whether the premise one is taken to be true, as interpreting existence to be a requirement for any other predicate (thus, of thinking) to apply; or it is denied, as Kant did by interpreting it to have the meaning that thinking beings

necessarily exist,⁴⁰ it cannot capture in this way the integrality of the I in the I think. Consider a very famous example from Hamlet. That is, *Hamlet thinks*, and according to the above inferential reasoning *Hamlet exists*. Now, we wish to deny that *Hamlet exists* and we might either deny that *Hamlet thinks* (instead, the one who thinks his thoughts is Shakespeare) or we might deny that existence is necessary to attribute thinking. However, I think, my position on the truth of *Hamlet thinks* is not different from my position on the truth of *Shakespeare thinks* or even on the truth of *you think* and this is not a skeptical concern; rather my emphasis is on my awareness that is present in I think which is lacking in my position on *Hamlet thinks* or *you think* -and the importance of this awareness will become clear in the next discussion of the *cogito* as performance; and remember that we already have seen the importance of this awareness in Kant's odd claim of the consciousness of my existence. Thus, when it comes to checking the truth of the premises, where the subject of the thought is not I, the second premise is no longer secured and then the first premise is not enough to arrive at the conclusion even if it would be true. Therefore, if the subject I is integral in *cogito* and it cannot be replaced by any other subject, then the point of the first premise disappears as *cogito* doesn't work through placing the I in a universal proposition.

What is the important role of I in *cogito* then? I think Hintikka's interpretation of the *cogito*, in his article *Cogito, Ergo Sum: Inference or Performance?* is more accurate than the interpretations of the *cogito* as inference and I claim that by considering Hintikka's interpretation we can see the importance of the I and why the subject can know that he exists without having any intuition of

⁴⁰ B422 fn.

himself, just as Kant's transcendental apperception shows the subject that he exists while having no intuition of himself.

Although Descartes reformulates his *cogito* argument many times in different texts we can still see that there are at least two indispensable features of the *cogito*: that it has to be a mental act that is supposed to show the existence of the subject; and it has to be the first person himself whose mental activity is at issue when he deduces from this activity that he exists. Indeed, in the second meditation, he explicitly says that "I am, I exist, is necessarily true whenever it is put forward by me or conceived in my mind" (CSM II, p. 17).⁴¹

Among all the different interpretations of *cogito*, I take Hintikka's interpretation to be the best approach to capture these two indispensable features of the *cogito*. Indeed, Hintikka says that the true power of the *cogito* lies in its performatory nature rather than its being an inference to the existence:

..The function of the word *cogito* in Descartes's sentence as well as his motives in employing it.. serves to express the performatory character of Descartes's insight; it refers to the "performance" (to the act of thinking) through which the sentence "I exist" may be said to verify itself. For this reason, it has a most important function in Descartes's sentence. It cannot be replaced by any arbitrary verb. The performance (act) through which the existential self-verifiability is manifested cannot be any arbitrary human activity, contrary to what Gassendi claimed. (Hintikka, 1962, p. 17)

His argument is as follows. That even the attempts to convince myself that I don't exist demonstrate to myself through the act of convincing that I exist. Thus, to doubt is to act and it shows the performer of the act that he is. This is not an inference or a deduction from a prior premise that if there is an act then there is an actor; rather through the very act of doubting and trying to convince myself that I don't exist I

⁴¹ *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*. Translated by John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff and Dugald Murdoch. 3 volumes. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984. The shorthand for the three volumes are CSM I, CSM II, and CSMK respectively.

immediately demonstrate to myself that I am. But this act cannot be an act of walking or seeing. But, "the word *cogito* may thus be replaced by any other word which refers to one of my acts of consciousness" (Hintikka, 1962, p. 25). Indeed, Descartes already in the 9th principle of *Principles of Philosophy* shows that he takes every conscious event within us to be a thought.⁴² Therefore while walking and seeing don't work in the same way that *cogito* does, the awareness of walking does work, since it is a thought as well. Thus, the consciousness is crucial for *cogito* to work. Because, it is the very reason that *cogito* has a performatory character. That is, I cannot, at the same time, be conscious of my activity in my mind and deny that I exist; the very conscious act of my mind demonstrates to me that I exist.

Moreover, Hintikka warns against the interpretations of *cogito* as introspection. He says that my gazing into myself as an observer doesn't provide me the certain knowledge that I exist, rather it is by the very activity of my thought and being conscious that I am the subject of the act by which I demonstrate my existence to myself. We have seen that in Kant's picture, the knowledge of my existence is also yielded by the act that is produced by understanding.

Thus, rather than being an inference from the mediate premise that everything that thinks exists, *cogito* also makes use of the awareness of the activity to show that I exist as I demonstrate to myself that I am. This demonstration doesn't involve the intuition of myself. That is, I don't appear myself as an object and point out against

⁴² The 9th principle is as follows: "By the term 'thought', I understand everything which we are aware of as happening within us, in so far as we have awareness of it. Hence, *thinking* is to be identified here not merely with understanding, willing and imagining, but also with sensory awareness. For if I say 'I am seeing, or I am walking, therefore I exist', and take this as applying to vision or walking as bodily activities, then the conclusion is not absolutely certain. This is because, as often happens during sleep, it is possible for me to think I am seeing or walking, though my eyes are closed and I am not moving about; such thoughts might even be possible if I had no body at all. But if I take 'seeing' or 'walking' to apply to the actual sense or awareness of seeing or walking, then the conclusion is quite certain, since it relates to the mind, which alone has the sensation or thought that it is seeing or walking" (CSM I, p. 195).

my doubting of my existence that here I am and here is my intuition as of an object. Rather, by producing the thought, doubting, I immediately show that I am which only works if I have the consciousness of that activity in me which is to say that I am conscious that I am acting as a subject.

3.4 Subjective-active intuition

We have seen that the ways in which *cogito* and apperceptive *I think* yields the knowledge of the existence of the subject to himself are deeply related to the activities he performs. In this part, I'm going to introduce the notion of subjective-active intuition of the subject that he has of himself which I think might help us to understand why the subject can know that he exists through his activities. First of all, I want to begin with what the active intuition is not. It is not an objective intuition of myself as if I am given to myself as an object. Indeed, I agree with Kant that 'I' is not given as an object through intuition. Thus, it is not an intuition in the way I have the intuition of objects. Furthermore, it is not the intellectual intuition that Kant strictly says that we don't possess an intellectual intuition.⁴³ First of all, intellectual intuition has the capacity of creating the objects just by thinking of them which means that its thinking is its intuiting. Thus, objects are not given to the intellectual intuition passively, rather it creates them through intuition. But, I cannot create through my subjective intuition, rather I am in need that myself must already be given to me as I am also in need that objects are given to me which I intuit passively. Moreover, the question whether I create any object through my subjective-active intuition cannot even arise as it already only applies to myself as I am given in this way only to myself; and an outsider cannot know that I exist through this way. Thus, I neither create myself nor any object through my subjective intuition.

⁴³ B139, B146, B159, B307

The subjective-active intuition is the intuition of the subject as subject through his subjective acts. There are not two I's in this intuition, there is just the I that is the subject of some event or cognition and his active intuition of himself is attached to this subjective activity of his. Thus, he doesn't reflect upon himself to get this intuition, rather he is busy with his subjective activity and this is the only way in which he can get his active intuition. This is very similar with what Kant calls the mere thought of I as a subject in the *I think*. But unlike him, I don't think this is just a mere thought; rather I think that this is a different kind of intuition which is not objective that only subjects have while they are actively being the subject of thinking. Indeed, it cannot be just my mere thinking about myself as I am somehow present and given as existent through this activity of thinking. That is, by being the subject of some thought, I don't search for a subject of these thoughts and just happen to find myself as the given subject and my relation to the given-ness of myself (my existence) cannot be explained by mere thought which is already a product of my faculty of understanding that requires my being. Moreover, I cannot think the opposite that I am not the subject of this thought that I am actively aware, which I suppose it must have been possible if my thought of this I was only a mere thought. Indeed, Kant asserts, and I agree, that through mere thinking no objects or the existence of any object can be cognized. But we need to attend to the fact that the mere thinking of I in the *I think* is quite different from my mere thinking about any other object; let's suppose the mere thought of a golden mountain. My thinking about the mountain doesn't say anything about its existence while I can know that I exist through the *I think* in which my thinking of the I is considered by Kant to be a mere thought. The difference is quite obvious: that I am holding the subject position in the *I think* and this is how I can know that I exist, while I cannot know whether the

mountain exists. But it is not the case that I can know the existence of you from a proposition in which you hold the subject position. Thus, the I think must be my own thought and I must actively intuit that I am the subject and producer, or holder of the thought that I have; and this must be the sense in which my I think represents my existence, where my existence is an empirical contingent event. Thus, even the mere thinking has an empirical side. That there is an existent subject who is doing the thinking and actualizes the activity of thinking.

As I have said, the active intuition is to be found only in subjective performances of the subject in which he doesn't even try to objectify himself by reflection. Therefore, if there is not an act of subjectivity it is not possible to have this active intuition as it is attached to my subjective engagements. This implies that my active intuition has an interesting relation to my passive intuitions. That is, my subjectivity is active whenever I am the subject of some cognition, which as I agree with Kant begins with intuition. Therefore, whenever I intuit some object and cognize it, I also have a possibility to actively intuit myself as the subject.

Now, what can I know about myself through this intuition? I cannot know anything about my nature through it; but can only know that I exist. Indeed, even if this is an intuition of myself, it cannot provide me any knowledge about my nature or the way I exist as I don't represent myself in this intuition as an object. Thus, it is like the way Kant considered my thought of I as a mere thought without yielding any knowledge other than the existence. Moreover, this intuition doesn't contradict Kant's requirement for objective intuition to determine the way I exist as it doesn't provide me any knowledge about the way in which I exist or what my nature is. Therefore, I can only be conscious through this intuition that I exist and I cannot doubt that I exist while I am having this consciousness, in a similar way I cannot

doubt my existence in Descartes' *cogito* argument. That is, it is true that my existence is not necessary as it is a contingent fact only known through experience; but my awareness of my existence is indeed necessary if I am to be the subject of my activity because of the subjective intuition I have. Thus, I know that I exist not through experiencing myself as an object; rather I know that I exist as I have experiences as the subject. And my experiences are contingent but my awareness of myself in my experiences is necessary; this is the way in which my knowledge of my existence is a posteriori. Therefore, what normally is taken to be a priori if it is given through thinking is not here taken as a priori as what is given here through thinking is the subject of the thought as the subject *of* that thought, which is different from thinking *about* the subject as an object, it is rather the doing of the subject. This is the same in the performatory character of the *cogito*.

There might arise the question through which sense this active intuition is to be intuited. However, this question already presupposes the subject-object dichotomy for the relation between a subject and the objects. However, there is not any object in this intuition and there shouldn't be. Indeed, if the subject objectifies himself and tries to have an intuition of himself through this way, his intuition of himself as an object will no more be the active intuition of himself as this intuition requires him to be the active subject.

I want to finish with an analogy from Wittgenstein (1921). In the proposition 5.633 of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, he first asks "where in the world is a metaphysical subject to be found?"⁴⁴ And then he says:

⁴⁴ Propositions of the *Tractatus* are from Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2001).

You will say that this is exactly like the case of the eye and the visual field. But really you do *not* see the eye.

And nothing in *the visual field* allows you to infer that it is seen by an eye.

(Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico Philosophicus*, pr 5.633)

He says that the eye is not included in its visual field and cannot see itself; thus, it cannot infer its being the eye that sees the objects in the visual field. Similarly, he thinks, we cannot infer the subject I from the world of objects as the subject is not included in that world of objects.

Let's suppose that this eye also sees itself as an object in its visual field, easily through a mirror; can it in this time deduce that it is that object (the eye) what is now seeing itself? I don't think so. Even if the eye look through itself as the object in the most concentrated manner it cannot know that the seen object eye is itself that is doing the seeing. This is indeed because of the fact that in the image of itself as an object it cannot see its activity of seeing which can only be known by the subject eye which does the seeing. Thus, the eye cannot conclude from its objective image that it is what performs the seeing which can only be known through an active non-objective intuiting. In the same way, even if the subject I was given to himself in intuition as an object (I mean, given to himself not only in time but also in space) this wouldn't supply him the knowledge of himself as subject; moreover, he would in no way be sure the object he sees is himself who is doing the thinking.

Therefore, through subjective-active intuition, subject knows and only the subject knows that he is the subject of his performing. But as this active intuition is non-objective all the knowledge it can yield me through is the knowledge that I exist as the subject.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

I have begun with the following questions “Can the subject of cognition cognize himself” and “Can the subject know that he exists”. I have looked for an answer in Kant’s theory of transcendental apperception and I showed how his theory asserts that through the transcendental apperception subject is conscious that he exists while he cannot cognize himself either as phenomenon or as noumenon through this apperception. I have shown that this enigmatic assertion of subject’s consciousness of his existence without any cognition of himself either as phenomenon or noumenon needs explanation. I asked why Kant didn’t take my consciousness of my identity in apperception as my knowledge of myself in apperception together with my consciousness that I exist. We have seen that apperception only represents the formal logical subject of the cognition as a transcendental requirement. However, shouldn’t this apperception then also be silent about my existence in the sense that it is silent about my being identical in my nature as it lacks any intuition of myself as an object to supply myself the knowledge of myself? But, the apperception does tell that I exist; and I asked how this is possible. I showed that Kant’s explanation for justifying this knowledge within the requirements of his theory is not satisfactory. Moreover, the reason why his explanation is unsatisfactory can indeed help us understand what type of epistemic relation that the subject has of himself.

We have seen that Kant lacks the required explanation to assert within the commitments of his theory that I am conscious that I exist through the transcendental apperception while I have no intuition of myself in the apperception but only the empty representation I. However, the way he presents my existence through the apperception has an interesting implication that I encounter my existence through my

subjective acts without being the object of my sensibility. Therefore, he might submit the special status of the subject toward his existence without doing any injustice to his theory and I think this might be possible with appealing an idea of subjective intuition by breaking the subject-object dichotomy for the case of subject's knowledge of his existence, which I think must already be different from the way in which subject can know the existence of the objects.

I explained that the apperceptive *I think* comes to the stage only if there is a manifold of representations and I am conscious through this *I think* that I exist. But, I don't have a way, in Kant's theory, to know whether a particular representation I have means that the object of the representation exists. Indeed, to assert that something exists requires the intuition of the existent, but this doesn't mean that every representation, which I have, implies that the representation corresponds to something exists as I might easily be dreaming or hallucinating. However, whenever I have cognition of a representation, without knowing whether it is of an existent object or of a hallucination, I cannot doubt that I exist, through the apperceptive consciousness that I produce the *I think* for the thinking about the representation. My existence is given for sure whenever I have a thought as it requires apperception which presents that I am.

Thus, as both Kant and Descartes make use of the active nature of the subject to present I exist they also discover the surest existence claim one can have, that I am conscious that I exist. This, I claim is possible because of the subjective intuition we have of ourselves and I can know that I exist through this intuition without knowing anything else about myself and this only applies to me as I am the subject of my thought.

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