



# Kant and Critical Philosophy

Week 6. 24<sup>th</sup> October 2016  
Self-consciousness, Schematism  
and Experience

# Class recap

- The 12 categories in the “Metaphysical deduction”
- Kant’s account of knowledge: the three faculties of the senses, imagination and the understanding
- Combination and synthesis
- The “Transcendental Deduction”, and its attempt to ground the categories through subject-object relations
- Grasp why apperception (self-consciousness) is so fundamental to human knowledge for Kant – *to be completed in this class*

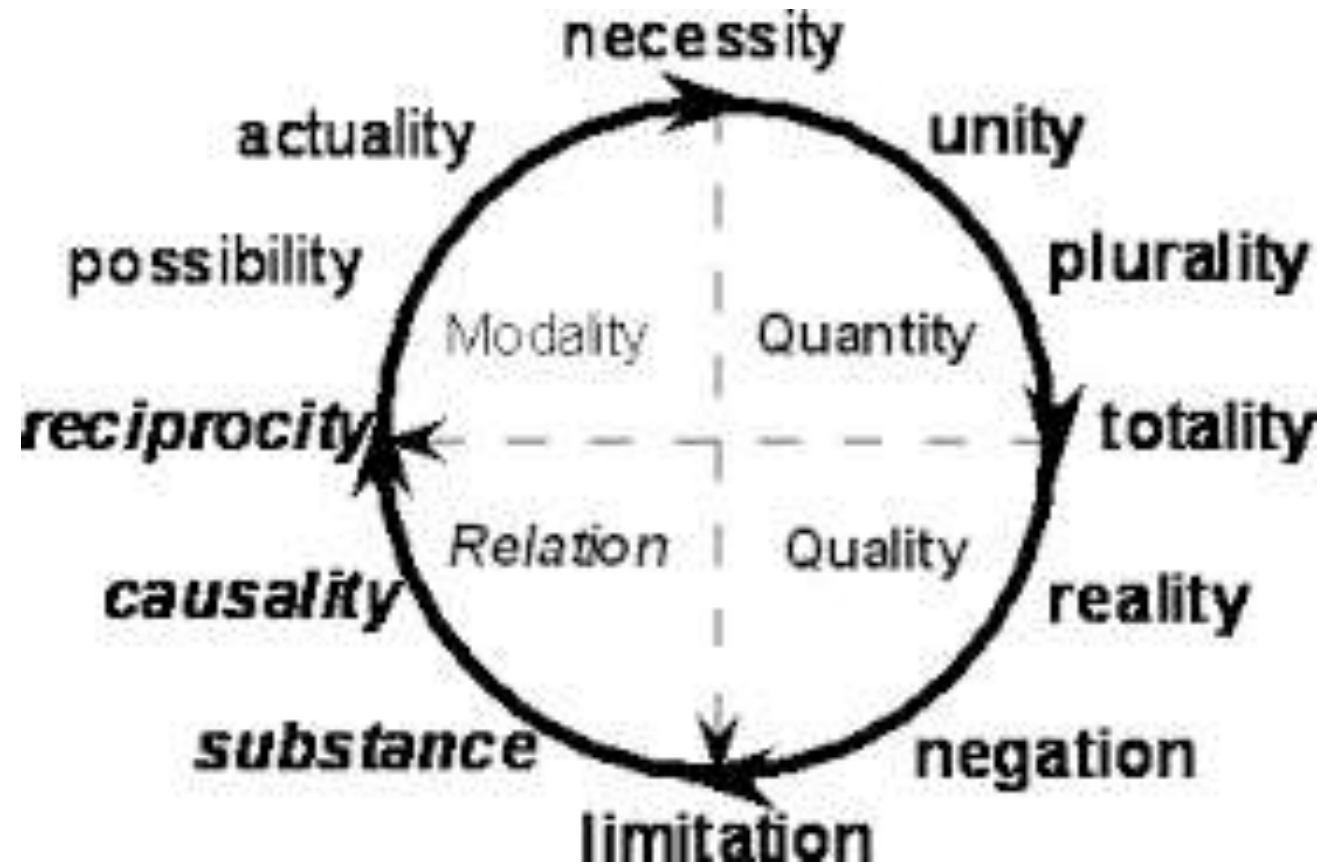
# Class aims

- Thorough recap on the Transcendental Deduction
- Explore Kant's arguments about self-consciousness and their context in the Deduction
- Grasp the importance of *schematism* in mediating between understanding and sensibility
- Understand Kant's views on substance and causality in the Analogies
- If time, discuss Kant's refutation of idealism and his broader challenge to Empiricism

# Recap: concepts and categories

- ‘Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind’ (A51/B75)
- Concepts are general rules used by the understanding for making judgements
- Judgements are ‘functions of unity among our representations’ (A69/B94), that enable us to combine or synthesise different representations (a ‘manifold’) into a singular coherent thought
- The mind is active in this synthesis – ‘spontaneity’
- Of the concepts, there are 12 pure a priori categories beneath them, stated in the “Metaphysical Deduction”

# Metaphysical deduction: categories



Judgments	Categories	Principles
Quantity	Quantity	Quantity
Universal: all X is Y	Unity	Axioms of Intuition
Particular: some X is Y	Plurality	
Singular: this X is Y	Totality (plurality as unity)	
Quality	Quality	Quality
Affirmative: X is Y	Reality	Anticipations of
Negative: X is not Y	Negation	Perception
Infinite: X is (not Y)	Limitation	
Relation	Relation	Relation
Categorical: all X is Y	Substance / accident	Analogies of Experience
Hypothetical: if X, then Y	Cause / effect	
Disjunctive: X or Y	Reciprocity: agent / patient	
Modality	Modality	Modality
Problematic	Possibility / impossibility	Postulates of Empirical
Assertoric:	Existence / non-existence	Thought in General
Apodictic:	Necessity / contingency	

# Categories: recap

- Categories provide general rules for how we synthesise, and the understanding requires at least one of these to think
- Categories supply the original ground for the 'lawfulness' of nature, and the a priori grounds of thought
- But... categories only apply to appearances, or our mind's representations – they cannot tell us about things in themselves
- Kant gives three forms of combination or synthesis involved in judgements:
  - the senses (*apprehension*), experiencing a manifold of sense-impressions into one perspective;
  - the imagination (*reproduction*), bringing together, storing and comparing representations representations;
  - the understanding (*recognition*), unifying representations and concepts into a judgement.

# Transcendental Deduction: recap

- Kant's "Transcendental Deduction" is concerned with demonstrating how these categories (or a priori pure concepts) can have justified application to objects, through their transcendental function (i.e. not involving actual experience)
- The theory reinforces transcendental idealism: what is given to us as intuitions or concepts is empirically real but transcendently ideal
- Subject and object make each other possible: my representations require sensible intuitions of objects, whose unity is grounded on my apperception or self-consciousness
- Thus: we cannot *think* or perceive the world without these a priori categories. But these categories relate only to appearances, not things in themselves → This is Kant's key contribution



# Transcendental apperception

- Kant's term for self-consciousness is apperception, taken from Leibniz, referring to self-conscious experience
- 'The I think must be able to accompany all of my representations' (B132).
- For a representation to be mine, it must be attributed to a single subject – the 'I think'. Representation necessarily involves subjectivity.
- Each representation involves apperception – the process of synthesising representations into a unified picture results in consciousness
- Its unity is transcendental, going beyond subjective experience
- 'it is only because I can combine a manifold of given representations **in one consciousness** that it is possible for me to represent **the identity of the consciousness in these representations** itself' (B133)
- Each representation incorporates the possibility I could recognise it as mine, 'otherwise I would have as multicolored, diverse a self as I have representations of which I am conscious' (B134)

# Transcendental apperception: A Deduction

- In his subjective deduction, Kant argues that transcendental apperception is the basis for all other cognitions
- It is the underlying unity and original consciousness itself that precedes all intuitions and representations (A107)
- This consciousness is the grounds of ‘all concepts *a priori*’, connecting all representations necessarily
- It has a dual nature: synthesising appearances by concepts, and by that identity of oneself (A108)
- Our various perceptions constitute ‘one and the same universal experience’, thus a swarm of appearances results in a coherent experience (A110-111)

‘Thus the original and necessary consciousness of the identity of oneself is at the same time a consciousness of an equally necessary unity of the synthesis of all appearances in accordance with concepts ... for the mind could not possibly think of the identity of itself in the manifoldness of its representations, and indeed think this *a priori*, if it did not have before its eyes the identity of its action, which subjects all synthesis of apprehension (which is empirical) to a transcendental unity, and first makes possible their connection in accordance with *a priori* rules’. (A108)

Thus the categories are ‘the conditions of thinking in a possible experience, just as space and time contain the conditions of the intuition for the very same thing’ (A111)

# Self in context

- Descartes: *self is a thinking, immaterial substance (cogito)*
- Locke: *self is a continuity of consciousness*
- Hume: *self is a bundle of impressions...*
- Kant: self-consciousness is an intellectual and not empirical awareness, giving us the identity of something (the 'I think'), but we cannot determine what. Nonetheless, to perceive a bundle or consciousness presupposes an I which Hume overlooks.
- The arises from the synthesis of representations. Thus my 'self' arises from my experience having an invariable structure to it, and my awareness of a formal unity/natural laws beneath my experiences.

# Transcendental apperception: round-up

- Experience itself appears constant because our mind structures it in an ordered, law-governed way
- These laws or rules are the categories, which are a priori, universal...
- We become self-conscious by representing an objective world that interacts according to a priori laws, via our judgements (cf. B157)
- Categories prescribe laws a priori to appearances (B165), and enable us to think and judge, and producing a meaningful picture of experience
- Thus, as the B Deduction hammers home, judgement and apperception are mutually dependent (see B148 for good summary)

# Schematism: introduction

- The Transcendental Deduction asked: *what gives subjective experience objective validity?*
- The Schematism now asks: *how can pure concepts of the understanding, the categories, be applied to actual experience?*
- So far the categories only provide general rules that structure appearances for us, without indicating how these rules are applied
- Hence Kant introduces a third element, the *transcendental schema*
- This is a mediating representation between sensibility and the understanding, pure, yet connecting the two
- It produces an image that corresponds to a concept  
e.g. the concept of a triangle: three intersecting lines, angles =  $180^\circ$

# Schematism

‘[T]here must be a third thing, which must stand in homogeneity with the category on the one hand and the appearance on the other, and makes possible the application of the former to the latter. This mediating representation must be pure (without anything empirical) and yet **intellectual** on the one hand and **sensible** on the other. Such a representation is the **transcendental schema**.’ (A138/B177)

# Schematism

- Thus a schema is a rule for how concepts may be applied to appearances – ‘a rule for the determination of our intuition, in accordance with a certain general concept’ (B180)
- This application must take place *in* time: time is both a form of pure a priori intuition (categories) *and* contained in every empirical representations (appearances), and mediates between both (B178)
- The schema is a product of the imagination (A139/B179).
- It doesn't relate to specific images, but instead translates the rules of the categories into instructions for constructing an objectively determinate experience.
- . . . . . Becomes the number five through a synthesis of appearance (the dots), category (causality) and schematism of the two.



# Schematism: conceptual knowledge

- What makes a particular dog Dog-like?
- I hold a general concept of a Dog which doesn't correspond to a particular kind, but enables me to identify dogs through what is common to them. This process is schematism (A141/B180).
- Schema explain how concepts construct an orderly sense-experience – and in a more compelling way than Plato's Forms
- Thus an *image* is a product of the empirical faculty of imagination; its *schema* is a product of pure a priori imagination, through which an image become possible in being connected to a concept.



# Schematism: round-up

- Schema are methods or procedures that mediate between sensibility and understanding, appearances and concepts.
- They exist in the imagination as general rules and refer not to specific images, but make them possible through the application of categories.
- Determining their actual source is very difficult, but they are fundamental for constructing an ordered experience, connected through the unity ultimately of apperception, consciousness.
- They are fundamentally a priori time-determinations in accordance with rules (B185) – there is neither a manifold of intuition nor apperception without a grounding in time.

# Schematism: problems?

- What exactly is a schema? Kant is unable to give any detail to these procedures without depending on concepts and intuitions
- Yet if they are concepts with a special relation to intuition, or intuitions as formed conceptually, then this already presupposes the possibility of connecting the sensible and the conceptual, which Kant needs to first explain and demonstrate
- Regarding *time*, is a transcendental schema a *thought* about time, or *time* thought in a certain way? It is unclear
- Whilst difficult to grasp and with obscure sources, they are necessary to rectify Kant's philosophical system...

# Analogies of experience: summary

- How is it possible for us to represent objects as beings in time, in a sense which transcends the temporality of our representations?
- Kant seeks to demonstrate the objectivity of the world beyond our immediate subjective representations (i.e. in a transcendental way).
- Think of Berkeley's analogy of a tree falling in a wood...
- To represent a realm of objects, we must be able to distinguish between our *subjective* representations (pertaining to us) and our *objective* representations (referring to a world of objects outside us)
- The categories of substance and causality allow us to do this
- Thus the analogies demonstrate the necessary a priori conditions of the categories of substance and causality, vs. Hume and custom.
- Yet the categories are only meaningful through sensibility (time), vs. Leibniz and innate ideas.

# Analogies of experience: 1. Substance

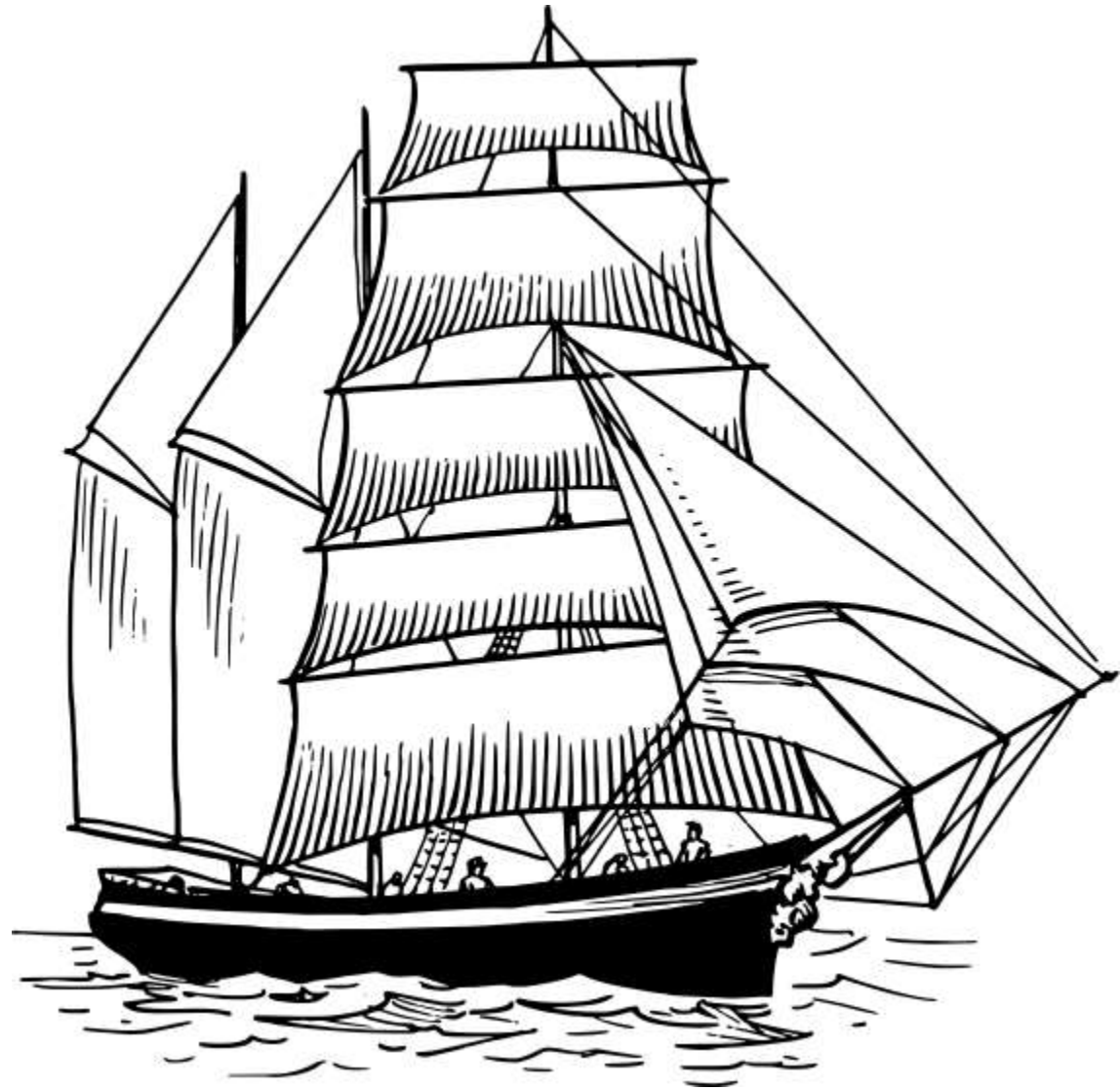
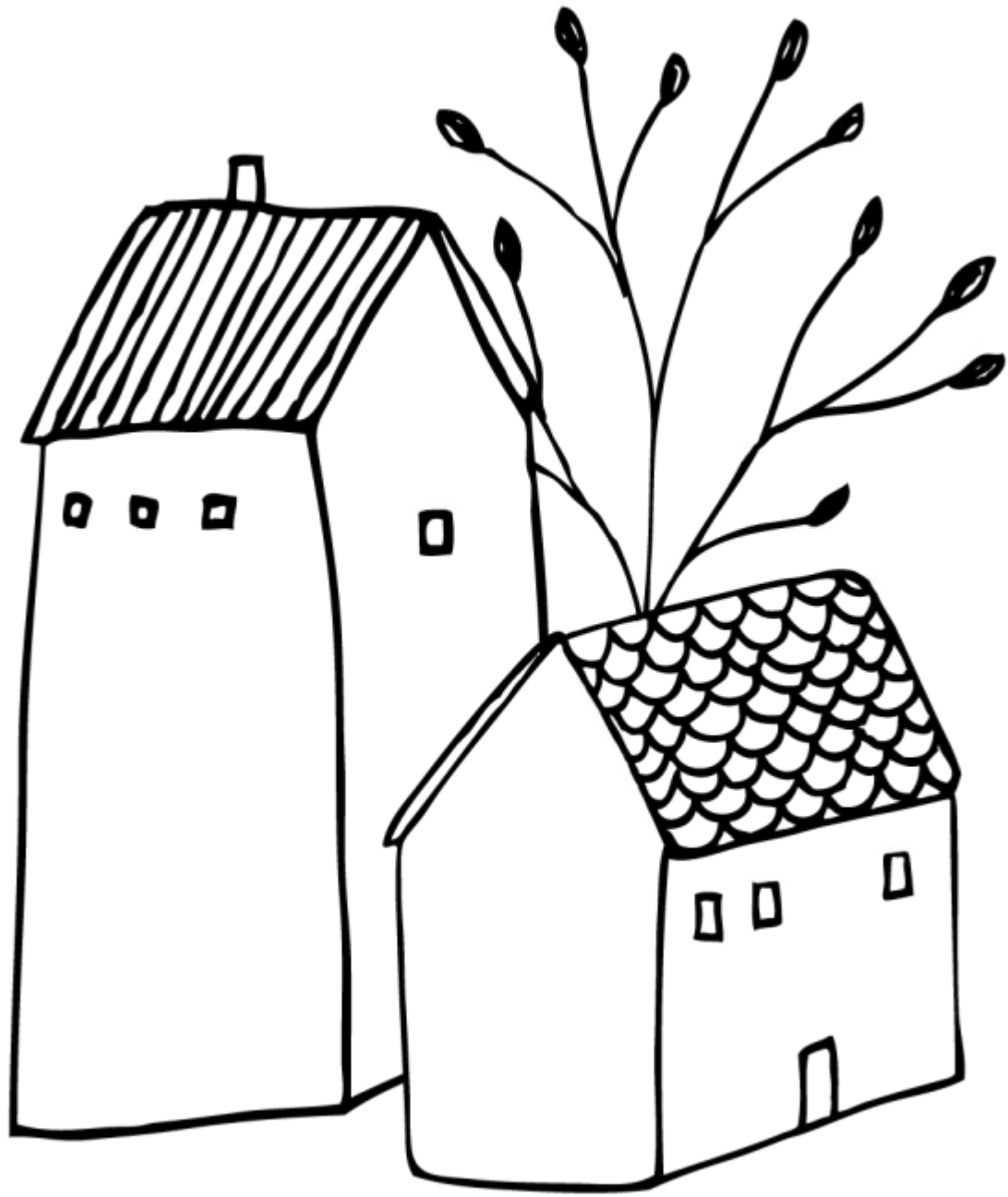
- Substance first defined (B197) as the ‘persistence of the real in time’
- Time is unchangeable: the single and underlying framework in which we observe changes in appearances
- Through this unitary foundation, we determine simultaneity and succession
- Yet I cannot perceive time directly, a claim Kant repeatedly makes. Time is not an object of perception, but what allows perception.
- To think appearances and their changes in time, which is itself unchanging, I need to posit something fixed and unchanging objectively within it – *substance*, a substratum representing time in general (B225)
- ‘All appearances contain the permanent (substance) as the object itself, and the transitory as its mere determination, that is, as a way the object exists.’ (A182)

# Analogies of experience: 1. Substance

- 'Now time cannot be perceived by itself. Consequently it is in the objects of perception, i.e., the appearances, that the substratum must be encountered that represents time in general and in which all change or simultaneity can be perceived in apprehension through the relation of the appearances to it. However, the substratum of everything real, i.e., everything that belongs to the existence of things, is **substance**, of which everything that belongs to existence can be thought only as a determination.' (B225)
- Substance emerges with a clearer philosophical definition: it is merely 'the mode in which we represent to ourselves the existence of things in the [field of] appearances' (A186/B229)

## Analogies of experience: 2. Causality

- Causality involved in temporal succession: it is 'the real upon which, whenever it is posited, something else always follows' (A144/B184)
- 'all change (succession) of appearances is merely alteration' (B233)
- Whilst alterations have substance as their underlying foundation, it is causality that necessarily orders changes in time
- Only through using the category of causality can we experience an objective time-order, enabling us to distinguish between changes in our own representations and changes in an objective world
- This objectivity is sensed as necessary and irreversible succession –
- ... i.e. causality, an a priori rule wherein one appearance necessitates another. Causality is a rule for ordering changes of our appearances in time





# Analogies of experience: space

- Given that time is unitary, Kant now presents the category of community to explain *simultaneity*: how two or more things can co-exist together in 'thoroughgoing community' (B256)
- Whereas the ship's current state was determined by its prior one (causality), community can explain interactions e.g. billiard balls
- The co-existence of objects is determined through their capability of causal interaction in space
- This determination is only possible through being able to represent them *reversibly*, i.e. not in time but in space (A211/B258).
- Space makes community (or reciprocity, interaction) possible: a single spatial order or relationship among multiple objects (A213/B260)

# Analogies of experience: round-up

- Completes the aim of the Deductions, demonstrating that experience is possible only through the necessary connection of perceptions, which is a priori, and enabled by the categories
- All appearances cohere in one singular nature – an objective order founded in time, understood through substance and causality
- This unity of nature is neither transcendent of experience (vs Leibniz) nor merely subjective (vs Hume): it is internal to experience and constitutive of the world of appearances
- Demonstrates an objective, a priori grounding to our subjective experiences

# Refutation of Idealism

- Though added to the B edition, its conclusions follow the preceding: we *can* have experience of outer objects, distinct from us
- He rejects two forms of 'material' or 'empirical idealism', which affirm an idealism not re: the subject (Kant) but about the world of objects
- 'Dogmatic idealism': Berkeley's claim that we can know that there is no external material world (B274-5)
- 'Problematic idealism': Descartes's claim that the external world is possible but dubious, based on a problematic inference from inner states to outer ones
- Kant will claim that the Aesthetic overcomes Berkeley's mystical idealism, in that it space and time are structures *internal* to perception, and so turns to Descartes...
- *Reading the Theorem and Proof (B275-6), discuss in groups of threes what you think Kant's argument for objective experience is here*

# Refutation of Idealism: argument (B275-6)

- His argument: 'The mere, but empirically determined, consciousness of my own existence proves the existence of objects in space outside me'
- I am conscious of my existence as determined in time...
- This presupposes something permanent in perception, which remains constant in my representations even as they change
- This supposes a thing outside me, i.e. in space, which brings forth the appearances in one's consciousness
- Thus empirical consciousness 'is at the same time an immediate consciousness of the existence of other things outside me' (B276)
- Thus inner and outer experience are necessarily correlated
- Descartes' cogito is thus refuted: in demonstrating himself in time (mentally), he must infer that he exists in space, i.e. a physical world

# General Note on the System of Principles

- The categories are mere ‘forms of thought’, which require intuitions to lend them objective reality (B288)
- Thus the objective and subjective, the concept and the intuition, are mutually dependent: there is no experience without categories, and no categories without experience
- But through the Analogies, Kant now adds that the categories intrinsically demonstrate *space* as well as time: the idealism of Descartes and Berkeley, or the innate ideas of Leibniz are untenable
- Thus Kant achieves a remarkable synthesis of the ‘rationalist’ and ‘empiricist’ projects, and leaves behind a unique contribution to philosophy: no *a priori* knowledge without experience, and no experience without *a priori* knowledge-processes



## Problems solved?

‘All principles of the pure understanding are nothing further than *a priori* principles of the possibility of experience, and all synthetic *a priori* propositions are related to the latter alone, indeed their possibility itself rests entirely on this relation.’ (B294)

# Class recap

- Thorough recap on the Transcendental Deduction
- Explore Kant's arguments about self-consciousness and their context in the Deduction
- Grasp the importance of *schematism* in mediating between understanding and sensibility
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# Reading for next week

- Focus on the excerpt on “Noumenon and Phenomenon”, pp. 360-3 of the Guyer and Wood translation (B306-12).
- If you have time, please read, from the Transcendental Dialectic, the Introduction, Book I (pp. 384-408), and all of “On the ground of the distinction between noumenon and phenomenon” (Bk. II, Ch. III)
- In class we will be discussing Kant’s dualism, the role of Reason and Ideas, and I’ll give an overview of the Transcendental Dialectic, including the Paralogisms and Antinomies
- Chapter 7 of Gardner’s *Guidebook* is a useful reference
- Next week will be the last on the *Critique of Pure Reason...*