

Kant's "Self" as a Being in the World

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INTRODUCTION

In his *Refutation of Idealism*, Kant distinguishes between two types of idealism. Problematic idealism is “the theory that declares the existence of objects in space outside us to be [...] merely doubtful and indemonstrable” (KrV, B 274), whereas dogmatic idealism is the theory that declares the existence of objects in space to be “false and impossible”, and things in space “to be merely imaginary” (KrV, B 274). In the *Criticism of the Fourth Paralogism of Transcendental Psychology*, we encounter what is fundamentally the same distinction: “[t]he dogmatic idealist would be one who denies the existence of matter, the skeptical idealist one who doubts it because he holds it to be unprovable” (KrV, A 377).

Nonetheless, the *Refutation of Idealism* is not a refutation of dogmatic idealism, since Kant considers such a refutation no longer necessary: “[t]he ground for this [dogmatic] idealism, however, has been undercut by us in the *Transcendental Aesthetic*” (KrV, B 274). According to Kant’s reading of dogmatic idealism, the impossibility of outer things on this view derives from a transcendental realist conception of space. Dogmatic idealism considers space as a form of things in themselves. Yet if space were a form of things in themselves, Kant alleges, it would be a non-entity, and things in space would have to be considered imaginary. Such a conception of space is therefore absurd. According to the *Transcendental Aesthetic*, space is a form of sensibility, and things in space are perfectly possible. With this noted, the argument according to which the transcendental reality of space leads to the impossibility of outer things will not be analyzed here.

My aim in this paper is to trace the introduction of a new and revolutionary conception of "self" as "*Weltwesen*" in Kant's refutation of problematic or sceptical idealism. The full development of this conception takes time. Thus I start with Kant's *Criticism of the Fourth Paralogism* (1781), where such a conception of "self" is not yet present. In the first section of this paper, we encounter two senses of object: mere representation and thing in itself. At this point, outer objects are reduced to mere representations, and Kant's "self" is merely a desubstantialized Cartesian "self". Section 2 then investigates Kant's theory of inferential cognition of existences with the aim of demonstrating why it is impossible to solve the problem of idealism by considering perceived outer objects as things in themselves. The third section focuses on a critical conception of "object", i.e. a critical and novel way of considering outer objects as things in themselves within Transcendental Idealism. Sections 4-7 summarize the *Refutation of Idealism* in 1787 as an appeal to a totally new type of immediate cognition. Finally, section 8 shows how a "self" that is integrated in space – an embodied self – emerges from a proper reading of premises 2 and 3 of the *Refutation of Idealism*. My final remarks make this result explicit. This paper therefore follows Kant's path to the *Refutation of Idealism*, reaching a conclusion regarding Kant's final conception of "self" that combines Guyer's (1987) and Carl's (2006) views on the concept.

1. THE CRITICISM OF THE FOURTH PARALOGISM

The first refutation of sceptical or problematic idealism in Kant's critical period consisted in an attempt to refute "a false scruple concerning the objective reality of our outer perceptions" (KrV, A 376). This is precisely the above-mentioned *Criticism of the Fourth Paralogism of Transcendental Psychology*, a text withdrawn from the second edition of the first *Critique*. The argument focuses on a duality with regard to representations. Representations are space-temporal whenever they represent empirical objects external to the self and merely temporal whenever they represent states internal to the self. Thus the argument concerns an application of the results of the *Transcendental Aesthetic* to the problem of idealism. The aim is to show that outer objects are objects of immediate experience in the same way that internal objects are. In the end, they are all representations. Hence, the genus "representation" divides into two species: inner representation (merely temporal) and outer representation (also spatial).

Kant does emphasize the assimilation of the object to its representation, which justifies Guyer's presentation of the argument as reductionist (1987, p. 281). For instance:

1) "[M]atter [...] is only a species of representations (intuition)" (KrV, A 370).

2) "[E]xternal objects (bodies) are merely appearances, hence also nothing other than a species of my representations" (KrV, A 370).

3) "[I]n both cases [regarding external objects and objects of my inner sense] they are nothing but representations" (KrV, A 371).

4) "[I]ts intuition is space, but it is itself nothing other than an inner mode of representation" (KrV, A 378).

To sum up, outer objects are not only possible but real. Nonetheless, their reality is the reality of a mere representation. I believe the last claim synthesizes the "false scruple" that Kant aims to abolish: the scruple about considering matter as representation. Such a conception of matter is precisely one of the two senses of the expression "outside us" that Kant considers in the *Criticism of the Fourth Paralogism* – the only sense that really makes sense for Kant in that context:

[T]he expression "outside us" carries with it an unavoidable ambiguity, since it sometimes signifies something that, as a thing in itself, exists distinct from us and sometimes merely something that belongs to outer appearance, then in order to escape uncertainty and use this concept in the latter significance – in which it is taken in the proper psychological question about the reality of our outer intuition – we will distinguish empirically external objects from those that might be called "external" in the transcendental sense, by directly calling them "things that are to be encountered in space". (KrV, A 373)

Problematic idealism "professes only our incapacity for proving an existence outside us from our own by means of immediate experience" (KrV, B 274). This means that problematic idealism derives from the alleged impossibility of immediate experience of outer objects in the first sense above: a thing distinct from the self. This is why the reduction of outer objects to a species of the genus "representation" – the second sense of "outside us" above – would solve the problem. There would be no need for an immediate experience of outer objects in the first sense or an inference from outer representations to things in themselves similar to those represen-

tations as their determinate causes, since the outer representation itself would amount to the outer object.

At this point, we need a better understanding of the issues that Kant has with such an inference in order to be in a position to fully understand both the problem of idealism and why rejecting the reductionism in the *Criticism of the Fourth Paralogism* does not amount to embracing an inferential argument.

2. INFERENCEAL COGNITION OF EXISTENCE

It is impossible to understand the problem with idealism without dealing with the issue of inferential cognition of existence. Kant accepted only two ways of proving the existence of an object in the *Criticism of the Fourth Paralogism of Transcendental Psychology*: causal inference and immediate perception. Since inference from a representation as an effect to the determinate cause of the affection is not valid, Kant claims that the existence of an outer object is to be assimilated to the existence of a mere representation, which is cognized through immediate perception.

It is worth examining in further detail the Kantian concept of "existence" and Kant's position concerning the cognition of existence via inference in the first *Critique*. In the *Elucidation of The Postulates of Empirical Thinking in General*, existence involves the possibility that perception precedes the concept of the object. Existence is not a first-order predicate. It does not add content to the concept; rather, it simply means that there is a perception corresponding to the concept:

[E]ven if this concept is so complete that it lacks nothing required for thinking of a thing with all of its inner determinations, still existence has nothing in the least to do with all of this, but only with the question of whether such a thing is given to us in such a way that the perception of it could in any case precede the concept. For that the concept precedes the perception signifies its mere possibility; but perception, which yields the material for the concept, is the sole characteristic of actuality. (KrV, A 225/B 272)

Nonetheless, Kant does allow for inferential cognition of the existence of an object – i.e. the possibility of cognition of existence that is not immediately perceived. It is possible to cognize existence comparatively *a priori*:

However, one can also cognize the existence of the thing prior to the perception of it, and therefore cognize it comparatively *a priori*, if only it is connected with some perceptions in accordance with the principles of their empirical connection (the analogies). For in that case the existence of the thing is still connected with our perceptions in a possible experience, and with the guidance of the analogies we can get from our actual perceptions to the thing in the series of possible perceptions. (KrV, A 225/B 273)

Also: “whatever is connected with this [some perception or other] in accordance with empirical laws is actual, even if it is not immediately perceived” (KrV, A 231/B 284).

In order to cognize the existence of something comparatively *a priori*, one must cognize, empirically, a connection between causes and effects in which the existence at issue plays a role. May one infer from the effect to the cause? Apparently, this is what we actually do when: “[e]very one of the large number of cases that we have examined in the past fits this generalization [that every event-type B is caused by event-type A]” (NOZICK, 2001, p. 50). Other empiricists – including of course Hume – adhere to the principle of same-effects-same-causes as a general rule, allowing the inferences at issue here (THN, 1.3.15, 6). Kant’s official answer, however, is “no”: “there is no existence that could be cognized as necessary under the condition of other given appearances except the existence of effects from given causes in accordance with laws of causality” (KrV, A 227/B 279). Indeed, in note 1 to the *Refutation of Idealism*, we also encounter a remark about the unreliability of “any case in which one infers from given effects to determinate causes” (KrV, B 276). It is worth pointing out, however, that Kant himself seems to infer from effects to determinate causes in a famous example: “[t]hus we cognize the existence of a magnetic matter penetrating all bodies from the perception of *attracted* iron filings” (KrV, A 226/B 273, my italics).

Also with noting is the fact that the inference rule accepted by Kant in such an example does not even require that the inferred existence be of an object of effective perception by a human cognizer:

[A]n immediate perception of this matter is impossible for us given the constitution of our organs. For in accordance with the laws of sensibility and the context of our perceptions we could also happen upon the immediate empirical intuition of it in an experience if our senses, the crudeness of which does not affect the form of possible experience in general, were finer. (KrV, A 226/B 273)

With this famous example, Kant means that one should distinguish between an object of possible experience (any spatiotemporal object under principles of the understanding) and an object liable to be perceivable by sense organs of human animals (an object suitable for the empirical constitution of our senses).

But even if Kant may eventually admit inferences from the effect to the cause, and even if he indeed allows for the existence of objects or qualities not effectively observable by human cognizers, inferential cognition of a transcendental cause of representations remains impossible. The issue with sceptical or problematic idealism may be located in the impossibility of inferring from an effect to a determinate cause, which, by definition, cannot be an object of possible experience – even in a broad sense – since an object in itself in that context would be the cause of the very perceptions that constitute any possible experience, and not a possible part of the nexus of experience: “one cannot have sensation outside oneself, but only in oneself, and the whole of self-consciousness therefore provides nothing other than merely our own determinations” (KrV, A 378).

This means that one can move from parts of experience toward a transcendental cause of perceptions; however, one can never experience such a cause, which precludes the possibility of legitimate inference: “no existence of objects of the senses can be cognized fully *a priori*, but always only comparatively *a priori* relative to another already given existence [...] [E]ven then we can only arrive at an existence that must be contained somewhere in the nexus of experience of which the given perception is a part” (KrV, A 226/B 279).

Moreover, in such an inference, the type of connection between representation as effect and transcendental object as its cause would be uncognizable too, for it would never be an object of experience itself, which would amount to a second reason to preclude that inference:

[I]f one wanted to make entirely new concepts of substances, of forces, and of interactions from the material that perception offers us, without borrowing the example of their connection from experience itself, then one would end up with nothing but figments of the brain, for the possibility of which there would be no indications at all, since in their case one did not accept experience as instructress nor borrow these concepts from it. (KrV, A 222/B 269)

Still a third element of the Kantian theory of inferential cognition of existence precludes the inferential cognition of spatial things (as causes) from the existence of representations of

spatial things. We cognize not the existence of a substance through a causal inference, but only the existence of its states: “it is not the existence of things (substances) but of their state of which alone we can cognize the necessity, and moreover only from other states, which are given in perception, in accordance with empirical laws of causality” (KrV, A 227/B 279). Certainly, such a condition holds even for empirical substances:

[W]e cognize only the necessity of effects in nature, the causes of which are given to us, and the mark of necessity in existence does not reach beyond the field of possible experience, and even in this it does not hold of the existence of things, as substances, since these can never be regarded as empirical effects, or as something that happens and arises. (KrV, A 227/B 280)

To sum up, the possibility of the cognition of an existence comparatively *a priori* “concerns only the relations of appearances in accordance with the dynamical law of causality, and the possibility grounded upon it of inferring *a priori* from some given existence (a cause) to another existence (the effect)” (KrV, A 227/B 280).

For the above reasons, Kant refuses an inferential argument in the *Criticism of the Fourth Paralogism of Transcendental Psychology* and advocates immediate cognition of the existence of spatial substances (as representations). But the price for this is too high; from 1787 on, Kant himself seems to have scruples about the assimilation of bodies to mere representations.

3. THE CRITICAL CONCEPT OF “OBJECT”

At the end of the day, the refutation of idealism in the *Criticism of the Fourth Paralogism of Transcendental Psychology* runs dangerously close to endorsing idealism when it claims that one should not be scandalized by the thesis that bodies are mere representations. In the Preface to the second edition of the first *Critique*, however – a text in which Kant famously coins the expression the “scandal of philosophy” (KrV, B xxxix) to refer to this idealism – he vigorously insists that outer objects should not be assimilated to mere representations. In other words, in 1787, matter is no longer the same as representation of matter, but is rather “a thing distinct from all my representations and external” (KrV, B xli). In short, in 1787, Kant is not happy with the claim that a certain sensation in us is real. Rather, he aims to prove the existence of “things

outside me to which my sensibility relates" (KrV, B xl). The following reflections from 1788 also make clear this change in Kant's position:

1) "[That which persists] must be represented in relation to the *mere* receptivity of the mind, i.e., in relation to something affecting it, which is different from me" (Refl 5653, 18: 309).

2) "[I]ntuition must consist in a real relation to an object outside us and space really signifies something which, represented in this form of intuition, is possible only in a relation to a real thing outside of us" (Refl 6317, 18: 628).

3) "[Something outside of myself that corresponds to these representations] does not exist merely in my representation but rather as thing in itself" (Refl 6323, 18: 643, note).

What can such things, "distinct from all my representations and external", be? From what I understand, they are neither the *mere* representations of the *Criticism of the Fourth Paralogism* nor exactly the transcendently real object that we were told about in that context. We encounter explicit mention of a "thing in itself" in one of the reflections quoted above, while the others clearly suggest this understanding of "object". In order to avoid severe doctrinal incoherence, the "thing distinct from all my representations and external", "to which my sensibility relates", must be understood as "something that exists in itself (as does every object of experience), *though it is not cognized as it is in itself*" (Allison, 2004, p. 302, my italics). In other words, the thing that exists in itself is no longer the transcendental cause of the object of experience, and, in turn, the object of experience is no longer a mere representation.

The point at issue here is the possibility of distinguishing between a mere representation and its object in a way that avoids making the perceived object as such – the thing *in space* – into a thing in itself. Space is how the thing in itself appears to us. In the new *Refutation of Idealism*, Kant aims to prove that the outer object we experience must be assumed to be ontologically distinct from the self, space being the *a priori* condition under which we can relate to such an object rather than an ontological form of it. This is the novel sense of object of which Kant had been in need.

4. THE REFUTATION OF IDEALISM: FIRST PREMISE

In order to understand the argument in the *Refutation of Idealism*, we must first unders-

tand that the argument is not an inference of the type presented above. In the *Refutation of Idealism*, the cognition of the existence of outer objects is an immediate cognition, even though it is no longer a cognition of the existence of a mere representation. Indeed, what is fascinating about the argument in the second edition of the first *Critique* is a certain inversion of positions with regard to inner and outer experience: outer experience is now considered immediate experience, while that same immediacy is denied to inner experience. For example:

1) “[H]ere it is proved that outer experience is really immediate” (KrV, B 276).

2) “[I]nner experience itself is consequently [only mediate and possible only through outer experience” (KrV, B 277. See also Refl 5653, 18: 306).

However, the rejection of the immediacy of inner experience due to its dependence on outer experience may be misleading. What is at issue is the determination of outer experience as constitutive of inner experience: “even our inner experience [...] is possible only under the presupposition of outer experience” (KrV, B 275). Instead of being “the mere representation of a thing outside me” among other representations immediately present to the mind, “the existence of actual things that I perceive” (KrV, B 275) is the factor that makes possible the temporal determination of the existence of inner states themselves. When Kant is clear about this, he says that the “thing distinct from all my representations and external” is “necessarily included in the determination of my own existence”; this “constitutes only a single experience, which could not take place even as inner if it were not simultaneously (in part) outer” (KrV, B xli). In other words, we now have to understand how and why the existence of matter is a part of inner experience itself.

The first premise in the argument is exactly this: “I am conscious of my existence as determined in time” (KrV, B 275). This premise does not seem especially problematic; it seems to assert only that we are capable of determining a temporal order in our representations.

5. THE REFUTATION OF IDEALISM: SECOND PREMISE

Nonetheless, the second premise – “All time-determination presupposes something persistent in perception” (KrV, B 275) – does raise further issues. This premise basically amounts to a restatement of the *First Analogy of Experience*: “[i]n all change of appearances substance persists, and its *quantum* is neither increased nor diminished in nature” (KrV, B 224). I intend

to return to this issue concerning the relation between the *Refutation of Idealism* and the *First Analogy*. At this point, I merely want to note that the proof of the *First Analogy* claims that the thorough empirical unity of time requires something that persists, but this may not amount to a claim about the existence of particular empirical objects; the substance to which Kant refers must exist for all time, while particular objects arise and perish (KrV, A 187-188/B 231). Since the self as an object of possible experience arises and perishes, it might not be this kind of primary substance. Since space is how we represent an object that is not the self, idealism appears to be refuted, for, according to the argument, no experience (or better, no thorough unity of experience) is possible without matter itself as the primary substance: an absolute persistent.¹

In short, provided that this kind of argument (which we are not going to critically examine here) is correct, the *First Analogy* contains a refutation of idealism. Nevertheless, this refutation depends on the thorough unity of experience as its premise. The proof of the *First Analogy* does not seem to contain a claim to the effect that the persistent thing required by each particular determination of time must be material. This point will be made in the *Refutation of Idealism*.

6. THE REFUTATION OF IDEALISM: THIRD PREMISE

The *Refutation of Idealism* teaches us that the persistent thing required by each time determination might not amount to a representation of that thing, given the variable and changeable character of every representation as such: "[t]he representation of something persisting in existence is not the same as a persisting representation; for that can be quite variable and changeable, as all our representations are, even the representations of matter, while still being related to something permanent, which must therefore be a thing distinct from all my representations and external" (KrV, B xli). Therefore, the persistent might not be something in me, even if the succession of representations in me were to repeat itself *ad infinitum*.

In the *Refutation*, this statement amounts to the *third premise* of the argument: "[t]his

1 For a similar argument, see EMUNDTS, 2010, p. 175ff and 182ff. See also ABELA, 2002, p. 186. Guyer disagrees with the notion that the *First Analogy* implies a refutation of idealism (1987, p. 308). However, he apparently does not consider the argument about the thorough unity of time requiring an everlasting substance.

persistent thing, however, cannot be something in me" (KrV, B 275). In the B Preface, Kant asks us to read this passage this way: "this persisting element cannot be an intuition in me" (KrV, B xxxix). From what I understand, the most relevant difference between the passage in the *Refutation* and the corresponding passage in the B Preface is the justification for that premise.

In the *Refutation*, we read that the persistent thing cannot be something in me, because "my own existence in time can first be determined only through this persistent thing" (KrV, B 275). Apparently, Kant means it would be circular to appeal to an empirical subject as a persistent thing in order to determine internal experience, since an empirical subject would constitute the result of such an experience. But this point is not very compelling, since the same argument could apply to the relation between matter and external experience. Indeed, Kant insists that the persistent is an *a priori* concept, even though it is to be found in external experience.

Why can't the empirical subject simply be the way in which the persistent thing exhibits itself, as an *a priori* concept in internal experience? If I understand Kant's point, the answer is that internal experience is made of representations, which are all "variable and changeable": "all the determining grounds of my existence that can be encountered in me are representations" (KrV, B xxxix). There is nothing like impenetrability in inner sense. The new Preface is clear about this, and so is note 2 of the *Refutation*:

[W]e do not even have anything persistent on which we could base the concept of a substance, as intuition, except merely matter, and even this persistence is not drawn from outer experience, but rather presupposed *a priori* as the necessary condition of all time-determination, thus also as the determination of inner sense in regard to our own existence through the existence of outer things. The consciousness of myself in the representation I is no intuition at all, but a merely intellectual representation of the self-activity of a thinking subject. And hence this I does not have the least predicate of intuition that, as persistent, could serve as the correlate for time-determination in inner sense, as, say, impenetrability in matter, as empirical intuition, does. (B 277-278)

In other words, it seems to be a fact about inner sense that it does not contain anything capable of exhibiting persistence. Here, Kant seems to follow Hume's steps regarding the (empirical) impossibility of the observation of identity by introspection since there is nothing unchangeable inside a mind:

The mind is a kind of theatre, where several perceptions successively make their appearance; pass, re-pass, glide away, and mingle in an infinite variety of postures and situations. [...] The comparison of the theatre must not mislead us. They are the successive perceptions only, that constitute the mind; nor have we the most distant notion of the place, where these scenes are represented, or of the materials, of which it is composed. (THN, 1.4.6, 4)

Acceptance of the Humean theory of internal experience could be enough to explain why Kant finds the identity of an "I" only in the "merely intellectual representation of the self-activity of a thinking subject", which was already clear in the *Transcendental Deduction* (see, for instance, B 133-134). But there is more to the impossibility of endurance in inner sense, as we will see below.

7. THE REFUTATION OF IDEALISM: FOURTH PREMISE AND CONCLUSION

Since we cannot discover persistence in inner sense, the *fourth premise* makes external experience the locus of empirical persistence "[t]hus the perception of this persistent thing is possible only through a thing outside me and not through the mere representation of a thing outside me" (KrV, B 275).

The conclusion then follows easily: "[c]onsequently, the determination of my existence in time is possible only by means of the existence of actual things that I perceive outside myself" (KrV, B 275). Or, in the Preface: "they themselves need something persisting distinct from them, in relation to which their change, and thus my existence in the time in which they change, can be determined" (KrV, B xxxix).

To sum up the argument:

- 1) "I am conscious of my existence as determined in time" (KrV, B 275).
- 2) "All time-determination presupposes something persistent in perception" (KrV, B 275).
- 3) "[T]his persisting element cannot be an intuition in me" (KrV, B xxxix).
- 4) "[T]he perception of this persistent thing is possible only through a thing outside me" (KrV, B 275).

Conclusion: “the determination of my existence in time is possible only by means of the existence of actual things that I perceive outside myself” (KrV, B 275).

8. UNDERSTANDING THE SECOND AND THIRD PREMISES

Let us return to the second statement regarding the *First Analogy*. I believe that Guyer makes a serious point when he asks “*why* something permanent is required for the special purpose of recognizing subjective successions of representations, as opposed to making determinate contrasts between such merely subjective successions and actual objective changes” (1987, p. 285. See also p. 286ff). According to Guyer, the mere happening of a succession of representations could be enough to justify the judgment that there is such a succession: “[w]hy is the successiveness of consciousness insufficient for its own recognition, and why should spatial, let alone independent objects be necessary for this purpose?” (1987, p. 293). I believe the answer to Guyer’s challenge involves an account from this passage from the proof of the *First Analogy*:

Alteration can therefore be perceived only in substances, and arising or perishing *per se* cannot be a possible perception unless it concerns merely a determination of that which persists, for it is this very thing that persists that makes possible the representation of the transition from one state into another, and from non-being into being, which can therefore be empirically cognized only as changing determinations of that which lasts. If you assume that something simply began to be, then you would have to have a point of time in which it did not exist. But what would you attach this to, if not to that which already exists? For an empty time that would precede is not an object of perception; but if you connect this origination to things that existed antecedently and which endure until that which arises, then the latter would be only a determination of the former, as that which persists. It is just the same with perishing: for this presupposes the empirical representation of a time at which there is no longer an appearance. (KrV, A 187-188/ B 231)

It seems to me that experiences of the arising and perishing of external substances are quite similar to the experience of representations in succession, since representations arise and perish insofar as they follow each other. However, pointing out that one cannot perceive empty time is not sufficient to establish that we need to perceive something that endures between t_1 and t_2 if we are to perceive that something exists in t_1 but not in t_2 (or vice-versa). Why can I not

have representation A in t_1 and representation B in t_2 , and have a determinate consciousness of this changing merely as time goes by? Why do I need space – and, moreover, something actual in space – in order to have the consciousness that time has passed and that my representations from then to now are different?

In the *General Note on the System of Principles*, Kant gets closer than ever to an answer to these questions. In this note, Kant explains why the relation between outer sense and persistent objects is not contingent (as I suggested above in my account of the third premise concerning the existence of an intuition of impenetrability in outer sense and the absence of a corresponding empirical inner intuition). Indeed, persistence is a structural element of outer experience because space is itself a possibility of coexistence of its parts, while such coexistence is impossible for the parts of time, which exist only in succession: “in order to give something that persists in intuition, corresponding to the concept of substance (and thereby to establish the objective reality of this concept), we need an intuition in space (of matter), since space alone persistently determines, while time, however, and thus everything that is in inner sense, constantly flows” (KrV, B 291). Thus, it is not just a matter of fact that representations are variable and changeable. They are so because time is the form of inner sense.

Furthermore, this note can help us to understand why persistence (and therefore space) is required even for perceptions of inner alterations (the succession of representations): “in order subsequently to make even inner alterations thinkable, we must be able to grasp time, as the form of inner sense, figuratively through a line, and grasp the inner alteration through the drawing of this line (motion), and thus grasp the successive existence of ourself in different states through outer intuition” (KrV, B 291). Unfortunately, however, in order to explain why space is necessary for the grasping of time, Kant appeals to the statement that we are trying to understand here: “the real ground of which is that all alteration presupposes something that persists in intuition, even in order merely to be perceived as alteration, but there is no persistent intuition to be found in inner sense” (KrV, B 291).

It therefore seems that we are back at our starting point: why do I need a persistent thing in order for there to be any time determination? In truth, however, we have indeed moved forward. We have seen that parts can coexist only in space, in the sense that, in a determination of time in inner sense, our ability to represent “now” and “then” as such depends on our

representing A in t_1 and B in t_2 as parts of the same whole representation. Past and current representations are equally constitutive of an empirical self. How would this be possible if we were to represent A and B only in time, such that all the parts existed only successively? The answer is that it simply would not be possible. Kant makes this point with all due clarity only in a Reflection:

I cannot cognize time as antecedently determined in order to determine my existence therein [...]. [I]n order to determine the latter empirically, something that persists must be given, in the apprehension of which I can cognize the succession of my representations and through which the simultaneity of a series in which every part passes away when another arises can alone be a whole. In which I posit my existence. (Refl 6313, 18: 615)

What makes correlation with space necessary for grasping time is therefore the same structural characteristic that makes persistence possible only in space: the possible simultaneity of parts of a series. This takes us to a re-reading of the synthesis of reproduction. In this section of the first version of the *Transcendental Deduction of the Pure Concepts of the Understanding*, Kant says:

[I]t is obvious that if I draw a line in thought, or think of the time from one noon to the next, or even want to represent a certain number to myself, I must necessarily first grasp one of these manifold representations after another in my thoughts. But if I were always to lose the preceding representations (the first parts of the line, the preceding parts of time, or the successively represented units) from my thoughts and not reproduce them when I proceed to the following ones, then no whole representation and none of the previously mentioned thoughts, not even the purest and most fundamental representations of space and time, could ever arise. (KrV, A 102)

Apparently, around 10 years later, when Kant is supposed to have written the above *Reflection*, he was willing to claim that if we had not been provided with outer sense (and only had imagination of something outer), we would always lose the preceding representations; it would be impossible to make preceding representations coexist with current ones were we to count on inner sense (time) alone. Hence, space is a necessary condition for a whole representation, such as the one in which I posit my existence. Accordingly, we read in the following Reflection:

We cannot represent any number except through successive enumeration in time and then grasping this multiplicity together in the unity of a number. This latter, however, cannot happen except by my placing them beside one another in space: for they must be conceived as given simultaneously, i.e., as taken together in one representation, otherwise this multitude does not constitute a magnitude (number); but it is not possible to cognize simultaneity except insofar as, beyond my action of grasping it together, I can apprehend (not merely think) the multiplicity as given both forwards and backwards. There must thus be given in perception an intuition in which the manifold is represented outside of and beside each other, i.e., the intuition which makes possible the representation of space, in order to determine my own existence in time, i.e., an existence outside me lies at the ground of the determination of my own existence, i.e., the empirical consciousness of myself. (Refl 6314, 18: 616)

It must be noted that it is not sufficient to merely think about something persistent in which the manifold is given both forwards and backwards. A thought is a representation. I can represent something in space, but that representation as such is not in space but rather in time. Thus, it is a changeable representation of the permanent that is not itself permanent – i.e. it is not itself spatial. This is why Kant makes “an existence outside me” the ground of the very synthesis of the reproduction. The unity of the multitude of moments of time is only possible through something real in space, space being “the consciousness of this real relation” (Refl 6316, Leningrad Fragment I, 18: 623).

Certainly, if something real in space is demanded by the unity of time in a representation, this does not mean that that representation is spatial in itself. As Guyer argues: “successive representations in one’s own experience can be judged to be successive only if they are judged to be severally simultaneous with the severally successive states of some enduring object” (GUYER, 1987, p. 306). This means that “the problem can be solved by holding not that representations must themselves be spatial, but that they must be given a spatial location by being assigned to an object in space as their bearer – namely, the body of the perceiver” (GUYER, 1987, p. 312). At this point, we can understand why the Kantian self must be an “embodied perceiver” (GUYER, 1987, p. 313), or, as our title puts it, a “being in the world” – i.e. a body among other bodies.

FINAL REMARKS

Kant's Refutation of Idealism might be considered a late rupture with the so-called philosophy of the representation. After all, according to Kant's considered position in the second edition of the first *Critique*, inner experience includes not only mere representations but also the persistent thing, which is to be understood in contradistinction to the mental states in apprehension. Indeed, this remarkable passage – which contains the curious expression used in this paper's title – could perhaps have been written by a twentieth-century philosopher:

Although I am affected here, no inference is required in order to infer the existence of an outer object, because it is requisite for the consciousness of my own existence in time, thus for empirical self-consciousness (of simultaneity), and I therefore cognize myself as well. *I am immediately and originally conscious of myself as a being in the world* and only thereby is my own existence determinable as a magnitude in time. (Refl 6316, Leningrad Fragment I, 18: 623, my italics)

Accordingly, space is no longer conceived as a mere "inner mode of representation" (KrV, A 378). Rather, it is the form of the "relation to a real thing outside of us" (Refl 6317, 18: 628). Kant therefore clarifies his Transcendental Idealism such that it involves not an *ontological* distinction between objects of experience as mere representations and things in themselves but an *epistemic* distinction between things themselves as they appear to us in (time and) space – the objects of experience – and those same things as they are in themselves. Consequently, from the second edition of the first *Critique* onwards, Kant's self is a being in a world of real things that is immediately and originally accessible, space being that self's form of openness to such a world.

This mature version of Transcendental Idealism is the ground of the critical concept of "object". The critical object is to be considered in contradistinction to a mere representation of a human cognizer, precisely because it is the thing that is independent of every mental act of referring to it in the synthesis of apprehension.

It is still to be noted that it is not a particular physical object that makes possible the determination of the self's own existence as a magnitude in time. Rather, this is made possible by the reality of the outer sense as such: our embodiment. I can cognize that I exist now and

then, only because I can cognize that I exist here and there. As Kant says above, I am originally conscious of "being in the world". As Carl says about this same passage, "you have to conceive yourself as a "Weltwesen" [...] – as a being that is somewhere at a given time" (2006, p. 190).

What is more, our being in the world is not cognized by an (indeed dubious) inference of the sort defended by other modern philosophers. Rather, this is our originary condition. And it is a scandal that one could think otherwise.

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RESUMO

De acordo com Kant, o idealismo é um “escândalo da filosofia”. Ao contrário de Hume, Kant não se satisfaz em notar que seres humanos não são capazes de abandonar suas crenças em coisas externas na vida prática. Kant pretende oferecer uma prova satisfatória da existência de coisas externas. Neste artigo, eu argumento que a prova definitiva da existência de coisas externas que Kant tem a oferecer está fundamentalmente conectada à sua nova concepção do eu empírico como um ser no mundo (Weltwesen), uma concepção que emerge na segunda edição da primeira Crítica e é completamente articulada nas Reflexões de 1788 em diante. Para mostrar isso, eu analiso a Refutação do Idealismo na Crítica ao Quarto Paralogismo da Psicologia Transcendental, a teoria kantiana da cognição de existências por inferência, a teoria crítica do “objeto” e a Refutação do Idealismo de 1787 em diante.

Palavras-chave: eu, objeto, idealismo, realismo, ser no mundo.

ABSTRACT

According to Kant, idealism is a “scandal of philosophy”. Unlike Hume, Kant is not satisfied to point out that human beings are not capable of abandoning their belief in outer things in practical life. Kant aims to offer a satisfactory proof of the existence of outer things. My claim in this paper is that Kant’s definitive proof of the existence of outer things is fundamentally connected to his new conception of the empirical self as a being in the world (Weltwesen), a conception that emerges in the second edition of the first Critique and is fully articulated in Reflections from 1788 onward. In order to make my point, I analyse the Refutation of Idealism in the Criticism of the Fourth Paralogism of Transcendental Psychology, the Kantian theory of inferential cognition of existences, Kant’s critical theory of the “object”, and the Refutation of Idealism from 1787 onward.

Keywords: self, object, idealism, realism, being in the world.