

## Unfolding the Connection between the Kantian Self and Time\*

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### Abstract

In Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, the self and time are interwoven on three different levels. To unveil this relation, this paper refers back to Kant's criticism directed to the ideas of early modern philosophers concerning the two notions in question. On the three levels, three different conceptions of the self correspond to three aspects of time. In the first aspect we encounter the self as *inner sense* (appearance) and time reveals itself as the *form* of this sense. The first aspect of the self thus cannot be known *as it is in itself*; on the contrary, it can be known only *as an appearance*. Later, in virtue of the act of *imagination*, while the second aspect of the self is unfolded as a temporal self, time comes forth as *formal intuition*. In this level, the self starts to become conscious of its temporal character. Finally, in the third aspect, the relation between the transcendental unity of the self (*apperception*) and the unity of time becomes transparent. In the course of analyzing the three corresponding aspects of the self and time, this paper aims to reveal both the temporal character of the Kantian self and the subjective character of time.

**Keywords:** Self, time, inner sense, imagination, apperception.

### Kant'ta Kendilik ve Zaman Arasındaki İlişkinin Açılması

#### Öz

Kant'ın *Saf Aklın Eleştirisi'nde*, kendilik ve zaman üç farklı seviyede birbirleriyle iç içedir. Bu durumu açık kılmak için, bu makalede, erken modern dönem düşünürlerin kendilik ve zamana ilişkin fikirlerine, Kant'ın yönelttiği eleştirileri ele alıyoruz. Söz konusu üç seviyede, kendiliğin üç farklı yönü, zamanın üç yönüne denk düşer. İlk seviyede, kendilik *iç duyu* (görünüş) ve zaman ise bu duyunun *formu* olarak ortaya çıkar. O halde, kendiliğin ilk yönü, kendinde olduğu haliyle değil, ancak bize görünen haliyle bilinebilir. Daha sonra, *imgelem* sayesinde, kendiliğin ikinci yönü *zamansal kendilik* olarak ortaya çıkarken; zaman, *biçimsel görü* olarak ortaya koyulur. Bu seviyede, kendilik, zamansal yönünün bilincine varmaya başlar. Son olarak, üçüncü seviyede, kendiliğin aşkınsal birliği (*tamalğı*) ve zamanın birliği arasındaki ilişki açık bir hale gelir. Kendilik ve zamanın birbirine karşılık gelen üç yönünü çözümlene sürecinde, bu makalenin amaçladığı şey, Kant'ın kendilik anlayışının zamansal özelliğini gösterirken bir yandan da zamanın öznel oluşunu aydınlatılabilmektir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kendilik, zaman, iç duyu, imgelem, tamalğı.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The concepts of the self and time permeate the entire first *Critique*. In this book, Kant attempts to justify the possibility of the objective knowledge of the experiential world from the subjective standpoint. The essential point that Kant concerns himself with in this book is this: “How are *a priori* synthetic judgments possible?” (1929, p. 55). To answer this entails the analysis of the self by explaining how the self (“I”) can attain knowledge. Looking for an answer to this question, the emphasis is put on *inner sense*, *imagination* and *apperception*. These three elements of mind, when examined closely, can provide a thorough understanding of the Kantian self and time.

This paper analyzes Kant’s notion of the self (within his theoretical philosophy) and time into three pieces, underscoring the correspondence between them. To understand Kant’s idea of the self, it is essential to refer to three different aspects of time accompanying three aspects of the self. It is also crucial to focus on “The Schematism” part, in which the self produces the objective time order. Furthermore, the present paper demonstrates what the pair of the three elements in question means; how Kant breaks with the early modern tradition concerning self and time; and how strongly the self is related to time.

## 2. THE THREE ASPECTS OF SELF AND TIME

As regards the self and time, Kant, in the first *Critique*, both criticizes early modern philosophers and attempts to solve the problems he attributed to them. This makes Kant’s notion of the self and time considerably more complicated. In trying to give an account of his theory of the self, some commentators limit their investigation only to two notions, i.e., *inner sense* and *apperception*.<sup>1</sup> However, in addition to two notions at issue, commentators like Heidegger (1997) and Longuenesse (2001) include *imagination* into their account. In the first *Critique*, Kant concentrates on three elements, namely, *inner sense*, *imagination* and *apperception*. He states that they must account for the possibility of knowledge. My strategy, thus, consists in trying to capture Kant’s account of the self by pursuing these three elements – all of which together constitute the self. Thus, the present paper revolves around the elements at issue in order to reveal the three aspects of the self by bringing out the role that time plays therein. In spite of the analysis of the three aspects in isolation, it should be kept in mind that they cannot be separated in reality; and their union alone can give us the self. It must also be kept in mind that for Kant, knowledge (including, that of the self, objects, events etc.) is a matter of representation, i.e., bringing multiplicity into a unity (synthesis). In the course of unfolding the nature of the self and time, we will repeatedly refer to this synthesis.

### 2.1. Inner Sense: The Self as Appearance and Time as the Form of Inner Sense

In a sense, Kant’s view of *inner sense* can be read as a response to Cartesian ego. For Descartes, there is one certain proposition (the first principle): “I am”. This “I” is considered as a substance, i.e., as the self *as it is*; as a real entity. Descartes takes his departure from inner state(s) and finally by introspection arrives at the conclusion that “I exist”. The essential point here is that Descartes establishes the reality of the self (to use Kantian terms: the self *in itself*) as a result of inquiring into the inner states. On Kant’s account, the inner states cannot provide us with such knowledge.

<sup>1</sup> See Allison (1983, p. 237-72); Serck-Hanssen (2009, p. 139-57); and Melnick (2009, p. 111-30).

Kant's theory of *inner sense* particularly aims to demonstrate that the self cannot be known *as it is in itself*; on the contrary, it can be known only *as an appearance*. That is, we can know our very self only through self-affection, i.e., as we appear to ourselves (Allison, 1983, p. 255). By *inner sense* we cannot have the "*intuition of the soul itself as an object; but there is [...] a determinate form [namely, time] in which alone the intuition of inner states is possible [...]*" (Kant, 1929, p. 67). It appears that, whatever belongs to *inner sense* must necessarily stand in temporal relations. Otherwise, the self cannot be known as an *appearance*. Therefore, as Kant states, "[t]ime is nothing but the form of inner sense, that is, of the intuition of ourselves and of our inner state" (1929, p. 77).

*Inner sense* can also be characterized as the bearer of all inner and outer experiences, which constitute our experiences as a whole. To illustrate, we can experience either objects or mental states. If our experience consists of the objects outside us, then it is called outer sense. That is, "[b]y outer sense (which includes sight, hearing, etc.) we are aware of objects in space" (Paton, 1936, p. 99). If our experience consists of states of mind (such as inclinations, memories, expectations, and so on) then, it is called *inner sense*. Thus, "[b]y inner sense we are aware of our own states of mind in time" (Paton, 1936, p. 99). It is worth noting that inner experiences can only be temporal but not spatial. Nevertheless, outer experiences must be both temporal and spatial. In this manner, objects of outer sense fall within the scope of *inner sense*. This point is in need of a further clarification:

[...] [A]ll representations [...] belong, in themselves, as determinations of the mind, to our inner state; and since this inner state stands under the formal condition of inner intuition, and so belongs to time, time is an a priori condition of all appearance whatsoever. It is the immediate condition of inner appearances (of our souls), and thereby the mediate condition of outer appearances. [...] [A]ll appearances whatsoever, that is, all objects of the senses, are in time, and necessarily in time-relations. (Kant, 1929, p. 77)

Time is the bearer of all appearances whatsoever. Sherover remarks that if "*all appearances that are spatial must also be temporal, there is the additional crucial thesis that only some appearances are spatial but all appearances are in time*" (1971, p. 51). That is, all outer appearances can be put in time; nevertheless, the "self" (or mental states) cannot be put in space. This process seems to work from the outer to inner; not the other way around. It is thus clear that all objects of experience are located in "a single temporal matrix"<sup>2</sup>. After reminding us that outer and inner awareness are analogous to one another, Cummins argues as follows:

[On Kant's account], [b]y outer (perceptual) intuition one is aware of various spatial objects, but perceptual experience does not establish more than the phenomenal reality of those objects. Similarly, by inner intuition one is conscious of a sequence of mental states; but on the basis of those experiences one is not entitled to affirm the transcendental reality of such states. (1968, p. 287)

Inner awareness alone does not give us the transcendental reality of the self. Having started with the inner self, Descartes claimed that he has proven the existence of the substantial self, i.e., *cogito*. Unlike him, Kant has attempted to show that the awareness of the inner self does not provide the knowledge of the self *as it is*. By introspection (meditation) "[o]ne does not apprehend one's mental states as they are in themselves" (Cummins, 1968, p. 288).

<sup>2</sup> I borrowed this phrase from Phillip Cummins. See Cummins (1968, p. 286).

In the first *Critique* Kant discusses the threefold synthesis, namely (1) “the synthesis of apprehension in intuition”, (2) “of reproduction in imagination” and (3) “of recognition in a concept”. This threefold synthesis unfolds the three aspects of the Kantian self. In the first synthesis the ability (*inner sense*) is called apprehension (synopsis). Notice that, unlike reproduction (synthesis) and recognition (unity), Kant does not ascribe “activity” to apprehension. He rather considers the first aspect of self as the receptive ability (“passivity”). And this is the reason why he, in the *Anthropology*, describes it as “a consciousness of what we undergo”, instead of describing it as “a consciousness of what we are doing” (1974, p. 161).

In *inner sense*, the self (the mind) intuits itself “as it is affected by itself, and therefore as it appears to itself, not as it is” (Kant, 1929, p. 88). Mind knows itself as an object of experience. Insofar as we are within the scope of the *inner sense*, we should consider the self as an appearance. The Cartesian subject is simply beyond the power of *inner sense*. This delineates the elusive character of the self. Kant has seen this difficulty and considered it as a paradox. That is, the self encounters itself not *as it is*, but, as it is affected, i.e., spatio-temporally ordered. Then, as Kant says, in *inner sense*, the self can be in a passive relation to itself (1929, p. 166). To make sense of this paradox, one needs to notice that the subject, in acting upon its inner states, puts the multiplicity – in Kant’s term, a “manifold” – of these states before itself as an object. So, the self knows itself as inwardly affected. To put it differently, the manifold of intuitions must stand in temporal relations. The self determines (synthesizes or unifies) this manifold of inner states in time. In so doing, it is affected by its own activity and intuits itself as such, i.e., as an appearance. On Kant’s account, the knowledge of *cogito* always evades or escapes us.

In the “Transcendental Aesthetic”, Kant regards time as the “form of *inner sense*”. So far, the association between time and *inner sense* has made itself quite obvious. Nevertheless, to unfold the covert inseparable relation between time and *inner sense*, we must inquire into the depth of the way Kant treats time in the “Transcendental Aesthetic”. Let’s have a look at some significant points:

- 1) Time is not “derived from experience”, so it is “not an empirical concept”.
- 2) It is given *a priori*, that is, time by being prior to all empirical intuitions underlies them.
- 3) It is not a general or pure concept (category).
- 4) It is, “a pure form of sensible intuition”.
- 5) It must be “given as unlimited” unity. (1929, p. 74-75)

To begin with, in (1) Kant puts forward that time simply cannot be abstracted from the relations of objects of experience. That is, the possibility of the objective knowledge rests on, in the first place, that time is an *a priori* condition, involving no empirical elements. If we recall the standard relational view of time, attributed to Leibniz, we see that Kant breaks with this tradition. According to this view, time is relational or relative; it is nothing other than the order among things or events (Brentano, 1988, p. 113; Rundle, 2009, p. 4). This view also suggests that in the absence of the succession of events, time would never arise. Then, it follows that time cannot be prior to the appearances. Contrary to this, Kant asserts in (2) that time must be *a priori*, thus, it cannot be derived from experience. Kant had always been after universality, necessity and objectivity. Something derived from experience can never satisfy these conditions. Yet, in his account, time must carry these three features within itself. That

is, it cannot involve even a slightest empirical element. This is simply why Kant rules out the relational view.

(3), (4) and (5) indicate Kant's very same claim: time is "a pure intuition". In trying to make sense of this phrase, the distinction between "concept" and "intuition" might prove helpful. There may be infinitely many individual representations having the common feature, allowing them to be put *under* the same title: a concept. Nevertheless, this does not hold for time, which is a "pure intuition". To clarify the distinction, Paton writes that a concept is a general representation, whereas an intuition is a singular representation (1936, p. 94). A singular representation, given unlimited, cannot be a generalization from distinct representations of time, which are supposed to have something in common. On the contrary, every representation of time is "*possible only through limitations of one single time that underlies it*" (Kant, 1929, p. 75). All representations of time already belong to it; they are already contained *within* it. That is, they are not distinct representations (having a common character), coming together to generate a concept of time. Its parts can be "*represented only through limitation, the whole representation [time] cannot be given through concepts [...]*", therefore, all parts of time "*must themselves rest on immediate intuition*" (Kant, 1929, p. 75). As an unlimited, singular, whole representation, time is "a pure intuition"; and there is only one single time *within* which all its representations are contained.

So far, time appears to be a single (temporal) matrix in which every appearance must stand successively. This idea is reminiscent of Newton's absolute time. According to Newton (1846), time cannot be derived from experience; even if there was no events, there would still be time. As an absolute entity, time is "beyond the reach of immediate sense experience" (Cassirer, 1943, p. 387) This is why Kant regards Newtonian time as transcendently real, which is beyond the scope of mind's cognitive capacity. Thus Kant claims that time remains unknown or paradoxically eternal non-entity (1929, p. 81). For him, as well as relational time, absolute conception of time is not *a priori*, which cannot provide universality, necessity and objectivity.

Furthermore, there is another essential characteristic of time which must not be overlooked: time is "the form of appearances". Technically speaking, when an appearance is analyzed into its pieces, it can be seen that it is made of two different elements: matter and form. Sense impressions (empirical intuitions) provide matter for an appearance. Yet, the matter has to be ordered in a certain way. This certain way is "the form of the appearance".

In the first aspect, we know the self as appearance, rather than as it is *in itself*. In *inner sense*, the "I" intuits the manifold of its inner states in a temporally ordered fashion. That is, as a receptive ability, it is an awareness of what we go through. Thus, in this first aspect, we encounter the self as an *inner sense* (appearance), and time as *the form* of this sense.

## 2.2. Imagination: Temporal Consciousness and Time as Formal Intuition

In the "Transcendental Deduction", Kant sets out to resolve an essential problem which can be re-formulated as follows: How does the self know its object *a priori*? (How can the self determine the objects of experience?). In struggling to provide an account for this problem, Kant suggests that the manifold of impressions must be brought into a transcendental unity. *Imagination*, receiving a constant assistance from time, has much to say about this.

*But space and time are represented a priori not merely as forms of sensible intuition, but as themselves intuitions which contain a manifold [of their own] and therefore are represented with the determination of the unity of this manifold [...] so that the form of intuition gives only a manifold, the formal intuition gives unity of representation. (1929, p. 170)*

Kant distinguishes “form of intuition” which belongs to sensibility from “the formal intuition”<sup>3</sup> which is a pure product of the *imagination*<sup>4</sup>. In pure intuition, time is known in isolation only by way of abstraction. Yet, in “formal intuition” it turns into a conceivable form. That is, it appears to the subject as an image, (an object, or a representation). Time gains this look through the transcendental synthesis of *imagination*. *Imagination “is the faculty of representing in intuition an object that is not itself present”* (Kant, 1929, p. 165). That is, its function is bringing different perceptions together so as to conceive the plurality of intuitions (in them) as a unity in one single activity. This activity is called synthesis (1929, p. 111).

*Imagination*<sup>5</sup> brings the manifold of (sensible) impressions into a (conceptual) unity by the synthesis of reproduction. It can do so since the *imagination*, somehow, mediates between the faculty of sensibility and understanding. As regards this, Kant remarks that “*these two powers [sensibility and understanding] cannot exchange their functions*”; nevertheless, “*only through their union can knowledge arise*” (1929, p. 93). Kant introduces the power of *imagination* as a mediating third “thing” in establishing the unity of sensibility and understanding. Heidegger argues that this makes the power of *imagination* to be left outside “the two fundamental sources of the mind”, remaining “homeless” (1997, p. 95). However, Heidegger (1997) treats *imagination* as a particular and distinct aspect of mind.

Having an intrinsic relation to both *inner sense* and *the transcendental apperception* makes *imagination* indispensable in the unity of the self. That means *imagination’s* activity is sensible and intellectual (spontaneous) at the same time, albeit the heterogeneity of these two faculties. It is noteworthy that for Kant, sensibility and understanding “*perhaps spring from a common, but to us unknown, root*”. Heidegger (1977) suggests that this common root is *the transcendental power of imagination* itself. A closer inspection shows, in one single activity, the *imagination* accomplishes two simultaneous interwoven syntheses: an empirical (reproductive synthesis exercised on sensible given data) and a transcendental (productive synthesis exercised on the “pure manifold” [pure relations] of time). Kant’ calls the first synthesis, the synthesis of reproduction in *imagination*:

*When I seek to draw a line in thought [...] obviously the various manifold representations that are involved must be apprehended by me in thought one after the other. But if I were always to drop out of thought the preceding representations (the first part of the line the antecedent part of the time period, or the units in the order represented) and did not reproduce them while advancing to those that flow, a complete representation would never be obtained [...] (1929, p. 133)*

<sup>3</sup> This term seems to, more or less, be the same thing with the term “schema”.

<sup>4</sup> It must be noted that the transcendental unity of this product is grounded in the pure *apperception*.

<sup>5</sup> There are two editions of the first *Critique*, namely, “A” (the first) and “B” (the second) editions. In the “A” edition Deduction, the crucial role is attributed to the *imagination*, whereas, in the “B” edition, its role is oversimplified, by subordinating it to the understanding (*apperception*). Later, in the “Schematism” chapter, the role of *imagination* is made central again.

This passage provides an answer to the problem of the connection between the dispersed experiences. Unlike *inner sense* – a consciousness of particular experience – *imagination* appears to be a consciousness of the connection of particular experiences. In reproduction, *imagination* brings the past experiences into the present (“now”). In *inner sense*, an old impression just drops out of thought when the present impression comes in. Nevertheless, *imagination* constantly re-produces every single past impression in the present moment. As Woods puts it, out of a collection of impressions apprehended at any particular time (“here and now”), *imagination* produces an image (of an object) (1998, p. 212).

In the very same act, *imagination* exercises a pure (productive) synthesis of the manifold of time, i.e., pure form of appearances. That is, it binds the past to the present by letting “the faint representation of time” to spring forth. As a result of its pure synthesis, *imagination* allows time to appear as an image (or perhaps as a “schema”). This act may be called, as Heidegger (1997) seems to suggest, the “time forming act” of *imagination*<sup>6</sup>. And the pure product of this act is “formal intuition”. When we recall that space and time, as forms of appearances, are embedded in given appearances, this twofold synthesis of *imagination* in question might be understood better.

*[Time (or space)] is or contains the relations (or system of relations) in which appearances stand. The content of pure intuition is these same relations, abstracted from sensible appearances, and taken together as forming one individual whole. Space and time are at once the forms of appearances and the content of pure intuition. (Paton, 1936, p. 104)*

This pure content is synthesized by transcendental *imagination*. So, the content, (the pure forms) turns into a “formal intuition”, which is necessary for the determinate objects of experience to arise. As a result of *imagination*’s two seemingly different syntheses in one act, both appearances and “space and time” turn into a visible and conceivable forms for the understanding. In fact, “formal intuition” should better be regarded as objectification, limitation, conceptualization, or representation of original and indeterminate time. It is simply a determinate and conceivable part of original, single, unlimited time. Upon this Heidegger says: “[f]ormal intuition provides space [or time] (as non-objective single wholeness) an image or a view, by turning it into an explicit object for the first time” (1997, p. 94).

For *imagination* to establish a connection between the sense impressions, spread over time, it must go beyond the “here and now”. The activity of connecting the multiplicity of sense impressions, therefore, must assume temporality, namely the unity of past, present, and even future. Otherwise, the synthesis of the past and the present experience would be impossible. The essential role time plays and its strong relation to the self find its true meaning in this “time-forming activity” of the transcendental power of *imagination*. *Imagination*, therefore, along with forming an image of objects, also forms *temporality*; that is to say, it gives unity to time. Rosenberg explains this formation as “the representation of a succession” (2005, p. 114), by pointing out a unity in which representations follow each other in succession. The formation of *temporality* is a logical necessity without which *imagination* can by no means pass beyond the present moment and exercise the pure synthesis of the past and present experiences. Nor can the particular temporal awareness of the self arise.

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<sup>6</sup> Prauss argues that by using an analogy of “drawing a line” instead of “a line” itself, Kant for the first time attempts to unveil the dynamic nature of time. Time is taken “as something in the process of becoming”, i.e., activity; rather than something static or completed. Thus, “the objective problem of time [is] transformed by Kant into a subjective and psychological problem” (2000, p. 156).

*Inner sense* might be considered as a consciousness of what happens “here and now” since it cannot pass beyond the present. Contrary to this, the power of *imagination* is the faculty of going beyond the present. Compared to *inner sense*, the power of transcending “the present” seems to indicate a different and perhaps a superior form of the self. Thus, the second aspect of the self cannot be described as the self which is only a passive receiver chained to the present. Rather, this aspect of self might be understood as an activity that is released from its chains and thereby can transcend a certain moment (“now”). This self is thus a self who is conscious of the connection of particular experiences. *Imagination* has the capacity of acting freely over time – which it constructs.<sup>7</sup> This free acting ability allows it to bring our particular past experiences into the present and to keep them in connection. This also allows *imagination* to establish the connection between all particular awareness. In this way, the self becomes conscious of its temporal character, namely, conscious of its activity as being spread out over time. Thus, this aspect comes forth as a certain form of the self, and I suggest to call it a “temporal consciousness”, i.e., a consciousness of one’s own temporal being.

Within the scope of the second aspect, Kant’s and Hume’s view of the self would be very close, if not the same thing. Let us recall Hume’s remark:

*When I enter most intimately into what I call myself I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never catch myself at any time without a perception, and never can observe anything but the perception. (1978, p. 252)*

Instead of arguing for the existence of the Cartesian/Substantial self, he asserts that the self is “nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement” (1978, p. 363). By introspection, the only thing we can catch, Hume argues, is a particular experience. Similarly, Kant thinks that no abiding self can be observed in the temporal flux. However, a particular awareness is “a representation of oneself at a certain time, but it is not a representation of oneself over time” (Keller, 1998, p. 169). Since this particular consciousness of the self is empirical and always changing, it must be many, i.e., there must be a plurality of the dispersed particular consciousness. This raises the problem of combining this plurality into one consciousness. Hume remains this problem untouched; whereas, Kant aims to demonstrate the self as abiding in the “temporal flux”. As Pereboom argues, a “subject that is distinct from these perceptions cannot have a role in Hume’s picture, since for him the subject is merely a collection of perceptions” (2006, p. 155). From Kantian perspective, however, “this subject is distinct from its representations” (Pereboom, 2006, p. 155); it must simply be transcendental in character since it is what is beyond the flux of perceptions (to this point I turn later). On Kantian account, Hume just failed to grasp the true meaning of the self.

<sup>7</sup> Notice that the time-forming (productive or pure) power of *imagination* is the condition of its reproductive synthesis. That is, without the formation of temporality, *imagination* cannot have a power to act freely over time, so that, it cannot exercise its reproductive synthesis.

### 2.3. Apperception<sup>8</sup>: The Transcendental Unity of the Self and Time as the Unity

The “transcendental unity of apperception” might be understood as the self-consciousness<sup>9</sup> or self-identity over time. It means the consciousness<sup>10</sup> of the unity of empirical ego (its various states). In accounting for the *apperception*, Kant presents the third synthesis, that is, “the synthesis of recognition in a concept”. This synthesis is no more than the consciousness of the synthesis of reproduction in *imagination*. The self must be aware of the reproduction of successive representations. Therefore, the transition of mind from one representation to another and meanwhile its relating them together must be one conscious act which is performed by the self. The purpose of this is to bring the synthesis of *imagination* to the concepts of understanding.

The third aspect of the self which may be regarded as “self-consciousness” is *transcendental apperception*. Unlike empirical apperception (*inner sense* and *imagination*), as in Hume’s bundle theory, which always changes, *transcendental apperception* presents itself as unchanging in the temporal flux, i.e., the succession of inner experiences. This abiding self is presented as “original” and transcendental since it functions as an *a priori* condition of every particular consciousness. Kant states that the particular consciousness “is in itself diverse and without relation to the identity of the subject” (1929, p. 153). Even if *imagination* synthesizes (connects) all the particular consciousness to each other, self-consciousness cannot be accomplished. Self-consciousness is simply the consciousness of the unity of the synthesis of *imagination* as belonging (referring) to the single “I”. Kitcher treats it as a consciousness “of something reasonably characterized as ‘a self’” (1999, p. 346). Priest takes it as “a formal relation between a person and his experiences” by depicting it as “the capacity of the ‘I think’ to accompany all our experiences” (1981, p. 351). Kant asserts that the unity of consciousness “precedes all data of intuitions, and by relation to which representations of objects is alone possible” (1929, p. 136). Underlining the three special characteristics of *apperception* – 1) numerical identity, 2) ownership, and 3) bareness – may clarify it to some degree.

In *inner sense*, “the always changing empirical consciousness” cannot fix itself through time. That is, it is simply not numerically identical. However, *transcendental apperception*, as the unchanging consciousness, abides through time. According to Kant, for knowledge to arise, there must be one single self-consciousness in which all empirical consciousness must be united. That is, as Ameriks puts it, “in all knowledge (i.e., each cognition) there [must be] a ‘constant’ unity despite the temporal plurality [of empirical experiences]” (2000, p. 141). By this, Kant fixes the Hume’s problem of providing “something” responsible for the connection of different perceptions. Transcendental unity of *apperception* which gives “I” (the transcendental self) is thought of as the necessary condition of every possible consciousness whatsoever. Thus, the *transcendental apperception* is “the original and necessary consciousness of the identity of the self” (1929, p. 136), i.e., the condition of self-consciousness.

<sup>8</sup> Indeed, *transcendental apperception* is both the condition of the synthetic unity of (the objects of) experience and the unity of the self. See Kant (1929, p. 135-38).

<sup>9</sup> While Kitcher (1999, p. 361) and Wilkerson (1980, p. 54) consider *apperception* as “self-consciousness”, Priest (1981, p. 351) regards it as “a potentiality or capacity for self-consciousness”.

<sup>10</sup> Like Leibniz 1982 [1765], Kant (1902) also thinks that we can somehow, albeit not explicitly, be conscious of something we cannot report or recall (Kitcher 1999, p. 382). Therefore, there might be some activities and characteristics of which we can be “obscurely” or “implicitly conscious”. Consciousness is not a well-defined concept determined by clear-cut boundaries.

Regarding the ownership, i.e., the fact that all our representations must be united in one single consciousness, Kant argues as follows:

*It must be possible for the 'I think' to accompany all my representations; for otherwise something would be represented in me which could not be thought at all, and that is equivalent to saying that the representation would be impossible, or at least would be nothing to me [...] all the manifold of intuition has, therefore, a necessary relation to the 'I think' in the same subject in which this manifold is found. (1929, p. 152-53)*

All my experiences, to be considered as belonging to me, must be accompanied by the single subject: "I". Yet, as an objection to the Cartesian subject as a substance, Kant states that the subject must be purely logical<sup>11</sup> or formal; it must be bare "I". He further says: that "the bare representation 'I', in relation to all other representations [...] is transcendental consciousness" (1929, p. 142). By "bareness", Kant's sole aim seems to "to prove that we can have no knowledge of the soul as permanent substance" (Paton, 1936, p. 407). The formal subject indicates its "bareness", that is, emptiness. "I think", which must accompany all my representations, "cannot itself be accompanied by any further representation" (1929, p. 153). It is therefore considered by Longuenesse, as "a mere form of thought" or "a mere form of consciousness" (2008, p. 27). This points out that the "I" must be taken as a logical or formal subject but not as a predicate. To make sense of this formal self, Kant, in the "Paralogisms of Pure Reason" (A), asserts: "the proposition 'I think' [...] contains the form of each and every judgment of understanding and accompanies all categories as their vehicle [...]" (1929, p. 332). The Kantian self, unlike the Cartesian one, has therefore nothing to do with a substantial entity. The "I" cannot be known as the subject in a Cartesian sense. It is neither an intuition nor a concept; yet it is only "the mere form of consciousness", which always accompanies representations and which is, according to Kant, in a position to lift them to the level of knowledge.

This "I", as a logical necessity, is the formal subject that holds different representations together; it is what brought them into a unity. Van Cleve states that, this logical self is called "transcendental because, like Hume, [Kant] believes that we can never observe it" (2003, p. 182). In regard to its being theoretically unknown, Kant says: "it does not know itself through the categories, but knows the categories, and through them all objects, in the absolute unity of apperception, and so through itself" (1929, p. 365). Finally, the reason why Descartes and the whole rational psychology have failed in accounting for the self is found in what follows:

*The unity of consciousness, which underlies the categories, is here mistaken for an intuition of the subject as object, and the category of substance is then applied to it. But this unity is only unity in thought, by which alone no object is given, and to which, therefore, the category of substance, which always presupposes a given intuition, cannot be applied. Consequently, this subject cannot be known. (1929, p. 377)*

The transcendental self is thus the formal subject of all experiences; "the thinker of our thoughts, the haver of our experiences, the willer of our actions, and [...] the agent of the various activities of synthesis" (Van Cleve, 2003, p. 182).

<sup>11</sup> Concerning this, Allison states that the representation of the "I" is "purely intellectual". He continues: "[b]ecause of this, 'I' designates only "something in general", [i.e.] it does not refer to anything at all" (1983, p. 282).

As regards the unity of time, we must know that it is a necessary condition for the unity of representations. So, it must be demonstrated that time must be thought as a unity in accordance with a rule. This is possible when time is understood in its relation with *the transcendental apperception*. In the “Analogies of Experience” there are three modes of time, namely, *duration*, *succession* and *co-existence*, which correspond to three rules of all relations of appearances in time.

What *inner sense* and the *imagination* can provide is empirical self. It is neither a fixed nor an abiding self over time. In the first two aspects, therefore, appearances are related to one another merely in a subjective time-order. This order poses a threat to the Kantian phenomenal world which is pictured as the necessary synthetic unity of experience. To resolve this, in the First analogy, Kant posits time as “something” permanent like substance (in the field of appearance) in which alone can succession and co-existence be represented. Without that representation there can be no time relations whatsoever. In the first *Critique*, in different places, he repeatedly points out the permanence of time:

- 1- “Time itself does not alter, but only something which is in time” (1929, p. 82).
- 2- Time “as the substrate of all change remains ever the same” (1929, p. 213).
- 3- “[C]hange does not affect time itself, but only appearances in time” (1929, p. 214).

All the three claims indicate that time must be like the *substratum* of the flux of appearances, i.e., empirically real. By the permanent time, it is possible for appearances to be related to one another in a universal and objective time-order, which rests on the original unity of *apperception*. Kant sheds more light on this point in the second analogy.

In the second analogy, the aim is to demonstrate that the relation between two states or events must not be a random, subjective relation; but instead, it must be an objective and necessary one. The succession – that two states follow one another – must be according to the relation of cause and effect. Through the concept of the relation between cause and effect, we can distinguish a subjective-time order from an objective time-order:

*This synthesis of imagination is always successive, that is, the representations in it are always sequent upon one another. In the imagination this sequence is not in any way determined in its order, as to what must precede and what must follow, and the series of sequent representations can indifferently be taken either in backward or in forward order.*  
(Kant, 1929, p. 226-27)

If we can show that when an appearance is posited in time, another one must necessarily follow it, then the relation between appearances conforms to a rule. Also, this rule shows which appearance is before and which is after. This way, we can have an objective time-order. Otherwise, the time-order would be a subjective one.

Universal and objective time-order is possible by means of the unity of *apperception*, since the unity of time is grounded in the unity of *apperception*. That is, time and the self are inextricably related to each other:

*[I]n the whole time in which I am conscious of myself, I am conscious of this time as belonging to the unity of myself; and it comes to the same whether I say that this whole time is in me, as individual unity, or that I am to be found as numerically identical in all this time.* (1929, p. 341)

This passage suggests that unity of self is grounded in the unity of time is another way of saying that the unity of time is grounded in the unity of the self.

In the third analogy, Kant attempts to elaborate how the co-existence of the variety of appearances happens in one and the same time. In the absence of time, each appearance is torn away from the whole, giving rise to that the synthetic unity of experience falls apart. We can easily imagine time as “void of appearances”, yet; we can never think of appearances in the absence of time. Time cannot be removed; in the world of experience, it is a universal constant.

These three analogies – elaborating what it is to be “the relation to time” (duration), “the relation in time as succession”, and “the relation in time as coexistent” – show that the unity of time, which is grounded in the transcendental *apperception*, is necessary condition of the unity of experience.

### 3. THE CENTRALITY OF TIME: THE SCHEMATISM

Kant demonstrates how the categories can refer to their objects in two different ways both in “A” and “B” “Deduction[s]”. Yet, in the “Schematism”, he demonstrates how the categories can be applied to objects through schema, i.e., in terms of time alone. Unlike, the “Deduction[s]” which aims to focus on the logical or the formal use of the categories in mere judgment, the “Schematism” aims to demonstrate the real use of them<sup>12</sup>. That is, while in the former, the objective validity of the categories is justified; in the latter, the objective reality of them is established by Kant (Allison, 1983, p. 135). What he is after in the “Schematism”, is thus is to justify the categories’ application to the real object of experience on the basis of time.

Kant has established that the categories are “quite heterogeneous” from the objects of the senses. Yet, for knowledge to arise, their unity is a necessity. This unity requires “a third thing” that is to serve as a common ground upon which the self can get an epistemic access to its object. Kant states that this “third thing” is a transcendental schema. Since it is homogeneous with both categories and appearances, schema<sup>13</sup> is characterized as a “mediating representation”.

The image can be considered as an empirical procedure of providing an image for a concept. Nevertheless, the schema of a concept is described by Kant as “*the representation of a universal procedure of imagination in providing an image for a concept*” (1929, p. 182). When we recall the two simultaneous syntheses of *imagination*, the distinction can be clear. As a result of the reproductive (empirical) synthesis of *imagination*, the image is produced. However, the schema is a pure product of the productive (transcendental) synthesis of *imagination*:

*[A Schema is] a diagrammatic procedure by means of which the abstract concept and a particular percept are brought together in the temporal form in which the percept is recognized as an object of perception. The schemata are thus nothing but a priori determinations of time in accord with rules. (Sherover, 1971, p. 105)*

Kant provides the list of four schemata which correspond to the four categories of quantity, quality, relation, and modality. The schema of quantity (magnitude) is “the

<sup>12</sup> By this, we should understand that in the “Deduction[s]”, the function of the categories in mere judgments are demonstrated; whereas, in the “Schematism” their function in possible experience are established.

<sup>13</sup> Compare with “formal intuition”.

generation (synthesis) of time itself in the successive apprehension of an object". The schema of quality is "the synthesis of sensation or perception with the representation of time; it is the filling of time". The schema of relation is "the connecting of perceptions with one another at all times according to a rule of time-determination". Finally, the schema of modality is "time itself as the correlate of the determination whether and how an object belongs to time" (1929, p. 185). Following the order of the four categories in question, schemata of them are concerned with the "the time-series, the time-content, the time-order, and the scope of time" (1929, p. 185). Schemata are also described as "the transcendental determinations of time". Allison explains what is meant by this phrase as follows:

*A transcendental determination of time must be conceptualization of time in accordance with an a priori concept, which refers time to an object or objectifies it, while also providing objective reality for the concept involved. To objectify time means to represent a temporal order as an intersubjectively valid order of events or states of affairs in the phenomenal world, in contrast to a merely subjectively valid order of representations in an individual consciousness. (1983, p. 183)*

In a "subjectively valid order", the self connects its particular experiences to each other in an empirical consciousness. By "the transcendental determination of time", the self is presented with the "intersubjectively valid order" which allows it to transcend its particular consciousness; to interact with the other selves; and, get an access to the objects within the phenomenal world. Thus, the schema displays itself as the objective time order on the basis of which the self can gain objective knowledge of the (objects) of the phenomenal world. With no schema, i.e., without being poured into a temporal mold, categories are "empty and devoid of meaning, content, and significance" (Sherover, 1971, p. 112). To gain significance and objective reality, categories must be temporalized. Without the unity of time, the self cannot know the objects of the experiential world, nor can it know itself as a unity.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

In Kant's theoretical philosophy, there are three different aspects of the self, i.e., *inner sense*, empirical self and transcendental self. Our analysis has revealed that, the first aspect of self is a passive receiver chained to the present moment. In the second aspect, the self is released from its chains (the present) and becomes aware of its temporal character. In the third aspect, the self becomes self-conscious, i.e., conscious of its numerical identity through time. I have demonstrated that to these three aspects of self, there corresponds three aspects of time, i.e., the form of intuition, formal intuition and time as unity, respectively.

In the course of unfolding the connection between the Kantian self and time, I have focused on the views of Leibniz and Newton regarding time; and Descartes and Hume regarding the self. I have attempted to understand what objections Kant raises and which replies he provides for them. In the light of these objections and replies, I have tried to show why Kant breaks with those traditions. That is, I have investigated why he rejects absolute and relation theory of time. Also, I have demonstrated why Kant rejects the Cartesian substantial and the Humean bundle theory of the self.

As regards the three aspects, Kant reminds us that there is an unbreakable connection between the receptive ability of *inner sense*, the synthesizing activity of *the imagination*, and the unifying power of *apperception*. Recall once again that even if we refer to three aspects of

the self, there is only one single self, the account of which can be given only after the investigation of the three notions, namely, *inner sense*, *imagination* and *apperception* – which are inseparably bound up together.

We must notice that unless sense-data are ordered temporally, they cannot be taken notice by the self; that is they would perhaps be nothing for us. This leads to the following outcome: in the absence of the construction of time, neither can the self make sense of the world, nor can it have the knowledge of itself. It must also be noted that the transcendental self is not subject to time; that is, it is timeless in the sense of being a logical subject. Nevertheless, the synthetic unity of experience, along with the unity of the self, is in need of the unity (representation) of time. For all this synthesis, i.e., connection, determination, recognition, knowledge and so on, can only be achieved on a temporal basis.

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