

## CONCEPTUAL CONTENT AFTER THE COPERNICAN TURN<sup>12</sup>

**MAX EDWARDS**

University of New Hampshire

[mvedwards@googlemail.com](mailto:mvedwards@googlemail.com)

*Kant announces a 'Copernican turn' in philosophy, but the model of cognition from which he claims to be 'turning' resurfaces in his own constructive account of empirical conceptual content. For Kant, no less than for his 'pre-Copernican' predecessors, empirical concepts are a species of representation that 'conform to' their objects. But if Kant does not excise the pre-Copernican model of cognition from his positive picture, in what does his turn from it consist? I argue that Kant's target is not the legitimacy but the explanatory sufficiency of the pre-Copernican model. Kant's critical gesture towards that model consists in showing that cognition can only exhibit the structure envisaged by the pre-Copernican system if it is underwritten by a kind of content - viz. transcendental content - which cannot be modeled in pre-Copernican terms. A full appreciation of Kant's Copernicanism thus requires an account of transcendental conceptual content, and its relation to empirical conceptual content. Drawing on Kant's account of the transcendental object and other neglected textual resources, I develop such an account.*

**Keywords:** *Philosophy, Conceptual content, transcendental object, Kant, empirical concepts, Copernican Turn.*

---

1 The research conducting to this paper was made possible by the support from the Deutsche Akademische Austauschdienst.

2 This work benefited from conversation with several excellent scholars. I would like to express my gratitude to Claudi Brink, Jim Kreines, Colin McLear, Michael Oberst, Andrew Stephenson, Clinton Tolley, Eric Watkins, and audiences in Berlin and San Diego.

*Kant anuncia un “giro copernicano” en la filosofía, pero el modelo de conocimiento del que afirma estar “girando” resurge en su propio enfoque constructivo sobre el contenido conceptual empírico. Para Kant, al igual que para sus predecesores “pre-copernicanos”, los conceptos empíricos son una especie de representación que “se ajusta” a sus objetos. Pero si Kant no elimina el modelo pre-copernicano de cognición en su perspectiva positiva, ¿en qué consiste su giro respecto a él? Sostengo que el objetivo de Kant no es la legitimidad, sino la suficiencia explicativa del modelo pre-copernicano. El gesto crítico de Kant hacia ese modelo consiste en mostrar que la cognición solo puede exhibir la estructura imaginada por el sistema pre-copernicano si está sustentada por un tipo de contenido —a saber, el contenido trascendental— que no puede ser modelado en términos pre-copernicanos. Una comprensión completa del copernicanismo de Kant, por lo tanto, requiere una explicación del contenido conceptual trascendental y su relación con el contenido conceptual empírico. Basándome en la noción kantiana del objeto trascendental y otros recursos textuales poco considerados, desarrollo tal explicación.*

**Palabras clave:** *Filosofía, contenido conceptual, objeto trascendental, Kant, conceptos empíricos, giro copernicano.*

In the preface to the second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant articulates what he takes to be the fundamental originality of his philosophical project in terms of the now famous contrast between the ‘Copernican’ and ‘pre-Copernican’ philosophical systems. Whereas the pre-Copernican philosopher assumes a theory of cognition on which ‘...all our cognition must conform to objects...’, the Copernican philosopher assumes instead ‘that the object must conform to our cognition’ (Bxvi).<sup>3</sup> Of course, Kant’s so-called ‘Copernican turn’ is one of the most familiar features of the first *Critique*. Nevertheless, I will argue in what follows that this well-trodden interpretative territory still promises to shed new light on important and difficult Kantian doctrines. Specifically, I will argue that attention to the nature and scope of Kant’s critique of the pre-Copernican system clarifies three otherwise obscure topics: his account of conceptual content, the status of the concept of the transcendental object, and the argumentative strategy of the so-called ‘subjective deduction’ in the first edition. These clarifications will emerge as I motivate the main thesis of this paper: namely, that Kant’s departure from the pre-Copernican paradigm is not nearly as total as the language of a ‘turn’ might suggest. Kant’s target is not the legitimacy, but the explanatory sufficiency of the pre-Copernican model of cognition. His point is not to deny that cognition exhibits the structure envisaged by the pre-Copernican system, but rather to show that it only exhibits this structure insofar as it also involves a kind of conceptual content which cannot be modelled in pre-Copernican terms.

In order to reach this conclusion, the paper divides into five sections. In section 1 I introduce the pre-Copernican theory of cognition, arguing that it is motivated by a certain realist conception of the manner in which the objects of our cognition possess their properties. This conception, together with an important assumption about the nature of cognition, which Kant shares, entails what I will call the ‘conformist’ model of cognition, on which the paradigmatic cognitive relation is one in which the features of the representation are explained by facts about the features of the represented object. In section 2 I show how the Aesthetic initiates the Copernican turn by undermining the realist conception of property-possession that made the conformist model seem obligatory. Nevertheless, I argue that the Aesthetic can only be understood as clearing space for rather than accomplishing the turn, because its results are compatible with a conformist model of cognition. Moreover, I show in section 3 that Kant himself accepts this model in his account of empirical cognition. This accordingly lays down an interpretative constraint on any reading of the Copernican turn: while the turn must involve more than merely the rejection of the realist conception of property possession, it cannot consist in the complete excision of the conformist model of cognition. In section 4 I show how Kant’s doctrine of the ‘transcendental content’ of the categories points the way towards the articulation of a genuinely non-conformist model of

---

<sup>3</sup> Here and throughout, the first *Critique* will be cited by the standard A/B pagination, and I refer to the Guyer and Wood translation (Kant 1781/87; 1998).

cognition, and then show how the results of section 4 together with the interpretative constraint laid down in section 3 seem to force on us an interpretation of the Copernican turn on which it is *only* a priori cognition that is remodelled in non-conformist terms. In section 5, however, I show, through a reading of the strategy of the transcendental deduction, that this is not so: remodelling a priori cognition *ipso facto* remodels empirical cognition, because Kant can only execute a transcendental deduction of the categories if he can show that there is a ‘pure thinking in every experience’ (A96). Establishing this result requires showing that empirical conceptual content is dependent upon the transcendental content of the categories, and it is in this thesis about conceptual content that I shall argue that Kant’s Copernicanism resides.

### 1. The Nature and Source of the Pre-Copernican Model

The pre-Copernican paradigm assumes that ‘...all our cognition must conform to the objects’ (Bxvi); thus the pre-Copernican philosopher operates with an implicit theory of cognition. Here and throughout, I will restrict myself to the following commonplaces about Kant’s conception of cognition: cognition, at least in theoretical domain, involves both sensible, intuitive representation and intellectual, conceptual representation (A51/B75-A52/B76); that it consists in a determinate relation of these representations to an object (B137); and that this relation is sufficiently robust to prove the real possibility of the object, thus differing from the purely intellectual relation to objects engendered in mere thought (Bxxvi). A theory of cognition will specify the general form of this relation; such a theory will stand in entailment relations with theories of mind and theories of the nature of objects: theories that make intelligible how it is that mind and world are fitted to stand in the kinds of relations envisaged in the theory of cognition. The implicit pre-Copernican theory of cognition holds that the general form of the cognitive relation is one in which the cognition ‘conforms’ to the object. Thus, in order to understand what would be involved in a departure from this paradigm, we need to understand what this claim amounts to and how it is motivated. In this section I suggest that the claim is motivated by the combination of two theses, one concerning the objects of cognition, the other embodying an explanatory constraint on a theory of cognition.

The first thesis is a claim about the manner in which the objects of human cognition possess their properties. According to this thesis, the objects of our cognition exhibit what I will call ‘cognition-independence’ in respect of a central class of their properties. Cognition-independence will be understood as follows:

(CI) A property *F* of an object *O* is cognition-independent if and only if *O*’s possession of *F* is explanatorily independent of the subjective conditions of its being cognized as *F*.

I will take the ‘subjective conditions’ of cognition of an object as possessing a given property as including whichever mental states or processes that must occur in a subject in order for the relevant cognitive relation to obtain. An object satisfies CI in respect of its

possession of a property *F* only if information concerning the subjective conditions of its cognition as *F* is absent from an explanation of how it possess *F*. I will argue in this section that the pre-Copernican paradigm rests on the thesis that this sort of explanatory profile is exhibited by a central class of the properties we can cognize objects as possessing.<sup>4</sup>

The second thesis embodies a claim about the necessary conditions of cognition, which Kant endorses. This is the claim that in order for a representation to count as cognition of an object, a dependence-relation of a certain kind must run in one of two directions, either from the object to the representation, or vice versa:

‘There are only two possible cases in which synthetic representation and its objects can come together, necessarily relate to each other, and, as it were, meet each other: Either if the object alone makes the representation possible, or if the representation alone makes the object possible.’ (A92/B124-5)

With regard to the second direction of dependence, Kant stresses that the relation he is envisaging is not one in which the representation makes the object possible as to its existence. That kind of dependence-relation can only hold in the case of practical cognition, and ‘...we are not here talking about its [the representation’s] causality by means of the will...’ (A92/B125). Rather, we should understand the representation as determinant of the object, not if the object owes its existence to the representation, but rather if it owes its *possession of a certain property* to the manner in which it is represented as having that property. In view of Kant’s metaphor of a ‘meeting’ of representation and object, we can call this second thesis ‘Cognitive Contact’ (CC):

CC: A representation *R* of an object *O* as *F* counts as cognition of *O* as *F* only if: either A) *O*’s being *F* makes *R* possible, or B) *R* makes *O*’s being *F* possible.

Here is not the place for an evaluation of CC;<sup>5</sup> the point to note is rather that, if one accepts CC together with the first thesis presented above, a pre-Copernican theory of cognition becomes obligatory. Suppose one holds that a central class of the properties we can cognize

---

<sup>4</sup> The reason for restricting the class of such properties is that I will take it that properties such as *meets the subjective conditions of cognition* (assuming them to be properties) trivially violate CI, and that Kant would hardly have expected his predecessors to have denied that claim (thanks to Andrew Stephenson for pointing this out). As will become clear, however, further specification of exactly how the relevant class of properties is to be limited will not be necessary for my presentation of the difference between the pre-Copernican and Copernican paradigms.

<sup>5</sup> Regarding an explanation of Kant’s advocacy of CC: there is at least one place in the Critique in which Kant considers a purported theory of cognition that rejects CC, namely in his consideration of the ‘preformation-system’ at the close of the B-Deduction (B167-8). This system holds that representations and objects, though isomorphic with one another, play no role in making one another possible, each owing their constitution instead to a divine ‘author’. Understanding and assessing the grounds on which Kant advocates CC will thus partly involve determining the nature of his objection to the preformation-system.

objects as possessing satisfy CI, and one also treats CC as imposing a legitimate constraint on a theory of cognition. Then, there is only one way of making intelligible how those properties can be cognized: by appealing to a relation of type-A above, on which the object's possession of the property makes possible its representation as possessing the property. Any properties that enter into cognition in virtue of a type-B relation, since they are made possible by their representation, violate CI; hence, acceptance of the first thesis excludes type-B relations from an account of cognition, at least with respect to a central class of the properties we can cognize. Accordingly, since the only other relations mandated by CC are type-A relations, such relations become paradigmatic in an account of the possibility of cognition. This, I suggest, is the core commitment of the pre-Copernican paradigm:

Representational Conformity: In the paradigm case, a representation  $R$  of an object  $O$  as  $F$  counts as cognition of  $O$  as  $F$  only if  $O$ 's being  $F$  makes  $R$  possible.

Thus, the pre-Copernican system links the conditions of a state's possession of representational content and the conditions of its status as cognition in a particular way. According to Conformity, it is standardly only states whose representational content is fundamentally explained by appeal to facts about the represented objects that are candidates for the status of cognition. In what follows, I will call any account of cognition that respects Representational Conformity a *conformist* account of cognition.

Now, if this picture of cognition is the one that Kant wishes to abandon, and if it is forced on us by the two theses presented above, then, given Kant's acceptance of CC, he must deny that the objects of cognition exhibit CI, at least in respect of a central class of their properties. In the next section, I argue that this is precisely the task undertaken in the Transcendental Aesthetic. Completion of this task, however, does not realize the Copernican turn, but only makes space for it: having rejected the pre-Copernican conception of the objects of our cognition, Kant must also articulate an alternative non-conformist account of cognition. In order to show that these are two genuinely distinct steps, I will show in the next two sections that the results of the Aesthetic are consistent with a conception of cognition that remains fundamentally pre-Copernican. Moreover, as I will show in section 3, this conformist model of cognition, as applied to empirical concepts, is one that Kant not only could, but apparently does, embrace. As we will see in section 4, this gives rise to a question about the nature and extent of Kant's Copernican turn which it will be the purpose of the remainder of the paper to answer.

## 2. The Aesthetic as Necessary but Insufficient Condition of the Copernican Turn

The Critique opens with the claim that the human cognitive capacity is constituted out of two mutually irreducible capacities: *sensibility*, a receptive, sensible capacity through which objects are given to the mind, and *understanding*, the spontaneous, intellectual capacity through which they are thought (A19/B33). As given to sensibility, an object is intuited; as thought through the understanding it is represented through concepts as exercised in

judgement (A19/B33; A50/B74-A52/B76; A68/B93-A69/B94). Transcendental aesthetic would be a science that studies sensibility in its a priori constitution (A21/B35), and Kant undertakes to establish and execute such a science in the section of the Critique of that name.

If the argument of the Aesthetic is successful, the objects of human cognition violate CI in respect of their spatiotemporal properties. The Aesthetic argues that objects, insofar as they are to appear in human sensibility, must possess spatiotemporal properties. But Kant goes further than this: he holds that objects do not possess spatiotemporal properties independently of their meeting the conditions of appearing in human sensibility: it is only insofar as they are subject to space and time as a priori forms of human intuition that objects possess spatiotemporal predicates at all, and such predicates accordingly cannot be conceived of as ‘determination[s]... that attach...to objects and that would remain even if one were to abstract from all subjective conditions of intuition’ (A26/B42; see also A30/B46 for the claim about time). Thus, Kant holds that objects do not possess spatiotemporal properties independently of meeting the sensible conditions of representation; since cognition requires sensible representation, the conditions of sensible intuition are at the same time conditions of cognition; and accordingly it follows that objects of cognition violate CI in respect of their spatiotemporal properties.

The point ramifies to any property that must be intuited to be cognized. Recall that a property violates CI if information regarding the subjective conditions under which it can be cognized is present in an account of the conditions under which it possesses the property. Now, if appearances (the objects of empirical intuition) are essentially spatiotemporal, then they can only possess properties insofar as those properties are spatiotemporally realized. This means that for any given property of an appearance, the fact that the appearance possesses spatiotemporal properties must always be cited as part of an explanation of how it possesses the specific property in question. But if we accept the central claim of the Aesthetic, the appearance’s possession of spatiotemporal properties is possible only if it is subject to the a priori forms of intuition. Thus, by the transitivity of the condition-of-possibility relation, every property of the appearance that is made possible by its possession of spatiotemporal properties will also be made possible by its being subject to the forms of intuition. If, in addition, the appearance must be subject to the a priori forms of intuition in order to be cognized as possessing the property in question, then facts concerning the subjective conditions of cognition of the property will be present in the list of conditions of possibility of the object’s possession of the property, and CI will be violated. It follows that any property of appearances that must be intuited to be cognized violates CI.

Now, my purpose here is not to evaluate Kant’s arguments, but rather to understand the commitments taken on vis-à-vis the rejection of the pre-Copernican paradigm if one accepts their conclusions. It is clear that the arguments of the Aesthetic, if accepted, completely dismantle the first thesis undergirding the pre-Copernican theory of cognition, at

least as that thesis was presented in part 1. Kant presumably holds that a central class of the properties that we can cognize objects as possessing must be intuited in order to be cognized; since all such properties violate CI, it cannot be true that a central class of the properties registered in cognition satisfy CI.

However, this does not spell the end for the pre-Copernican theory, because the results of the Aesthetic are compatible with a modified variant of the first thesis, which, if accepted, would open the way to a rearticulation of the pre-Copernican cognitive paradigm, albeit one that took place against the idealist backdrop of Kant's theory of cognition. Kant claims that the subjective conditions of cognition include both sensory and intellectual conditions. Now, for all the Aesthetic has shown, spatiotemporal objects could possess their sensible properties quite independently of meeting the *intellectual* conditions of cognition; in this case, although these properties would not exhibit cognition-independence, they *would* exhibit 'thought-independence', understood as follows:

(TI) A property *F* of an object *O* is thought-independent if and only if *O*'s possession of *F* is explanatorily independent of the subjective conditions of its being thought as *F*.

In this case, the first pre-Copernican thesis would resurface as the claim that objects of our cognition satisfy TI in respect of a central class of their properties. If we accepted this thesis, and continued to endorse CC, then we would be compelled to adopt a conformist account of the conditions under which judgement qualifies as cognition. If objects satisfy TI in respect of the properties we judge them to possess, then an act of judgement could not make possible the object's possession of the property, for this would violate TI. Given CC, cognition is only possible when there is a relation of dependence in one of two directions between the judgement and the object; since the relation cannot run from the judgement to the object on pain of violating TI, we will be forced to hold that judgement, insofar as it is to deliver cognition, is made possible by the state of the object. In this case, we will not have departed from the central pre-Copernican thesis of Representational Conformity, according to which the kind of representational relationship in which cognition is possible is one that is fundamentally to be explained by appeal to facts concerning the represented object. To borrow a phrase from Béatrice Longuenesse (1998, 17), we will be left with an 'internalization within representation' of precisely the account of cognition from which Kant claims to be turning. The Aesthetic, then, facilitates but does not accomplish the Copernican turn.

### 3. Empirical Content and the Model of Subsumption

Not only are the arguments of the Aesthetic *consistent* with a conformist account of cognition; as I will argue in this section, Kant makes direct appeal to the conformist model in his account of empirical conceptual content. If this is correct, then whilst the Copernican turn cannot consist in the mere rejection of CI, neither can it require the outright abandonment of the conformist model, and it will be the aim of the latter part of this essay to develop an interpretation that respects these constraints. The aim of the present section is to show how



Kant draws on the model of conformity in his account of empirical cognition and empirical conceptual content more generally.

In order to begin, it will be worth developing an account of Kant's understanding of the nature of conceptual content in general. In the sense of the term 'content' at play in the Critique, the content of a concept contrasts with its logical form:

'For every concept there is requisite, first, the logical form of a concept (of thinking) in general, and then, second, the possibility of giving it an object to which it is related. Without this latter it has no sense, and is entirely empty of content, even though it may still contain the logical function for making a concept out of whatever sort of *data* there are.' A239/B298

The possibility of bringing a logical form into relation with an object is a condition of its possessing content; and one obvious explanation here is that the content of a concept *just is* the relation it bears to an object in virtue of which it counts as a concept rather than a mere logical form. This explanation is consonant with Kant's repeated equation in the Critique of the content of a concept with its relation to an object.<sup>6</sup> On this account, then, a logical form can be a concept just insofar as it can be brought into certain relations with an object. How are we to understand these conceptuality-conferring relations? A representation is a concept insofar as it is the predicate of a possible judgement (A69/B94), and judgements may serve the purposes either of cognition or of thought. A concept can feature in cognition insofar as it can 'determine' or 'subsume' an object in sensory intuition; it can feature in thought insofar as it is compossible with other concepts to form a non-contradictory thought (Bxxvi). Now, Kant in the Phenomena and Noumena chapter loosely associates a concept's capacity to subsume an object with its possession of *use*, and its capacity to feature in thought with its possession of *significance*, and it will be congenial to adopt these terms in what follows. Thus, we can say that a mere logical form will count as a concept just insofar as it can be brought into relation with objects in such a way that it acquires either use or significance: distinctively *conceptual* content is that relation to objects in virtue of which logical forms acquire use or significance.

Now, Kant claims that the faculty by which concepts are put to use in cognition is the power of judgement, which is presented in the first Critique as a capacity for discerning rule-governed unity in the given manifold (A132/B171). Moreover, concepts are only fit for use by the power of judgement insofar as they are associated with 'schemata'. For a concept to subsume an object, it must be 'schematized', and it is 'schematized' when it is brought into 'homogeneity' with an object that is given in intuition. Roughly, the idea is that a concept is homogenous with an object in intuition when it is possible to view the intuited object

---

<sup>6</sup> See, eg, A57/B81, and Tolley (2012b) for further citations and compelling argument for the association of the two notions.

as instantiating the ‘marks’ or properties abstractly thought together in the concept. This homogeneity is made possible by the schema of the concept, which guides the power of judgement in its efforts to discern unity in the sensible manifold. In the case of empirical concepts, this guidance is supplied by a rule for the construction and recognition of a sensible image that ‘corresponds’ to the concept. Here, the schema is a specific rule governing the ‘apprehension’ and ‘reproduction’ of the given manifold, whereby one recognises certain ways in which the manifold unfolds as tending towards an image that corresponds to the concept. Thus, the schematism of the empirical concept sensitizes the subject to certain distinctive sensible trajectories.<sup>7</sup>

A proper treatment of Kant’s doctrine of schematism, and the complex theory of transcendental imagination in terms of which it is parsed, goes well beyond the scope of the present essay. For present purposes all that is important is the claim that the schema of an empirical concept sensitizes the subject to certain distinctive combinations of sensation, and allows the subject to mark these salient combinations by thinking them under the schematized concept. What is important is thus that, insofar as they are associated with schemata, empirical concepts constitute *discriminatory capacities*; and hence it is only as discriminatory capacities that empirical concepts possess one central kind of conceptual content, namely that through which they can be granted a use. We can attribute this claim to Kant absent an interpretation of the complex mechanisms by which such capacities are instituted and sustained.

Now, insofar as they are associated with schemata, empirical concepts constitute an ability to attribute an object properties on the basis of the way in which it is present in sensation. Thus, the possibility of the object’s being cognized through schematized empirical concepts is to be explained partly by appeal to the manner in which its properties are manifested in sensation; and since sensations are present in sensibility independently of their being thought under concepts, it follows that the sensible properties cognized through empirical concepts are properties that satisfy TI: properties that an appearance possesses independently of the conditions of its being thought. In this case, empirical cognition, to the extent that it acquaints us with properties of an object that are given through sensation, must be understood as a kind of cognition that is made possible by and hence conforms to the object. And this is exactly what Kant claims. In the passage in which he introduces the requirement of Cognitive Contact, Kant claims that the cognition-enabling dependence runs from the object to the conceptual representation of the object ‘with appearance in respect of that in it which belongs to sensation’ (A92/B125). It thus seems that the pre-Copernican model plays a central role in Kant’s account of empirical cognition.

---

7 For recent interpretations along these lines, which associate empirical schemata with rules governing the apprehension and reproduction of the manifold of sensation, see Allison (2004, 208-210) Longuenesse, (1998, 50), and Pendelbury (1995, especially 785).

In fact, the model of conformity informs Kant's account of empirical conceptual content *uberhaupt*. Above it was claimed that logical forms possess conceptual content only insofar as they can be related to objects in such a way as to possess *use* (a role in cognition) or *significance* (a role in thinking). It is plausible that at least a central class of empirical concepts also rely on their schemata as a condition of their possession, not only of use, but also of significance. That is to say, if one abstracted from the association of an empirical concept with a schema, it could no longer contribute to the representational content of an act of thinking. Now, for this claim to have any textual or philosophical plausibility, we must be clear about the sense in which schema and concept must be related. The claim here is not that an empirical concept can only feature in thought insofar as it is *currently being schematized*. Kant is not committed to the absurd claim that, eg, 'the table is red' can only express a thought as long as I take my current perceptual experience to present me with a red table. This sentence can express a thought whether or not I take myself to be undergoing experiences which present me with the relevant objects; hence its constituent concepts can possess significance in abstraction from their *being schematized*. However, it is less clear that they can possess significance in abstraction from their very *association with schemata*. Considered in this manner, the concepts do not constitute discriminatory capacities, and thus crediting a subject with a grasp of the concepts so understood would not involve crediting the subject with the capacity to indicate in intuition the kind of object she is thinking about when she uses the concepts. *Can* such a subject think with these concepts? Does such a subject express a thought with the sentence 'the table is red'? Now, Kant states in the Preface that we can think using concepts provided that we can combine them in a non-contradictory manner in judgement (Bxxvi). Clearly, the subject under consideration is combining concepts in a non-contradictory manner, and hence succeeds in thinking *something* with the sentence under consideration, but what is less clear is that the concepts <table> and <red> are making any distinctive contribution to what is being thought. Given that the subject cannot indicate in intuition the kinds of things she is talking about, it seems that there is nothing left to distinguish her thought from the very general thought that there is a substance which possesses a property. But since concepts such as <substance> and <property> are thought as constituent marks of all empirical concepts, there will be nothing left to distinguish the empirical concepts <table> and <red>, as they feature in this subject's thinking, from others. Thus there is nothing left of *these particular-concepts* to feature in thought: there is no thinking left to be done which would count as an exercise of these empirical concepts as opposed to others. In this case, empirical concepts lose their capacity to make a distinctive contribution to the representational content of a thought when they are considered in abstraction from their association with schemata.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> Thanks to James Kreines for pressing me to clarify this point. It must be admitted that it is difficult to find direct textual evidence to supplement the systematic basis presented above for attributing this doctrine to Kant. However, one

Thus, removing the condition of use of empirical concepts at the same time removes their condition of significance. In this case, it is only insofar as they are associated with schemata that empirical concepts possess conceptual content at all. This makes for a unitary notion of empirical content, which can be understood on the conformist paradigm. Empirical concepts relate to objects in the manner required for them to possess content just insofar as they are capable through their schemata of tracking the sensibly manifested properties of objects. Since empirical schemata may only be generated if an object manifests sensible properties, and since empirical concepts owe their content to their association with schemata, empirical conceptual content would be impossible if objects were not present in sensibility. This yields a clear sense in which empirical concepts are a species of representation made possible by the object, as the conformist model requires. Thus it appears that, consistently with the results of the Aesthetic, Kant can and does model empirical conceptual content on the paradigm of conformity.

In what follows, I will call the kind of content possessed by empirical concepts ‘subsumptive content’. Rather than identifying empirical and subsumptive content, I will treat empirical conceptual content as a species of subsumptive content. A concept has such content if and only if it owes both its use and significance to its capacity to track sensibly given features of objects; a being capable of registering features of objects in a priori sensibility could therefore possess subsumptive a priori concepts. On the assumption that the subsumptive model gives us the only intelligible explanation of how a concept could depend on an object for its very possibility, I will also assume that *only* concepts that possess subsumptive content stand in a conformist relation to objects.

#### 4. The Transcendental Content of the Pure Categories

Now, this establishes that the Copernican turn cannot consist in the complete excision of the conformist paradigm. Nevertheless, it must involve more than the mere rejection of the thesis that objects of cognition satisfy CI in respect of their cognizable properties. First, we have just seen that this result alone is compatible with a theory of cognition that bears all the hallmarks of the conformist account. Second, Kant explicitly states in the Preface that the Copernican turn cannot stop with intuitions, but must also be extended to concepts (Bxvii), thus we could hardly expect the turn to be completed in the Aesthetic, before Kant’s analysis of conceptual representation has even begun. The challenge is thus to see how Kant can extend his Copernicanism into his account of conceptual representation consistently with the conformist presuppositions of his account of empirical conceptual content.

---

promising textual source is in the Schematism chapter, A141/B180, in which Kant claims that empirical concepts are ‘... always immediately related to the schema of the imagination’, and appears to distinguish empirical concepts from both categories and pure sensible concepts on this basis.

As a first step to meeting this challenge, I argue in this section that Kant at least intends to augment his account of content by allowing for a kind of content which cannot be understood on the subsumptive model. In the Phenomena and Noumena chapter, Kant claims that the coincidence of conditions of use and significance seen to obtain for empirical concepts does not obtain in the case of the categories. Explaining how these conditions diverge requires positing a new kind of conceptual content for the pure categories which Kant calls ‘transcendental significance’ and also ‘transcendental content’. The concept of the transcendental object has its origin in a specification of this distinctive kind of content.

The categories are a priori concepts of objects. Their empirical use consists in their representing intuited objects in such a way that it is determined which logical place in judgement the representation of that object should occupy. Here is Kant’s example in relation to the concept <body>:

‘They [the categories] are concepts of an object in general, by means of which its intuition is regarded as **determined** with regard to one of the **logical functions** for judgements... Through the category of substance... if I bring the concept of a body under it, it is determined that its empirical intuition in experience must always be considered as subject, never as mere predicate...’ (B128-9)

Just as in the case of empirical concepts, the categories are of use in cognizing given objects insofar as they are associated with their schemata, which Kant identifies as ‘transcendental time determinations’. Thus, to pursue the present example, the schema for substance is persistence of the real in time: by recognizing something as a permanent substratum, which endures while other things change, one recognizes it as the sort of thing that can only be represented in the subject-position in judgement, and thereby schematizes the category of substance (A144/B183).

If one abstracts away from the association of the category with its schema, one is left with the ‘pure category’, in which abstraction is made from the specifically temporal form of human intuition (A245). Thus, for example, the concept of substance as permanence of the real in time contracts to become the bare representation of ‘something that can occur only as subject (without being a predicate of anything)’ (A242/B300).

What is the status of the pure categories? While Kant is at pains to insist that they are deprived of any empirical use, he nevertheless grants them in the Phenomena and Noumena chapter what he calls ‘transcendental significance’ (A248/B305). As we will see, this has implications for our understanding of the nature of conceptual content in general.

In the case of empirical concepts, use and significance are biconditionally related, and both obtain in virtue of a concept’s capacity to subsume an object. This made for a unitary notion of empirical conceptual content on the model of conformity to an intuitively given object, which I called subsumptive content. Now Kant has granted the categories transcen-

dental significance in the absence of empirical use. In order to save the unitary notion of conceptual content in the present case, therefore, we would have to say that, though the pure categories do not subsume a sensible object, they *do* subsume a non-sensible object, one that is given to the intellect alone. This would explain the possibility of a non-empirical significance of the categories in a manner that salvaged the connection between the possibility of cognitive content and the possibility of subsumption of an object: we could explain the possibility of a transcendental significance of the categories by attributing them a transcendental use. But Kant's claim is precisely that the pure categories 'have merely transcendental significance, but are not of any transcendental use' (A248/B305; cf. A139/B178). It is precisely Kant's aim in the Phenomena and Noumena chapter to explain the non-empirical significance of the categories without claiming that they subsume a special non-empirical object.

In order to do this, Kant challenges the identification of conceptual content *per se* with the possibility of subsumption of an object. Though content and the possibility of subsumption are biconditionally related in the case of empirical concepts, this relationship does not hold in the case of the categories. Attention to the case of empirical concepts tempted us to equate the very notion of relation to objects with that of (possible) subsumption of objects. However, against this Kant argues that subsumption of objects is only a species of which relation to objects is the genus. There is also another kind of purely intellectual relation to objects that can obtain independently of the possibility of subsumption of objects. Concepts that possess this kind of relation will be capable of figuring in thought and will thus possess significance, but since the relation is not subsumptive they will not thereby possess use. Thus, in the case of the categories the conditions of significance depart from the conditions of use, and there is a special kind of content that accrues to the categories merely in virtue of their possession of significance. This special kind of content Kant calls transcendental significance (A248/B305), and elsewhere, 'transcendental content' (A79/B105).

Only in the context of Kant's account of transcendental significance can we understand the significance of the concept of the transcendental object. This, I suggest, is a concept that has its origin in a specification of the distinctive nature of transcendental content. It was claimed above that conceptual content is a kind of relation between representations and objects. Thus, specifying kinds of conceptual content will be a matter of specifying the nature of the relation, and, connectedly, the nature of its relata. Now, some of the concepts under which we can bring an object present the object just insofar as it is fit to be the relatum of certain kinds of conceptual content. These concepts, although they concern the object, are themselves internal to the specification of the nature of a kind of content: they present an object in such a way as to make intelligible how it is suited to supply a certain kind of content to a representation. Now, the kinds of concepts under which we can bring the objects in this manner will depend on the kinds of concepts under which we bring the associated cognitive relation. For example, when the relation in question is

subsumptive, the concept will need to specify an object in terms of those features in virtue of which it is apt to be represented through an act of subsumption. Clearly, an object would not be apt to supply a concept with empirical subsumptive content if it was not presented in intuition, and thus concepts that present an object as given in intuition will be internal to the specification of subsumptive content. Thus, for example, the concept <appearance>, since it is the concept of an object as presented in empirical intuition (A20/B34), must be part of the specification of empirical subsumptive significance, since part of what is involved in an object's being susceptible of empirical subsumption is its being given in empirical intuition. Likewise, if the pure categories were related to objects through subsumption of an object given in non-sensible intuition, then the proper concept with which to specify the object of transcendental significance, just insofar as it is such an object, would be a concept that presented the object as given to non-sensible intuition – the (positive)<sup>9</sup> concept of a noumenon (A249/B305).

Thus, the concepts <appearance> and <noumenon> cannot be appealed to in a specification of the nature of transcendental content. Of course, it may very well be that objects that fall under the concepts <appearance> and <noumenon> are among the objects to which the categories are related in their transcendental significance. The point is simply that, since the pure categories possess transcendental significance without subsuming given objects, it cannot be the case that the objects of transcendental significance, just insofar as they are such objects, can be given to intuition. Thus, it cannot be the case that objects fall under concepts such as <appearance> or <noumenon> just insofar as they are topics of transcendental significance; hence, such concepts cannot be internal to the specification of transcendental significance. Kant's Copernican articulation of a new kind of relation to objects accordingly demands a new concept of the object.

That this is the concept of the transcendental object is made clear in the following important passage:

‘Thinking is the action of relating given intuitions to an object. If the manner of this intuition is not given in any way [i.e if we abstract from the sensible schemata of concepts], then the object is merely transcendental... Now through a pure category, in which abstraction is made from any condition of sensible intuition as the only one that is possible for us, no object is determined, rather only the thought of an object in general is expressed in accordance with different *modi*.’ (A247/B304)

Insofar as it is the relatum of pure transcendental significance, the object is ‘merely transcendental’: the concept of the transcendental object is thus the concept under which we bring an object just insofar as we view it as susceptible of representation through the pure

---

<sup>9</sup> See B307.

categories. This is not a concept that presents the object as given to intuition: it merely presents the object as possessing the features of an 'object in general'. But if the fundamental features of an object 'in general' are thought through the pure categories, and the pure categories present an object insofar as it is thinkable through logical functions, it follows that the features of an object in general are those in virtue of which it is a possible topic of judgement. Thus, the object is thought under the concept of the transcendental object just insofar as it is thought as a possible topic of judgement.<sup>10</sup>

Thus, the categories, by relating to the transcendental object, are transcendentially related to all possible objects of judgement. But this relation to the transcendental object is not instituted through an act of subsumption. The concept <transcendental object> does not denote a special entity which comes before the intellect, to be subsumed under the pure categories: it is '...no object of cognition in itself' (A250), and hence '...cannot be called the **noumenon**' (A253).<sup>11</sup> How, then, is the relation to the transcendental object set into place? The pure categories depict objects as regards their form as possible objects of judgement; if they are not related to their objects through an act of subsumption, this means that they do not acquaint us with the form of objects by recognising that form as instantiated in some given object of pure intellectual subsumption. That is to say, the categories do not represent the form of possible objects in virtue of a capacity to conform to those objects. Rather than registering the form of possible objects, as manifested in a noumenal object, the categories '...anticipate the form of a possible experience in general...' (A246/B303, my emphasis). It is in virtue of their capacity to anticipate objects rather than to subsume them that the categories can signify the forms of possible objects of judgement. Now, an *anticipatory* representational relation to the object does not sound like a relation that is fundamentally to be explained by appeal to facts about the object. If we could make sense of cognition on the model of anticipation, therefore, we would have the makings of a non-conformist model of cognition. Thus, the pure categories testify to a fundamentally

---

10 This reading has significant affinities with that developed by George in his unduly neglected (1974). George claims that the concept of the transcendental object is the most fundamental concept under which we bring an object insofar as we conceive of it as the referent of concepts as they feature in acts of empirical judgement (1974, 189-90). I am in substantial agreement with George here, though I deny that the concept merely designates an entity insofar as it is the topic of *empirical* judgement; then it would have to designate the entity as subsumed. Rather, it designates an entity just insofar as it is the topic of *any* kind of judgement, and this is why it specifies the kind of entity thought through the pure categories. Nevertheless, I owe to George my basic interpretative strategy of viewing the concept <transcendental object> as one under which we bring objects just insofar as we conceive of them as possessing certain distinctive relations to our cognitive capacity – a strategy George extends to the concept <thing in itself>, which he presents as the most fundamental concept under which we bring an entity when we conceive of it as the cause of our experience (1974, 189-90). However, neither George nor any of the commentators on the transcendental object with whom I am familiar makes explicit the connection of the concept with Kant's doctrine of the pure categories (cf. Allison (1968), Bird (1962), Paton (1936)).

11 See also Kant's claim at A157/B196 that there is no 'pure object' in relation to which the agreement of pure concepts in a synthetic a priori proposition could be grounded.



new kind of representational relationship with objects, and to the extent that this relationship could be understood as yielding cognition, we have the materials for a non-conformist model of cognition.

The distinctive kind of content in virtue of which the categories are related to the transcendental object is referred to by Kant as transcendental significance, and elsewhere as transcendental content. Now, it is plausible to regard the discipline that Kant entitled ‘transcendental logic’ as a study of this distinctive kind of content. In the introduction to the *Transcendental Analytic*, Kant introduces the idea of a transcendental logic by contrasting it with its ‘general’ counterpart (A55/B79-A57/B82). Although both logics take thought as their subject-matter, transcendental logic lifts an abstraction that is present in general logic: transcendental logic does not abstract from the fact that thought has ‘content’ (A55/B80). That is, transcendental logic does not abstract from the fact that thought is related to objects.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, transcendental logic focusses on the content that pertains to the ‘pure thinking of objects’, and in focussing on this kind of content, it *thereby* excludes all cognitions that possess ‘empirical content’. This suggests that the content of pure thinking is different in kind to that of empirical thinking, and the present interpretation of the pure categories has an explanation here: the content of empirical thinking is a kind of representational relation that is fundamentally, although only in part, to be explained by appeal to the sensible presence of the object; the content of pure thinking through the categories is a kind of representational relationship which cannot be explained by appeal to the intuitive presence of the object. And indeed this is exactly what Kant claims: *in* concerning itself with the ‘rules of the pure thinking of an object’, transcendental logic *thereby* i) excludes cognitions that are of empirical content, and ii) addresses ‘...the origin of our cognition of objects insofar as that cannot be ascribed to the objects...’ (A56/B80). Insofar as our cognition does not owe itself to the presence of the object, it is founded on an act of anticipation: transcendental logic is a study of the anticipatory content of the pure categories. Thus, the two disciplines of transcendental aesthetic and transcendental logic correspond to the two steps of Kant’s Copernican turn: while the Aesthetic rejects the conception of property-possession which made a conformist model of cognition seem obligatory, it is only through transcendental logic that Kant develops the explanatory resources for a positive articulation of a non-conformist model of cognition.

Though this resolves the question of where in the text we can expect the Copernican turn to be completed, it leaves unsettled questions about the scope of the turn, and indeed superficially suggests an answer that I will reject in the next section. In the Preface, the chief motivation for departing from the conformist paradigm is that, according to Kant, it cannot

---

12 Note that even if one wishes to contest the claim that the content as relation to objects conception is consistently employed throughout the *Critique*, there can be little doubt that it is operative in the present passage: Kant has explicitly glossed the notion of content in these terms two sentences earlier.

make sense of the possibility of a priori cognition of objects (Bxvi). This makes it appear that Kant's complaint against the conformist paradigm is restricted to its treatment of a priori knowledge-claims; in this case, perhaps Kant only seeks to depart from the conformist model as regards a priori cognition. The fact that Kant restricts transcendental logic to a study of the *pure* thinking of objects seems to encourage this picture. Moreover, we saw in the last section that Kant's Copernican philosophy *does* make appeal to the conformist model in its account of empirical cognition. In this case, then, it might be tempting to hive off Kant's account of empirical knowledge from his account of a priori knowledge, and claim that the Copernican turn consists in the rejection of CI together with the articulation of a non-conformist account of a priori cognition, but leaves intact the conformist model with regard to empirical cognition. This is the kind of reading that Engstrom (2006, 7) calls a 'cut-and-paste' reading of the Copernican philosophy, and it might seem to be forced on us by the apparent restriction of transcendental logic, and the apparent centrality of the model of subsumption in Kant's account of empirical cognition.

Our present question about the scope of Kant's Copernican turn is thus also a question about the scope of transcendental logic. Clinton Tolley (2012a) has recently asked whether transcendental logic should be granted the same generality as general logic, or whether it should be restricted to some sub-region of human thought – a priori as opposed to a posteriori knowledge-claims; or synthetic as opposed to analytic judgement; or thought that is restricted in some way to the spatiotemporal manifold given in human intuition. Now, it is only in regard to thinking that exhibits the transcendental content studied by transcendental logic that Kant has the resources to articulate a non-conformist paradigm of cognition. Thus, restricting the scope of his transcendental logic thereby restricts the scope of his Copernican turn. Tolley produces compelling grounds for viewing the generality of transcendental logic as every bit as unrestricted as that of general logic. But if we are to accept this conclusion, we must also show that Kant applied a non-conformist paradigm to all possible cognition. The aim of the final part of this essay is to show just this, and to do so in a manner that respects the role of the pre-Copernican paradigm in Kant's account of empirical cognition. I will do so by appeal to a reading of the aims and basic strategy of the transcendental deduction, with particular focus on the role of the transcendental object in the first-edition Deduction.

## 5. The Transcendental Deduction and the Possibility of Subsumption

The distinction between subsumptive and transcendental content sheds light on the purpose of the transcendental deduction: the primary task of the transcendental deduction of the categories is to show that and how empirical thought is possible. This initially sounds surprising: the avowed task of the deduction is to prove that the categories have legitimate application to the objects of experience (A89-91/B122-23). But the two tasks come to the same thing. This becomes clear when we consider the relationship between transcendental

and subsumptive content. It was claimed above that an entity is a topic of transcendental significance and hence falls under the concept of the transcendental object just insofar as it is fit to be the subject-matter of judgement. Now, concepts only possess content insofar as they can be exercised in judgement, and hence objects can only supply concepts with content if they are fit to be represented by those concepts through judgement. The object of subsumptive significance, insofar as it is the kind of entity that can be present in empirical intuition, is an appearance. However, for this object to supply representations with *conceptual* significance, it must also be a possible topic of judgement, and hence must fall under the concept of the transcendental object. Thus, showing that appearances are among the objects to which the categories are related in their transcendental significance is of a piece with showing how appearances could supply the input to empirical conceptual content.

Given that appearances violate CI, they possess properties in virtue of meeting the conditions of their being cognized. One of the conditions of appearances' being cognized is their being given in a certain way in empirical intuition, and they possess many of their properties in virtue of meeting this condition. These are the properties tracked by empirical concepts in their subsumptive significance, and accordingly it is possible to verify the objective validity of an empirical concept simply by consulting experience to see whether it does in fact exhibit the sensory properties thought in the concept. With regard to such concepts '...we always have experience at hand ready to prove their objective reality.' (A84/B117)

It is crucial to note, however, that appearances cannot fall under the concept of the transcendental object in virtue of their way of being given in intuition; for this would be inconsistent with the transcendental significance of the categories, as is made clear by the following considerations. When an object falls under a concept in virtue of its way of being given in intuition, it satisfies TI, which, together with CC, entails that cognition of the object be conformist in character, and Kant applies the conformist model to empirical cognition with his subsumptive model of content. Thus, if appearances fell under the concept of the transcendental object in virtue of their way of being given, then the categories, insofar as they allowed us to think appearances under the concept of the transcendental object, would be subsumptive in character. However, I claimed above that concepts which possess subsumptive content in this manner are not fit for use in thought in abstraction from their association with schemata; but the central point of the Phenomena and Noumena section is that the categories *are* fit for use in thought in abstraction from their schemata. Thus, any objective concept under which appearances fall in virtue of their way of being given, since it cannot possess significance independently of the conditions of its empirical use, *is not* the concept of the transcendental object, and any concepts that allow us to cognize appearances as falling under such an objective concept are *not* the categories, at least as they are presented in the Phenomena and Noumena section.

The fact that the transcendental object cannot be understood as applying to experiences in virtue of picking out some feature of sensation, I suggest, is what Kant is attempting

to flag when he says that it is equal to 'X' (A104-5, A109). The object is equal to X because there is no isolable element of the empirical manifold to which we are responding in our use of the concept, with which we could equate the transcendental object; just as it was a mistake to view the transcendental object as being a topic of cognition in virtue of being given in intellectual intuition, it would be a mistake to claim that it is a topic of cognition in virtue of being given in empirical intuition. It is rather a concept that '...cannot contain any determinate intuition at all' (A109). Thus, to the extent that appearances are cognizable under the concept, they cannot be so cognizable in virtue of features of the way in which they are given in intuition.

So, we have the following result: if appearances fall under the concept of the transcendental object, then, given that they violate CI, they must do so in virtue of their conditions of being cognized; but they cannot do so in virtue of their sensible conditions of being cognized, for insofar as an object falls under a concept in virtue of its sensible conditions of cognition, it can only be brought under concepts that possess subsumptive content, and the categories possess transcendental content. Now, this means that the only possible route to showing that appearances fall under the concept is showing that they do so in virtue of some non-sensible condition of their cognition; that is, if appearances are to fall under the concept of the transcendental object, they must do so, not in virtue of their way of being given, but in virtue of their way of being thought. Since they are thought through acts of subsumption, Kant must investigate the nature of subsumption in order to show that, just in virtue of the manner in which they are subsumed, appearances are thought as falling under the concept of the transcendental object.

This strategy is most clearly on display in the propaedeutic presentation of the deduction in the first-edition (A99-114). There, in his discussion of the threefold synthesis (A98-104), Kant presents an elaborate characterisation of the discriminatory processes by which appearances are subsumed under empirical concepts. Then, Kant attempts to show that, just in virtue of the form of the activity of subsumption, we think appearances under the concept of the transcendental object, that is, represent them as yielding a possible topic for judgement. Kant's claim is that we think appearances this way just when we become conscious in a certain way of the status of our acts of subsumption. We think appearances under the concept of the transcendental object just insofar as we view the rule governing their subsumption as one that could be indefinitely reapplied (A105), and one which, in some manner, represents the sensory elements of the manifold as necessarily connected with one another (A106). The concept of the transcendental object, Kant claims, is thought through our empirical predicates whenever those predicate are applied to the appearance on the basis of a rule of which we are conscious in this manner. Moreover, this way of becoming conscious of the rule of subsumption is not optional: it is only by becoming conscious of the rule in this manner that the subject can think its necessary self-identity (A107-8), and

hence it is only by being subsumed in this manner that appearances can belong to a single experience.

Clearly, an assessment or even a full presentation of this intricate argument goes well beyond the scope of the present work. The point to note is that it is in the transcendental deduction that Kant must articulate a non-conformist account of the relation of cognition to its object, and the subjective deduction is well understood if viewed in this light. Kant in the subjective deduction is trying to show how an anticipation of the form of the object as possible topic of judgement is built in to the very form of subsumptive awareness. In order to complete the transcendental deduction, Kant must show that appearances are thinkable under the concept of the transcendental object in virtue of their meeting the conditions of cognition. Nevertheless, in order to respect the transcendental significance of the categories, Kant cannot claim appearances are so thinkable in virtue of their way of being given. Thus, Kant must show i) that appearances are thinkable under the concept of the transcendental object in virtue of an act of thought that is contained within the act of subsumption; and ii) that this act is itself a condition of the possibility of experience. He executes this strategy in the passage cited above by i) tracing the representation of the transcendental object to our consciousness of the unity of the rule of subsumption; and ii) claiming that this consciousness is a condition of bringing representations to the original unity of apperception. Whatever we are to make of i) and ii), by situating the Deduction in the context of the Copernican turn we can at least make sense of why Kant should be arguing for these claims at this point in the text.

Hence, the Copernican turn will be consummated, if at all, in the transcendental deduction. Once completed, the Copernican turn will show that appearances can provide empirical thought with subsumptive content only if subsumption itself involves a spontaneous act of thought which determines the appearance in accordance with the concept of the transcendental object.

## Conclusion

Kant's Copernican turn consists in showing that intuited objects acquire the properties in virtue of which they are topics of possible judgement through an act of thought, which I have called an anticipation in accordance with the categories. Since empirical thinking and cognition can only take place in relation to a possible object of judgement, it follows that such thinking must itself incorporate an act of anticipation, and it is the purpose of the transcendental deduction is to show how this could be so. Accordingly, empirical thought is remodelled in terms unavailable in the pre-Copernican system, because it is understood as incorporating a kind of representational content – transcendental content – which cannot be explained by citing the sensibly given features of objects. Nevertheless, this does not spell the end of the conformist model of empirical cognition: to the extent that the object

is the subject-matter of judgement, it conforms to our mode of cognition; but to the extent that it exhibits a sensory profile in intuition, it is that to which our cognition must conform.

Kant sometimes expresses this balance by emphasizing that this idealism is purely 'formal' (B519n): while the mind is responsible for the basic forms of objects, qua intuited and thought about, it is not the originator of their sensible matter: we cannot view the mind as supplying itself with the sensations that are present in intuition, and to the extent that it registers the sensibly given features of objects, it stands in a genuinely conformist relation to its object. The task of the deduction is to show how this conformist relation to the object can co-exist with, and indeed constitutively involve, an anticipation of the form of the object in accordance with the concept of the transcendental object. Thus, Kant's Copernican turn, if successful, will achieve a sublation of the very distinction in terms of which it is introduced: he will have shown that the object must conform to the mind as a condition of the mind's conforming to the object.

## References

- Kant, I. (1781,1787/1998). *Critique of Pure Reason*. transl. and ed. Guyer, P. and A. Wood. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Allison, H. E. (1968). 'Kant's Concept of the Transcendental Object'. *Kant-Studien*, 59 (1-4): 165-86
- Allison, H. E. (2004). *Kant's Transcendental Idealism: An Interpretation and Defense, Revised and Enlarged Edition*. New Haven: Yale University Press
- Bird, G. (1962). *Kant's Theory of Knowledge: An Outline of One Central Argument in the Critique of Pure Reason*. New York: Humanities Press
- Engstrom, S. (2006). 'Understanding and Sensibility'. *Inquiry* 49 (2006): 2–25
- George, R. (1974). 'Transcendental Object and Thing in Itself: The Distinction and its Antecedents'. *Kant-Studien Supplementary Issue*, 186-195
- Longuenesse, B. (1998). *Kant and the Capacity to Judge: Sensibility and Discursivity in the Transcendental Analytic of the Critique of Pure Reason*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press
- Paton, H. J. (1936). *Kant's Metaphysic of Experience, Volumes I and II*, London: Allen and Unwin.
- Pendelbury, M. (1995). 'Making Sense of Kant's Schematism'. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 55 (4): 777-797
- Tolley, C. (2012a). 'The Generality of Kant's Transcendental Logic'. *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 50 (3):417-446.
- Tolley, C. (2012b) 'Kant on the Content of Cognition'. *European Journal of Philosophy*, 20 (4):200-228