

# Transcendental Unity of Apperception In Kant's Theory of Knowledge

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# Transcendental Unity of Apperception In Kant's Theory of Knowledge

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## Abstract

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This article aims at delineating Kant's theory of understanding that integrate subject and object at the transcendent level. Transcendental here refers to the process of thinking in such a way that 'transcends' natural thinking. It is called transcendental for it occupied not so much with objects, but much about a metaphysical solution on how the object related to the subject. It starts with transcendental deduction by relating the objective with the subjective knowledge. Here he excludes transcendental deduction from the discussion of the empirical deduction. Afterward he differentiates the metaphysical deduction from transcendental deduction, in which he identifies transcendental deduction as the explanation of the way in which a priori concept can relate to object. The most important concept in Transcendental deduction is that of apperception. The analysis of this concept involve two abilities that later become two important steps: First ability of apprehending (reproducing and recognizing) knowledge of empirical truths. Second, ability of apprehending (reproducing and recognizing) knowledge of a non-empirical kind. Thus the general feature is the view that knowledge involve essentially the ability to judge (synthesize or combine) and the move from what is true empirically of our knowledge to what is true transcendently. This is spontaneous act of mind and is called pure apperception or original apperception, while the principle that governs the unity of consciousness is entitled the Transcendental Unity of Apperception.

**Keywords:** Apperception, Subject-Object, Deduction, Transcendental Truth

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### Abstrak

Makalah ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan teori Kant tentang pemahaman yang mengintegrasikan subjek dan objek pada tingkat transenden. Yang dimaksud *transendental* di sini merujuk kepada proses berfikir yang mentransendensikan berfikir alami. Disebut *transendent* karena proses ini tidak banyak membicarakan objek, tapi lebih banyak tentang solusi metafisis tentang bagaimana objek berkaitan dengan subyek. Ini dimulai dari deduksi *transendental* dengan mengkaitkan pengetahuan objektif dengan pengetahuan subyektif. Di sini ia mengesampingkan deduksi *transenden* dari diskusi tentang deduksi empiris. Setelah itu ia membedakan deduksi metafisik dari deduksi *transendental*, di mana ia mengidentifikasi deduksi *transendental* sebagai penjelasan tentang cara dimana konsep *a priori* dapat berkaitan dengan objek. Konsep terpenting dalam deduksi *transenden* adalah konsep *apersepsi*. Analisa konsep ini melibatkan dua kemampuan yang kemudian menjadi dua langkah penting: pertama, kemampuan memahami (*mereproduksi* dan *mengenal*) pengetahuan tentang kebenaran empiris. Kedua, kemampuan memahami (*mereproduksi* dan *mengenal*) jenis pengetahuan yang *non-empiris*. Jadi gambaran umumnya adalah pandangan-pandangan bahwa pengetahuan itu melibatkan secara mendasar kemampuan menyimpulkan (*sintesis* atau *mencampur*) dan memindahkannya dari pengetahuan kita yang benar secara empiris menjadi benar secara *transenden*. Ini adalah kerja otak kita yang spontan dan ini disebut *appersepsi murni* atau *appersepsi asli* sedangkan prinsip yang mengatur *kesatuan kesadaran* itu disebut *Kesatuan Transenden Apersepsi*.

**Kata Kunci:** Apersepsi, Subyek-Objek, Deduksi, Kepercayaan Transenden

### Introduction

Kant is known as a philosopher who integrate the rationalism and empiricism. Kant's idea of apperception is something to do with the power of understanding and renders one of the most important part of his epistemology. The idea, in general, is an attempt to solve the problem how things that are object-related can be possibly fit together with those that are subject-related. In more specific notion the theory tries to clarify how our concepts refer to items in reality or how our inner thought and judgment can be objectively true of the external world. The current discussion will try to examine the extent to which the idea of transcendental unity

of apperception can satisfactorily solve the problem. In order to grasp the complete argument of Kant's program to maintain the inseparability of the subject-object related phenomena we shall, at the outset, trace directly his concept of *transcendental deduction*.

### Transcendental Deduction

In Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* the transcendental unity of apperception is placed under the chapter "The deduction of the Pure Concept of Understanding", but Kant presents its detail exposition from the principle of transcendental deduction and *the a priori* grounds of the possibility of experience. These two sections of *Critique* are complex expositions which aimed at justifying the validity of our empirical knowledge and it seems to be the core of Kant's *Critique* and the foundation of his whole critical edifice.

Kant calls the transcendental deduction "Analytic of Concepts" that deals with the *a priori* concepts where the understanding uses to construct experience together with the *a priori* forms of our sensible intuition (space and time). These *a priori* concepts is named "categories". The goal of the transcendental deduction is to show that we have *a priori* concepts or categories that are objectively valid, or that apply necessarily to all objects in the world that we experience. Therefore, according to Kant the categories are necessary conditions of experience, or that we could not have experience without the categories. To clarify further the meaning of *Deduction* Kant exemplifies it in terms of legal action. Usually jurist questions what is right (*quid juris*) and not what is the fact (*quid facti*). Here the concept of understanding with regard to *quid facti* is the result of the experience where the employment of *a priori* concept or categories is necessary, while various concepts which form a highly complicated human knowledge come out of *a priori* employment independent from experience. Karl Jasper interprets what is meant by deduction in Kant's views refers to the grounding of the objective validity of *a priori* concepts.<sup>1</sup> Unlike Karl, Coupleston and Justus Hartnack are in the same opinion that deduction is justification, in the sense that it is not a question about how extensively we actually employ categories,

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<sup>1</sup>Karl Jaspers, *Kant*, Edited by Hannah Arendt, Tran. Ralph Manheim, Harcourt, (New York: Brace & World, Inc., 1957), 35.



but a question of whether our use of categories is legitimate.<sup>2</sup> In other words *deduction* is concerning the justification of the application of categories by showing that they are *a priori* condition of all experience.

<sup>1</sup> *Transcendental* refers to the process of thinking in such a way that 'transcends' natural thinking. Although it is nothing to do with the old metaphysical sense of "transcendence" which is to arrive at pure being or God, it is in some ways similar process. Kant *transcends* objective thinking seeking to arrive at the condition of all objectivity. This is no longer metaphysical knowledge of supersensible object but knowledge of the origin of our knowledge. Instead of seeking the origin of all things he seeks the origin of the subject-object dichotomy. The final result, therefore, is not an object to be known as in metaphysics, but an awareness of the limits of our knowledge. Kant's explanation of the term is clear, as he says: "I entitle *transcendental* all knowledge which is occupied not so much with objects as with the mode of our knowledge of objects insofar as the mode of knowledge is to be possible *a priori*".<sup>3</sup> David Bell's conclusion is true for he regards that Kant's epistemology is a metaphysical solution on how the object-related and subject-related phenomena must be taken to be mutually dependent and ultimately inseparable.<sup>4</sup> Kant entitles the way in which *a priori* concept can be related to object as *transcendental deduction*.<sup>5</sup>

From the above understanding of *transcendental* and *deduction*, it is clear that what is meant by *transcendental deduction* is not concerned with matters of empirical facts, but with the justification of validity of concepts attained from that empirical facts. Therefore, within *transcendental deduction* Kant differentiates between an objective deduction - whose purpose is to explain the validity of *a priori* concepts, especially on the possibility of understanding without experience - and on the ability of cognitive power or the faculty of thinking. The main point is, in fact, that Kant wants to relate the objective with the subjective knowledge, for Kant has said in his

<sup>2</sup> Justus Hartnack, *Kant's Theory of Knowledge*, (London: Macmillan, 1968), 47. See also: Frederick Copleston S.J., *A History of Philosophy*, Volume VI, (London: Search Press, 1977), 252.

<sup>3</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Trans. Norman Kemp Smith, Unabridged Edition, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965), B 25, hereafter cited as CPR.

<sup>4</sup> David Bell, "Kant", in Nicholas Bunnin and E.P. Tsui-James, *The Blackwell Companion to Philosophy*, (London: Blackwell, 1996), 591.

<sup>5</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 84.

preface of second edition of his *Critique* that "all our knowledge must conform to objects".<sup>6</sup>

*Transcendental* knowledge is of a special kind and is neither classified under *a priori* knowledge of a mathematical kind nor everyday empirical knowledge. This is nothing to do with or telling nothing about objects in the accepted ordinary or scientific ways, but only about the kind, status or limits of such ordinary or scientific knowledge. The term might be well understood in his further passage, where Kant explains the meaning of *transcendental exposition*. To him *transcendental exposition* is the explanation of concept as a principle from which the possibility of other *a priori* synthetic knowledge can be understood. It is called transcendental because partly it is designated to explain or to indicate the possibility of *a priori* knowledge.<sup>7</sup> It is clear that there are not two identifiable syntheses or types of consciousness, but only two ways of talking about synthesis of consciousness and these two are empirical or transcendental. In the case of *pure concept of understanding* the only kind of deduction of pure *a priori* knowledge is on *transcendental* level.<sup>8</sup> and therefore the need of transcendental deduction is unavoidable.

Moreover, the understanding of *transcendental deduction* can be absorbed from 1 the steps taken by Kant in verifying its characteristic. First, he excludes transcendental deduction from the discussion of the empirical deduction, for the latter indicates that 1 presentation exists as reaction of the mind to external things. Then he differentiates the *metaphysical deduction* from transcendental deduction, in which he identifies *transcendental deduction* as the explanation of the way in which *a priori* concept can be related to object. In other words *transcendental deduction* is that which deals with relation between subject and object in so intricate a way that the unintelligible character of the whole seem to stand out as the

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<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, 2 xvi.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, B 25, 40, 80-81; Kemp Smith explains the distinction between the term transcendent and transcendental of Kant's *Critique*. The former is that which lies entirely beyond experience, whereas the latter signifies those *a priori* elements which underlie experience as its necessary condition. The transcendent is always unknowable, but the transcendental is that which conditioning experience render all knowledge, whether *a priori* or empirical, possible. See, Norman Kemp Smith, *A Commentary, Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, (New Jersey: Humanities, 1984), 75.

<sup>8</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 87-88.

essential fact.<sup>9</sup>

However, there is an important point worth noting regarding the transcendental deduction. Since transcendental deduction deal with subject-object relation, it analyzes whether the object conceived in *transcendental deduction* can be explained as a concept that objectively valid as a concept or it still has to be verified further.<sup>10</sup> Kant, while excluding *metaphysical deduction*, explains that in transcendental deduction we have to examine what it is to be objectively valid, what kind of concept of a category is and why there have to be categories of one sort or another. In this process Kant reminds us that in Transcendental Deduction we must have categories, but not that of metaphysical categories that we do have. In order to elaborate further about Kant's analysis of the objective validity and categories we shall turn our discussion into his concept of *apperception*, which concerns the notion of a personal and a conceptual unity.

### The Transcendental Apperception

Many had assumed that the concept of apperception was introduced for the first time into more technical philosophical tradition by Leibniz,<sup>11</sup> who distinguished between perception and apperception. However, Kant has considerably extended the function of apperception in many respects and has developed it and makes the distinction between *empirical apperception* or self-consciousness and *transcendental apperception* or the *a priori* unity of consciousness. While in Leibniz it is simply reflective consciousness rather than mere passive perception, in Kant, it is consciousness of oneself as a unity on both empirical or transcendental level.<sup>12</sup> In connection with Leibniz, C.D. Broad noted two significant points: first, that Kant maintains Leibniz's term to denote a form of purely intellectual cognition, but denies that it is acquaintance with particular existents. Second, Kant introduces another faculty of *internal sense* which

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<sup>9</sup> Karl Jaspers, *Kant*, 33.

<sup>10</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 128.

<sup>11</sup> See C.D. Broad, *Kant, An Introduction*, Edited by C. Lewy, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 240; Robert Ulich, *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Edited by Paul Edwards (et.al), (New York: Macmillan, Publishing Co & The Free Press, 1967), 138. See also: Anthony Flew, *A Dictionary of Philosophy*, (New York: St. Martin Press, 1979), 16.

<sup>12</sup> Lacey, A.R., *A Dictionary of Philosophy*, (London, Routledge, 1976), 9.



Leibniz never has in mind.<sup>13</sup> In general we may infer that Kant's concept of *apperception* is marked by his attempt to build a unity of empirical and transcendental *apperception*. It is by introducing a faculty of inner sense with a mysterious power that make judging possible and that is the faculty of making one's own representation of the object of one's thought.

It has been suggested above that the concept of *apperception* is the most important analysis in the transcendental deduction where the concept of objective validity and a conceptual unity is to be found. As Kant deals with the problem in a slightly different pattern between the first and the second edition of his *Critique*, we shall follow here their general feature. Kant's analysis of the concept can be divided into two steps: First, it is supposed that the ability to apprehend (reproduce and recognize) is required for knowledge of empirical truths. It is concerning the empirical operation, where the term 'apprehension', 'reproduction' and 'recognition' are elaborated. In this operation the person's awareness of himself depends on the changing condition of his consciousness. Second, it is supposed that such ability is required also for knowledge even of a non-empirical kind. The term *apperception* is introduced to stand for a complex condition governing the transcendental operation of these abilities. In this step Kant shows his claim on the persistent inference from empirical to transcendental.<sup>14</sup> Thus the general feature is the view that knowledge involves essentially the ability to judge (synthesize or combine) and the move from what is true empirically of our knowledge to what is true transcendently.

The argument of the two steps be discerned from A 100, A 102 and B 135, and can be briefly summarized as follows. In his exposition the shift from empirical to non-empirical account is clear. Kant departs from the mental ability of empirical operation to arrive at *a priori* synthesis of representation. Kant holds that the accumulation of representations finally becomes associated, and apprehension is the major synthesis that involves the ability to reproduce (remember) and recognize (identify) what we perceive. However, reproduction must follow certain rules, without which our empirical imagination cannot exercise its appropriate power of knowing. The rule for the

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<sup>13</sup> C.D. Broad, *Kant, An Introduction*, 241.<sup>14</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 106-107.



reproduction is *a priori* ground of a necessary “synthetic unity of appearance” or synthetic unity of representation. This synthesis is grounded in antecedently upon *a priori* principle. Here, the synthesis of apprehension is inseparable from synthesis of reproduction. Since the former constitute transcendental ground of the possibility of all mode of knowledge, the reproductive synthesis of the imagination is to be counted among the transcendental act of the mind.<sup>15</sup> We have mentioned already that the ability to apprehend (reproduce and recognize) is required for knowledge of empirical truths, but from the above argument it is clear that these abilities indispensable from and even required for knowledge of a non-empirical kind. Here the *a priori* synthetic principles is the governing rule that unites the two world, empirical and transcendental.

However, Graham Bird criticizes that in his transition Kant has ambiguously used the term *non-empirical*, for it indicates the move from empirical to both transcendental inquiry and *a priorisynthesis*.<sup>16</sup> He exemplifies that it would be like arguing that since, in order to make a cake, a mixing of ingredients is necessary, there must be somehow, a necessary that is non-empirical or *a priori* mixing, over and above conventional procedure. However, if we look at B 120-121, it suggests that Kant does not argue for the existence of *a priori* knowledge or synthesis, but rather presupposing that there is such knowledge, and arguing that it must involve abilities of the kind contained in apprehension. In other words, based on his examination of empirical apprehension Kant concludes that there is an *a priori* or non-empirical synthesis. Thus, the term non-empirical should be understood as the process of transcendental inquiry into the general condition of all our knowledge.<sup>17</sup>

What we have just elaborated above is Kant’s introduction of *apperception* in his preliminary exposition of the deduction. The term *apperception* is elucidated through the notions of consciousness and personal identity as well as through objective judgment and conceptual rules. In this introduction the concept is not clearly established, for he is not so clear in distinguishing, for example, between consciousness and concept. He says: “The concept of

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, A 100-102.

<sup>16</sup> Graham Bird, *Kant Theory of Knowledge*, (London: Routledge & Paul Kegan, 1962), 119.

<sup>17</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 401-402.

number is nothing but the consciousness of this unity of synthesis".<sup>18</sup> In his elaboration of "the synthesis of recognition in a concept"<sup>19</sup> he expounds not only the function of concept but also the notion of self-consciousness. Thus, apperception is like an anchorage where all notion such as consciousness, personal identity, concept and objective judgment are gathered. The argument leading to the need of *transcendental apperception* is as follows. The relation of our thought to object carries the element of necessary *a priori* and they must possess unity that constitute the concept of an object. The unity that make object necessary is nothing else than the formal unity of consciousness in the synthesis of the manifold of representation. The unity is possible only if the intuition can be generated according to rule, by which reproduction of the manifold become *a priori* necessary and render possible concept. Finally, Kant arrives at his notion of on the necessity of *transcendental apperception*. He says that all necessity is grounded in a transcendental "transcendental ground", and this is the transcendental ground of the unity of consciousness in the synthesis of the manifold of all of our intuition<sup>20</sup> without this ground thinking any object for our intuition is impossible. He then proceeds further that the only available candidate for such ground is *transcendental apperception*.<sup>21</sup>

### Transcendental Unity of Apperception

Kant considers that a synthesis as an established fact exists as the result of the activity of understanding or as the result of the use of concept. From this fact Kant proceeds to the *transcendental unity of apperception*. The line of argument can be discerned as follows. Our senses present us with a multiplicity of different sensation or in Kant's terminology "the manifold of representation" or sense impression, but the intrinsic nature of these representations has no permanent, stability, determinacy, objectivity or conceptual articulation. Since sense experience is a manifold of various sense impression which are unconnected, while our awareness is to be an awareness of an intelligible, containing determinate, stable objects

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<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, A 103.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, A 103-106.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, A 104-106.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, A 106-107.

that persist through their changes and interact causally with one another, then we must be capable of unifying or combining this manifold. The combination cannot come through sense, and the act of combining sense impression into unity as an act of understanding is called *synthesis*.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, Kant claims that without such synthesizing activities we could have no awareness of external world. This synthesis cannot be learned through experience for it must be governed by rules. The governing rules are *a priori* rule and the most fundamental of all *a priori* rule is that which enable different mental states to be referred to one and the same object. However, if plurality of mental states and mental content are all belong to one single unified consciousness and if all mental states to be my state and content of consciousness, an inescapable condition must be met and that necessary condition is that mind should possess self-consciousness. In the section *The Original synthetic Unity of Apperception* Kant explains that:

It must be possible for the "I think" to accompany all my representation: That representation which can be given prior to all thought is entitled intuition. All the manifold of intuition has, therefore, a necessary relation to the "I think" in the same subject in which this manifold is found".<sup>23</sup>

The quotation suggests the attempt to postulate the unity of self-consciousness. We need, therefore, to analyze in detail. In the terminology of *the Critique*, representation is the generic name for all mental contents, including categories, empirical concept, ideas, pure intuitions and perception. Kant explicit definition is to be found in *The Critique*<sup>24</sup> as "inner determination of our mind in this or that relation of time." Or it may be understood as merely the contents of our consciousness and the immediate object of awareness. Ronno Gennaro, who accuses Kant of being ambiguous, grasps the term representation as either 'mental state' or as 'conscious mental state'.<sup>25</sup> In fact, the representation is divided into representation with or without consciousness, but Kant is only interested in the conscious representation that include all the elements of his account of

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<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, B 130.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, B 131-132.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, A 197, B 242

<sup>25</sup> Rocco J. Gennaro, *Consciousness and Self-Consciousness*, (Amsterdam: John Benjamin Publishing Company, 1995), 49.



knowledge and experience. The representations with consciousness are entitled *perception*, and these are divided into sensation, or those which related solely to the subject of that state and objective perceptions or cognition. Furthermore, the objective perception is divided into *intuition* and *concept*. The former relates to immediately to a single object, while the latter refers to it *mediately* through common feature of several thing.<sup>26</sup> Both the intuition and concept are produced in a spontaneous act, but intuition is given prior to all thought. While intuition provide a field within which the manifold of intuition may appear as a representation, the concept synthesizes these representation into experience and knowledge. The application of a concept to an intuition in judgment is nothing other than the 'representation of representation' of an object. Therefore, all representation have, as representations, their object and can themselves in turn become object of other representation.<sup>27</sup> The sentence implies that in order to treat representation as mental contents, we must make judgments about them by mean of other representations.

Now the term "I think" is subject to various interpretations. Justus Hartnack understand the term as not identical with empirical self-consciousness. It is because in empirical self-consciousness we must necessarily be able to say that it is mine. The "I" therefore, is transcendental "I" and this is the transcendental "I" that possess the content of consciousness that I have at the moment of my consciousness and at the moment before. This transcendental "I" is a necessary condition of every thought, every judgment, every idea and thus consciousness itself.<sup>28</sup> What is meant by Hartnack is what Kant calls in the first edition version *Transcendental Apperception*. The same opinion but in different perspective Howard Caygill interpret the "I think" as the same subject in which its manifold is found. To be my intuition it must be related to an 'apperceptive' "I think". The "I think" itself is an act of spontaneity which does not originate in or belong to sensibility.<sup>29</sup> The two agree to exclude "I" from empirical sense or from sensibility and put it in transcendental realm. If the "I think" is consciousness itself and representation is also regarded as mental consciousness or determination of inner

<sup>26</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 320; B 377.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, A 108

<sup>28</sup> Justus Hartnack, *Kant's Theory of Knowledge*, 54.

<sup>29</sup> Howard Caygill, *A Kant Dictionary*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publisher, 1995), 82.

sense, so the “I think” and ‘representation’ are similar thing. This seems to be not the case, for Kant relates mentality with self-consciousness, and the “I think” is not just any thought, but a thought directed to ‘my representation’.

However, we had better see the understanding of Ronno J. Gennaro who assumes that there can be many ways to understand the word “I think” and the “representation”. The former admits of two possible interpretation: I *non-consciously* think and I *consciously* think, while the latter can be taken as either ‘mental state’ or as ‘conscious mental state’. To him the two term employed by Kant imply the same ambiguity, and therefore the sentence above might be modified as follows: *All of my mental states must be able to be accompanied by a thought about them.* By this way Kant might be claiming that all of *his* mental states might become an object of *his* thought. So, any of our non-consciousness mental states might become the object of our thought or as Gennaro calls it “meta-psychological thought”. Our mental states could become conscious if accompanied by the appropriate meta-psychological thought. Therefore, says Gennaro, the closest interpretation to the theory of consciousness is that “I think” should be read as “I non-consciously think” and ‘representation’ should be understood as “conscious mental state”.<sup>30</sup> But he does not merely assert “I think”, but “I think” can be attached to each of my mental contents.

However, in connection with different object, such my self, Paton understands the “I think” like an empirical ability of knowing. To him my own existence or self is known only as an act of thinking and even it is known only as a form of thought. But “I think” cannot be proposition to infer the “I am”, because they are identical and knowing my existence through “I think” is completely indeterminate. I can know my own existence, not as a thinking subject in abstraction, but only as thinking this and that concretely in a temporal succession. If so then (granting that time is a form of my sensibility) I can know my existence determinately only as I appear to myself in time, and not as I am in myself.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Rocco J. Gennaro, *Consciousness and Self-Consciousness*, 49-51.

<sup>31</sup> Paton, H.J. *Kant's Metaphysic of Experience*, Vol. 2, (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., N.Y), 401-402.

If we admit that the "I think" is in fact what Kant calls in the first edition version as Transcendental Apperception and the "representation" includes all the elements of his account of knowledge and experience, we would arrive at what is termed by Kant as *transcendental unity of self-consciousness*. With the idea of apperception, which is the unity of self-consciousness, Kant adopts the "I think" as the absolutely first principle of all philosophical speculation.

Now we shall elucidate the term unity of consciousness in brief. According to Kant thoughts do not lie in the mind as an unconnected contents, they are bond together as the thought of one mind. They are all my thoughts, and only mine in transcendental sense. However, looking further Kant's notion on the unity of consciousness we will find that it is not merely a matter of association of ideas. The unity of consciousness entails the association of the content of consciousness and not two equal things. Kant claims that if a manifold of representation are bound up in one consciousness, then it follow that they are related to one another by association. However, he denies that the perception or concept may stand in associative relations without being of the same consciousness. Thus the idea of bread brings with it the idea of butter and pepper reminds us to the idea of salt. Similarly the image of the face of a friend calls to mind the ideas of his dress, his physical stature, his personal characteristics and his action in the past. All these image are associated in and constitute "the unity of consciousness".<sup>32</sup> In addition, there is an obvious question on how different experience is possible to oneself. Kant explanation on the necessary of synthesis seem to be the appropriate answer. In order a series of experience to belong to a single consciousness they should possess precisely the rule that govern their connectedness. In other word, the unity of consciousness require me to synthesize my different sensory experience in conformity with the rule embodied in the categories. According to Paul Guyer connection among our representation which is independent of empirical content connection presuppose a synthesis of its diverse element. Here the transcendental synthesis of all possible item of consciousness independent of all ordinary empirical cognition is

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<sup>32</sup> Robert P.Wolf, "A reconstruction of the Argument of the Subjective Deduction", in Robert Paul Wolff, *Kant, A Collection of Critical Essays*, (London: Macmillan, 1968), 90-92.



necessary. The unity of all representation in one consciousness which is independent of their empirical content has to be grounded in an *a priori* synthesis that proceed according to a *a priori* rule.<sup>33</sup> Thus, by way of a *a priori* synthetic different experiences is possible for oneself.

From this way of looking at the foregoing exposition we can discern that the “I think” which enable such judgment to take place can be described as “a representation” which must be capable of accompanying all other representation. Since the representation “I think” is a representation that must be accompanied by all other representations and cannot be accompanied by any other representation, it necessarily be one and the same. The point that Kant wants to propose is that the unity of consciousness requires self-consciousness, and self-consciousness, in turn requires the ability to ascribe one’s mental states to oneself. This spontaneous act of mind is called *pure apperception* or *original apperception* and the principle that governs the unity of consciousness is entitled *the Transcendental Unity of Apperception*.<sup>34</sup>

## Conclusion

The foregoing delineation is preliminary attempt to depict Kant’s argument on his renown concept namely *Transcendent Unity of Apperception*. The concept is an attempt to resolve the question of how human understanding conform or grasp an intelligible world or in other words how the *a priori* knowledge of an intelligible world would be possible. To solve this he introduces the notion of transcendent, which is an *a priori* condition for the possibility of intelligible experience. The process named *transcendental deduction* is deduction of *a priori* knowledge by relating subject and object in so intricate way that the unintelligible character of the whole as essential fact is attained. In this *transcendental deduction* there is another operation namely apperception in which human abilities such as apprehension, reproduction, and recognition are applied to non-empirical knowledge. Thus the general feature is to move from what is true empirically of our knowledge to what is true transcendentally. Therefore the self attained knowledge by way of

<sup>33</sup> Paul Guyer, *Kant and the Claim of Knowledge*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987), 135

<sup>34</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 132.

apperception is not as it is but only as it appears, because in apperception <sup>1</sup> we are conscious only the necessary synthetic unity of thought. This spontaneous act of mind is called *pure apperception* or *original apperception*, while the principle that governs the unity of consciousness is entitled *the Transcendental Unity of Apperception*. In his solution Kant propose to posit that the object-related and subject-related phenomena should be taken to be mutually dependent and ultimately inseparable.

However, the fact is that the intelligible world is independent of the human understanding and of the sensible world. The intelligible world which is independent of our understanding cannot be grasp except by sensibility which means that our knowledge of it could not be *a priori*. The pure understanding alone could at best enable us to form representations of an intelligible world, but since these intellectual representations would entirely "depend on our inner activity," there is no good reason to believe that they conform to an independent intelligible world. Such *a priori* intellectual representations could be an illusion of the brain that do not correspond to anything independent of the human mind. Finally we may also question what is the role of human belief during their process of grasping the intelligible world.[]

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