Non-Apperceptive Consciousness*

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Determining the nature of transcendental apperception (hereafter TA) is key to understanding Kant's theory of consciousness. One of the intricate problems with interpreting TA is the dual modal aspect of the famous proposition that Kant puts forward at the beginning of the B-version of the Transcendental Deduction of the categories (hereafter TD) in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. At §16, Kant writes that "the *I think* must be able to accompany all my representations".¹ Kant calls it a *Grundsatz* at B135.

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1 Unless otherwise indicated, translations from the *Critique of Pure Reason* are from the Guyer/Wood edition (Cambridge University Press, 1998). The *Critique* is cited in the standard way by means of the abbreviation A/B. The following additional abbreviations for Kant's texts are used:

AA = *Kants Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Königlich Preußische (später: Deutsche) Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin: de Gruyter, 1900- (Akademie Ausgabe).

Anthr. = *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (AA 7). Trans. V.L. Dowdell. Carbondale & Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1978, 1996.

Inquiry = *Inquiry concerning the Distinctness of the Principles of Natural Theology and Morality* (AA 2). In *Theoretical Philosophy 1755–1770*. Ed. and trans. D. Walford. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, 2003.

LM = *Lectures on Metaphysics*. Ed. and trans. K. Ameriks & S. Naragon. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, 2001.

MAN = *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Naturwissenschaft* (AA 4). Ed. K. Pollok. Hamburg: Meiner Verlag, 1997.

Prol. = *Prolegomena zu einer jeden künftigen Metaphysik* (AA 4).

R = *Reflexionen zur Metaphysik* (AA 18)

ÜE = *Über eine Entdeckung nach der alle neue Kritik der reinen Vernunft durch eine ältere entbehrlich gemacht werden soll* (AA 8).

The way the proposition is formulated is less straightforwardly analytic than is usually thought by commentators. From the passage that follows it seems that Kant thinks of this ‘I think’, or the *cogito*, as a kind of representation. It is further identified by Kant as pure apperception or original apperception (B132)². As it appears, the ‘I think’ is also closely linked up with, if not identical to, what is called transcendental self-consciousness or the unity thereof (B132 [AA 3: 109.3–4]). In fact, in the Transcendental Aesthetic, at B68, Kant already identified “simple [*einfache*] representation of the I” as “consciousness of self [*Bewußtsein seiner Selbst*]” (trans. Kemp Smith). ‘I think’-consciousness, transcendental apperception and self-consciousness are, for Kant, thus equivalent.

Trying to grasp the meaning of TA and the relation between the various designations for apperception is requisite in any serious analysis of TD. However, despite numerous attempts at grappling with it no agreement has yet been reached in the literature as to how we should understand this proposition and how it bears on the general argument of TD. In this article, I do not address the many complex issues involved in understanding TD, nor even all aspects of TA (see further Schulting 2008). Due to space constraints, I also hardly talk about *empirical* apperception. I will also not address the question how TA ties in with the derivation of the categories from a principle, and so is part and parcel of the argument concerning objective knowledge (see Schulting, 2012). I must also abstain from talking about synthesis and its correlates (e.g., synthetic unity of consciousness), although this is fundamentally important for fully understanding Kantian apperception.

Here, I am interested in answering two, relatively simple, but important questions: (a) Does Kant allow first-order consciousness without second-order consciousness, that is, does he allow for empirical consciousness that is not transcendently apperceived, and so *not* accompanied by the ‘I think’, either in principle or de facto? In other words, is there non-apperceptive consciousness for Kant? (b) If Kant allows for unaccompanied first-order consciousness, what is the status of this consciousness? Is it in any way possible to be *conscious of* this consciousness? Or is this first-order consciousness in some way a consciousness of which we are and remain ex hypothesi *unconscious*? A related question, which is independent of Kant’s arguments regarding the conditions for self-con-

2 Importantly, at A354 Kant identifies the ‘I think’ as ‘the formal proposition of apperception’, and at A400 he identifies the ‘I’ and ‘mere apperception [*bloße Apperzeption*]’.

sciousness, is whether Kant allows for unconsciousness *strictius dicta*, viz. the total lack of consciousness, at all. I will touch on this in due course.

I approach these questions systematically rather than merely historically. I believe that TA itself provides sufficient ground for establishing Kant's position on unaccompanied or non-apperceptive consciousness. An argument for the thesis that Kant either allows or doesn't allow for non-apperceptive consciousness can be extracted from the positive argument for TA as an analytic principle. We need only look at the logical ramifications of this principle to find such an argument. I do this in the last section of the paper. Certain passages in the *Critique* and elsewhere, e. g. a reference to Locke in the *Anthropology*, confirm this more obliquely. Although I think that Kant is pretty consistent, it is clear that some text passages, especially in the A-version of TD, might at first blush seem to contradict the real possibility of non-apperceptive consciousness.³

1. Possible Construals of the 'I think'-proposition

But before we get to the intricate bits, let's just start, innocently enough, with trying out a few answers to the question how we should read the 'I think'-proposition at §16 (TA). At one extremity, one might want to argue, as the great German Kant scholar Heinz Heimsoeth appears to do⁴, that (1) TA concerns not merely cognitive acts or states, representations that have an epistemic value, but indeed comprises all possible representations that I have or will have (or, more problematically, have had, presumably implying that one's representational history is also involved). In other words, *all possible* representations that a subject has must be regarded as primordially contained in the *cogito*; presumably the unitary self as "simple", as Henrich has glossed it (Henrich 1976, 55 ff.), is *eo ipso* formally implied in the manifold of all one's representations. Each representation, being a mental state, uniquely exemplifies the *cogito*.

3 See esp. A108, A111–112, A116, A117n.

4 Heimsoeth 1966, 83n.115. Cf. Heimsoeth 1956, 235. For Heimsoeth the 'I think' does not concern "eigentliche Denkakte und Gedanken" only, but representations as such, in the sense of Cartesian *cogitationes*, indeed "alles was sich im Bewußtsein abspielt". This latter equivocation poses problems. For Kant, the 'I think' would *eo ipso* accompany everything that can be thought by me (any *cogitatio* carries a *cogito*) but it would not accompany *all* types of representation. Not all representations are *cogitationes*, for Kant. The pivotal question thus is whether everything 'that occurs in consciousness' is exhausted by thought acts.

No representation an 'I' effectively or possibly has (or indeed has had) can fail to be accompanied by it. This is a notably strong reading of TA.

An importantly different approach could be (2) to emphasize that in any case all representations must *be able* to be so accompanied, expressing the necessity of a possibility, whilst it is not the case that all of one's representations need *effectively* be accompanied by such an 'I'-thought.⁵ The emphasis is put on the difference between actual and possible reflective accompaniment. One could have representations that are not effectively accompanied by, and thus not thereby explicitly contained in the unity of, the 'I'. This constitutes the major difference from view 1. However, according to view 2 representations must still have a *real potential* for such accompaniment.⁶ In other words, representations have a disposition towards apperception. In this way, one believes to have attended to the peculiar modal aspect that appears to be implied by Kant's words 'must be able'.⁷

Or, slightly differently, (3) the proposition is taken to assert, analytically, that all my representations must stand under the condition under which alone I can ascribe them to the identical self as my representations, and thus can grasp them together as my own.⁸ Any representation that I have I must be able, indeed cannot fail, to ascribe to myself as my own, which shows up an analytic relation between the representation that I have and the act that I ascribe it to myself. This view emphasizes the conceptual truth of the relation between a representation and its necessary subjective agent. The concept of representation is such that all representations are acts of representing that imply *eo ipso* an agent—the subject—that does the representing.⁹ For this ability to be *existentially* possible though, specific further material conditions should be met.

5 Cf. Allison 1996, 47. See also Allison 2001, 191, where Allison avers that the principle of apperception implies that it must be *possible* that the 'I think' accompanies all my representations, "not that it actually does so on every occasion. It thus asserts the necessity of a possibility".

6 This is suggested by Allison: "Thus, room is left in the Kantian scheme for intuitions that are not brought under the categories (*though not for those that cannot be brought*)." (2001, 191; emphasis added) The phrase 'real potential' is from Ameriks 2000b, 243.

7 See also Heimsoeth 1966, 81 and 82n.112.

8 This is in fact, with omission of what turn out to be important appositions, Kant's definition of the analytic proposition (see B138). Cf. Guyer's discussion of apperception in Guyer 1980, 208–209.

9 Cf. Ameriks on the Act Theory of apperception in Ameriks 2000a, 250 ff.

These three interpretations attend to different aspects of TA. View 1 implies that all representations that an 'I' has (at any time and in any sense) are primordially contained in the unity of consciousness—which at §16 Kant calls the transcendental unity of self-consciousness—to be at all 'one's' representations. The transcendental unity is analytically implied, as it were, in all of one's representations. This means that an existentially necessary unity of all of one's possible representational states obtains, regardless whether it concerns past, actual or future states; it is not clear whether subconscious representations are included as well. At any rate, from the a priori unifiedness of representations in the unity of consciousness one infers that all possible representations synthetically constitute, as self-same representations, my self-consciousness. The aspect of 'belonging', to which Kant alludes in this section, is emphasized.

Typically, some interpreters who take this interpretive path assume that Kant believes that one necessarily has *a priori* knowledge of the identity of one's continual self, namely of one's identity through the transition of one's representational states. This quasi-Cartesian interpretation of identity has been attributed to Kant by, most prominently, Dieter Henrich (1976; 1988; 1989), who also distinguishes between a construal of TD starting from the unity of self as its premise as opposed to a construal starting out from the identity of self as its premise. Furthermore, it remains to be seen, apart from the apparent historical inexactitude of straightforwardly aligning Kant with orthodox Cartesianism, whether such a construal of the self indeed has its pedigree in Descartes' notion of the *cogito* itself rather than in some adulterated version of it. It doesn't seem true to claim that Descartes, at least in the *Meditations*, believes that I must be able to be *continually* aware of my identity as *res cogitans*. It is in fact the lack of continuity between the instances of the *cogito* over time which leads Descartes to postulate the need for a definite proof of God's existence as its eventual guarantor.

What I would like to emphasize here is, apart from the strong synthetic reading, the patently conflationist view of consciousness and self-consciousness, which differentiates this reading from other readings of TA. It confuses the 'possessive' and transcendental or 'epistemic' unities of consciousness.¹⁰ Note also that no effort is made to distinguish between representing and thinking, surely not to be taken as identical modes of mind; especially for Kant, sensibly representing is not the same as representing by means of conceptual thought. Most significantly, it appears

10 I owe these labels to Ameriks (see Ameriks 2000b: 281).

that on this reading there could indeed *be* no episode of consciousness in a subject that is not a representational state had by it as a selfsame subject over time and who is self-aware of having this representational state being his. By implication, on this reading any (possible) consciousness is an instance of consciousness of one's unitary self-consciousness and consciousness must thus be taken to be always already unified consciousness. Crucially, then, this view simply confuses the conditions for psychological consciousness and the conditions for self-consciousness. Because of this conspicuous feature, I will henceforth refer to view 1 as the Explicit Conflation Reading of apperception (ECR).

ECR: *All possible instances of representation are existentially contained in the unity of the self and, by implication, all episodes of consciousness are eo ipso instances of the transcendental unity of self-consciousness.*

Karl Ameriks has recently remarked with regard to this reading of apperception that it reveals an ontological commitment to the extent that it is "a claim not merely about *how* we are self-aware [but] already a claim that we cannot exist except when self-aware in a certain way" (2000b: 250). ECR makes the intemperate claim that there is an existential entailment between all possible representations that one has, and of which one is *ipso facto* conscious, and the unity of self-consciousness. It is thus that ECR assumes that there is a prior synthesis of *all* of one's *possible* representations (past, present, and future) and that any occurring representation is just a manifestation of the self to which it synthetically belongs.

View 2 is less obviously committed to a strong synthetic argument with respect to the existential unity of instances of one's consciousness and would rather want to emphasize the *conditionality* of apperception. That is, the accompanying of one's representations by the 'I think' is not an existential necessity but a logically necessary possibility for the possibility of self-consciousness. This reading holds that some representations could in fact go unaccompanied by the 'I think', implying that as such, as unaccompanied, representations are not *contained* in the transcendental unity of consciousness. This means that these representations, not being contained in the unity of consciousness, would effectively be "impossible, or else at least [...] *nothing for me*" (B132, emphasis added), which should be interpreted as implying that those particular representations are obscure, if not totally non-existent (contra Aschenberg 1988, 58). These obscure representations, which according to this view do not amount to *conscious* representing, do have, in some sense, a causal

influence on my behaviour.¹¹ Unity of consciousness *is* nonetheless necessarily entailed by *all* possible representations to the extent that all representations must be regarded as at least *capable* of being unified by me as the subject of those representations. This view is characterized by an emphasis on the necessary presupposition of apperception. In close connection with this claim it is claimed that apperception is a precondition or supposition of all consciousness.

Representations cannot fail to possibly being accompanied. There is thus a real potentiality for all my representations of being accompanied by the 'I think'; this potentiality is not a mere hypothesis but implies a necessary entailment of apperception for all representations (it is not clear what the conditions of satisfaction are for what is in the first instance deemed a potentiality or possibility). Henceforth I call this view the Necessary Entailment Reading of apperception (NER). NER is the most widely accepted reading of TA.¹²

NER: *All representations that I have have a 'real potential' for transcendental apperception, i.e., a relation of necessary entailment obtains between all representations that I have and transcendental apperception to the extent that representations must potentially, but need not effectively, be accompanied by the I think.*

This reading argues that for every instance of a representing A there is a parallel instance of an 'I think'-accompaniment B, and B is, as on ECR, always already formally implied by, although not *existentially* instantiated in, A (this constitutes a difference with ECR). This means that it isn't the case that for any instance A there necessarily obtains an *actual* reflection of the kind B, but it does mean that there can be no instance A that does not already imply, formally, and so entail a possible instance of B.¹³ Unlike ECR, NER holds that some representations that one has, and is in the business of representing, could and sometimes do in fact go un-ac-

11 Cf. Allison 1983, 153 ff.

12 The idea behind of NER is captured by Pierre Keller's assertion that "any connection that might hold between individual representations in a particular consciousness must be such that it is consistent with the unifiability of those representations in self-consciousness" (1998: 57), or, somewhat more ambiguously, by his statement that "*all* representational content must have at least an indirect relation to a possible self-consciousness in order to be a determinate representation at all" (1998: 19; emphasis added).

13 Cf. Henrich 1988, 58–59.

accompanied by the 'I think'. Some representations do exist without an 'I think' strictly speaking having been instantiated. Representations are then not non-existent per se, but they are non-existent before the 'I' (cf. again B132). Logically, representations that do not instantiate the 'I think' do thereby not actualize the possibility of 'I think'-accompaniment and *a fortiori* do not exist *as being so accompanied* and are nothing for the 'I'.

A complication for NER arises: how does it account for the difference between unaccompanied and effectively accompanied representations if *all* representations must at least entail possible accompaniment? What actualizes the effective accompaniment? That is, when is the 'I think' effectively instantiated and when not? Another complicating factor, and the most interesting for our purposes here, is that NER holds that unaccompanied representations are *eo ipso unconscious* representations.¹⁴ NER regards apperception as a condition for consciousness tout court, which thus must be fulfilled for representations to be conscious representations. An amended version of NER, call it NER', allows *conscious* representing without any effective accompaniment by the 'I think', that is, without any actual second-order consciousness of an 'I' or self reflecting on a first-order conscious mental state.¹⁵ However, NER' holds that no first-order conscious state can occur *without* at least entailing the *possibility* of 'I think'-accompaniment or self-consciousness (this is the 'real potentiality' or necessary entailment aspect characteristic of NER).

NER': *All representations that I have have a 'real potential' for transcendental apperception, i.e., a relation of necessary entailment obtains between all representations that I have and transcendental apperception to the extent that representations must potentially, but need not effectively, be accompanied by the I think, and such representations as are not effectively accompanied by the I think are not eo ipso unconscious.*

View 3 is close to NER in the sense that it argues that a subject *must* be capable of becoming conscious of his representations as his representations without always being self-consciously aware of his representations. Alternatively put, apperception must be seen primarily as a subject's in-

14 See e.g. Allison 1983, 153; cf. Kitcher 1984, 117n.6 and 140; Pippin 1997, 41; Collins 1999, 131.

15 This version of NER was suggested to me by Stephen Houlgate in discussion.

fallible ability to *self-ascribe* representations as being part of the set of all of his representations so self-ascribed. In Paul Guyer's useful definition, the apperception principle concerns the "conceptual truth that whatever representations one ascribes to oneself must be ascribed to the same continuing set of representations to which belong all other representations ascribed to oneself, in accordance with the rules for constructing such sets" (1980: 208). This reading focuses on the analyticity of the principle and rejects a priori synthesis out of hand. It is particularly in this sense that view 3 differs from NER. It is also able to circumvent quasi-Cartesian commitments to a priori knowledge of the self as a noumenal substance or to constancy claims regarding the self in terms of ECR.¹⁶ This view of apperception is what has generally come to be known, mainly through the achievements of P.F. Strawson,¹⁷ by the name of the theory of self-ascription of representations. Hence, I refer to this interpretation of apperception as the Self-Ascription Reading of apperception (SAR).

SAR: Any representation that one ascribes to oneself must be ascribable, in conformity with certain a priori rules, to the same self to which one ascribes all other representations.

These are three possible construals of TA, which emphasize different aspects of TA. Although two of the most prominent expositors of Kant, Henrich and Guyer, have adopted it, ECR belongs to a minority view and shall not be discussed further here.¹⁸ SAR is a view that is close to NER, although it dismisses or neglects Kant's argument for a priori synthesis. It seems to me that for this reason alone SAR cannot be the right interpretation of Kantian apperception. The received interpretation is based on NER. Let me now expand on the implications of NER by look-

16 Guyer is peculiar in this respect. His interpretation of Kant's apperception thesis is a mix of ECR and the Self-Ascription Reading.

17 Strawson writes for example: "Unity of the consciousness to which a series of experiences belong implies [...] the *possibility* of self-ascription of experiences on the part of a subject of those experiences; it implies the *possibility* of consciousness, on the part of the subject, of the numerical identity of that to which those different experiences are by him ascribed." (1966: 98) See Schulting 2008 for my critique of Strawson's reading of Kantian apperception.

18 I discuss both Henrich's and Guyer's philosophically illuminating positions on the relation between apperception and the Deduction extensively in Schulting, 2012.

ing at one of the best known latter-day accounts of apperception, namely Henry Allison's, which I believe is a paradigmatic case of NER.¹⁹

2. Allison, NER and Representation

The important questions that NER must answer are: (1) In what does the relation of a representation to TA consist? And (2) What is the relation of consciousness to apperception? This second question is appropriate given the fact that Kant has explicit recourse to the notion of *self-consciousness*. With regard to the first question, one presumes, based on the modality of the proposition, that it cannot be the case that, were there no accompaniment of the 'I think', there would not even exist the possibility of having representations. Rather, in the absence of an actual accompaniment of the 'I think' something could very well be represented, albeit perhaps wholly indeterminately (at least in the cognitive or epistemic sense). Possibility works *eo ipso* both ways. If 'I think'-accompaniment is a possibility, even if a necessary one, then logically it must also be possible that it does *not* occur. However, although Kant stresses the words 'be able' in the dual modality of 'must be able', it should not be ignored that the possibility of the principle appears to have a specific quality: the proposition designates a *necessary* possibility. This might appear to contradict the possibility of the absence of 'I think' accompaniment. Indeed, it suggests *necessary* entailment along the lines of NER. On analysis, it will turn out that Kant means something altogether different.

However, holding in abeyance an assessment of the implied necessity of the 'I think'-proposition ('*must* be able'), suppose that Kant indeed allows that there is an actual occurrence of a mental state not being accompanied by the 'I think'. As said, this does not *eo ipso* imply the absence of representation tout court, which Kant appears to confirm in a subsequent clause in §16 (AA 3: 108.21–22). This then appears to suggest that TA must not be seen as designating a principle of representing tout court. Allison, for one, seems to be saying the opposite. He writes: "We can infer

19 Other recent Kant expositors who, to a greater or lesser extent, espouse NER are among others Kirkland 1989, 460, Klemme 1996, 192–194, Carl 1997, 154, Keller 1998, 14 and, more recently, Beiser 2002, 145. See also the early Kitcher in Kitcher 1984, 143–144. Cf. *per contra* Ameriks 2000a, 116; 244; 2000b, 247 *et passim* and 1995, 221–223; and Brook 1994, 224.

from the apperception principle that there can be no representation of objects apart from the unity of consciousness, because *without such a unity there can be no representation of anything at all*.²⁰ In defence of Allison, one could rejoin (1) that, based on what Allison regards as the conditions under which we can represent objects, Allison is merely saying that no representation of an *object* is possible without the unity of consciousness or apperception, for he means the “reflexivity of objective representation” (Allison 1996, 60). And indeed this is what the passage following the above-quoted one appears to confirm. I have no quarrel with such a view. Or one could rejoin (2) that what Allison means by the unity of consciousness is *merely* the analytic unity of representations, without which no representation (subjective or objective) could ever occur, given that the ‘I’ think must be able to accompany *all* of one’s representations, whereas synthetic unity only pertains to representations taken together as having objective reference. I do not think Allison means the latter view, for he explicitly, and quite rightly, equates the unity of consciousness with the *transcendental* unity of apperception, or the synthetic unity of apperception, not just the analytic unity of consciousness.²¹

Crucially, Allison says, referring to Kant’s important qualification in the same passage, that “the claim that a representation is ‘nothing to me’ means simply that I cannot represent to myself anything by it, not that it is nonexistent” (Allison 1983, 137)²². I take the emphasis in the subordinate clause to lie on “to myself”. A representation could certainly be existent, even if the representation has no real epistemic value for me. By implication, Allison appears to recognize that the relation between representations and the ‘I think’ cannot be an existential entailment relation. The latter clause in aforementioned quote from Allison (p. 146), then, does not seem to imply that Allison has a general definition of representation in mind, but rather a specific one. That what Allison understands by a ‘representation’ is to be taken as a representation in the thick sense, a genuine representation *of some object*.

On this reading, Allison would have to agree with the claim that representing as such, to wit, what he calls a “representation of anything at all” short of a determinate object, is perfectly possible *without* presuppos-

20 Allison 1983, 146, emphasis added. Cf. Beiser 2002, 156. Also Kitcher 1984, 116–117. Kitcher points to A116 for support. Cf. Kitcher 1982, 63–64, but compare with *ibid.*, 67. See also Pippin 1989, 45.

21 Allison 1996, 58.

22 Cf. de Vleeschauwer 1937, 98.

ing TA. Indeed, at one point Allison rightly observes—in a note he refers to Kant’s letter to Marcus Herz—that TA need not imply that I “cannot have ‘representations’ which are nothing to me *cognitively speaking*” (Allison 1996, 47; emphasis mine). However, based on what he says in the subordinate clause in the previously quoted text passage (1983: 146) I am inclined to think that Allison believes that indeed *having* representations without explicit apperception is possible, but also that, if a representation is to have representational value (and not just remain hidden in the inmost recesses of the mind), it must at least presuppose *the possibility* of TA. That is, a genuine representation must at least have the potentiality to be accompanied by a second-order act of reflexivity which gives it cognitive value. Indeed, the implicit inference that Allison appears to draw is: *if any representation is impossible without at least presupposing apperception, then a fortiori object-representation is impossible without it*. Allison, then, does appear to regard TA as the logical principle that governs representation tout court after all, even if this does not mean that I must always be *explicitly* aware of all my thoughts as mine.²³ This view amounts to NER.

23 See also Robert Pippin’s position in this. He writes: “Kant does indeed insist that consciousness, construed as a representing activity, must be inherently reflexive in order to be representative, genuinely to have objects. [...] Or, stated in representational terms, this means that there is no internal property of a mental state’s occurring in me, and no property of that state’s real relation with other states, that makes it a representation *of X*. For such a state to represent *I* must ‘take it up’, unite it with other (or other possible) representations, and thereby self-consciously represent *X*.” (1989: 45) Earlier (1982: 38) Pippin asserted, even more explicitly, that “the senses do not represent at all, but only contain the results of the affection by objects on our senses [...] and are constructed as representing only when so interpreted by the spontaneity Kant calls the understanding.” Subjective representations are then actually not representations but “undifferentiated subjective affects” (1982: 39). Note that, conversely, for Kant a representation can be an object of other representations, as he argues in the Second Analogy (B234–235=A189–190; see also A108–109); Kant says that “one can, to be sure, call everything, and even every representation, insofar as one is conscious of it, an object”. This in itself does not settle the objective validity of representations, for, as Kant says, “only what this word [i.e., object, D.S.] is to mean in the case of appearances, not insofar as they are (as representations) objects, but rather only insofar as they designate an object, requires a deeper investigation.” Pippin’s reasoning manifests a short argument with regard to the conditions of object-representation. He confuses the empirical conditions of representational mental activity in a general sense and the transcendental constraints of objectively valid representation. See Smit 2000, 239 ff. for an illuminating discussion of B234–235=A189–190.

It appears that Allison conflates not so much the difference between the first-order activity of merely representing and the second-order activity of being reflexively aware of one's representations but two different sets of *conditions*, i.e., the conditions for having representations and the wholly different set of conditions for being aware of one's own representations 'cognitively speaking', which he effectively conflates into one, namely into the principle of transcendental apperception (TA) as that which ostensibly governs representation tout court. Thus, although he recognizes that one could be *de facto* representing without effectively accompanying one's representing (having explicit apperceptive awareness, say), he also seems to think that the incontrovertible *condition* of the very ability of representing as such is TA. This amounts to a confusion of existential (or psychological) and transcendental conditions that is characteristic of NER/NER'. It also, I believe, contravenes the thrust of Allison's own reciprocity thesis with respect to the intimate relation between the unity of consciousness and the constitution of objects (this is a topic outside the scope of this article).

With regard to the second question: If I am not explicitly aware of my representations as mine, but am merely *having* representations, in other words, if apperception is not effectively instantiated, are the representations that I have *conscious* ones? In general, one would presume that representational states that are not attended to by a second-order act of reflection are conscious states of mind regardless, based on the idea that one must distinguish between first- and second-order consciousness. The absence of second-order consciousness doesn't logically entail the absence of first-order consciousness. Allison disputes this (and I note that he is not alone in this view), for he thinks that apperception is presupposed for consciousness even of our subjective mental states (i.e. states that have no cognitive, objective, value), hence for first-order consciousness. Thus, one could not be conscious even of one's own mental states, more precisely, *be* in a state of consciousness, unless TA is satisfied.²⁴

24 Allison 1983, 153 ff.; see also Allison 1996, 72–74. Cf. Kitcher 1984, 117n.6 and 140; Pippin 1997, 41. Collins is the most recent and clearest example of the idea that for consciousness transcendental apperception is required. Collins dismisses pre-synthetic consciousness on the grounds of the unintelligibility of the notion of "conscious experience that precedes the emergence of consciousness" (Collins 1999, 147). To apperceive means for Collins to be conscious, or indeed, "conscious experience is the ultimate product of this mental activity [viz. apperception, DS]," so that "we are not conscious of either the original representations" (ibid., 108). Collins is right of course, if he means that one is not conscious of the

Allison makes an ostensibly crucial distinction between representations and *conscious* representations. For consciousness of representations to occur a further condition needs to be fulfilled, this condition being tantamount to pure or transcendental apperception (TA). Apart from the issue whether discriminating between representations and conscious representations is germane to Kant, one might want to ask first: What are representational or mental states, if not themselves episodes of consciousness or states of awareness (of whatever magnitude), regardless of issues that have to do with epistemic significance?²⁵ Put negatively, does merely subjectively valid experience consist of having representations of which we are *in no sense* aware?²⁶ Given that, according to Kant, it is not governed by pure apperception (B142), are we to believe that subjectively valid experience consists in (necessarily) *unconscious* representation? How, then, could representations still be accorded subjective value, as modifications of the mind that have no *objective* significance, but which may to a certain extent still be reckoned to amount to consciousness (cf. B242=A197)?²⁷

However, one might want to insist (and I take Allison to be insisting on this line of thought) that representing *as such*, i.e., representing of which I am not aware by virtue of a second-order act of apperception, cannot be taken to be coextensive with consciousness. This is not as odd as I may have made it appear, since presumably Leibniz thought the same: perceptual states need not be conscious or apperceived states.²⁸ Consciousness, then, is to be considered to be exclusively something of a higher order, governed by the constraints of TA. Some conspicuous formulations of Kant's appear to imply that such a construal is justified.

already synthesized representations severally. Collins further emphasizes that there is "no consciousness or experience at all apart from the functions of the understanding" (ibid., 113; cf. ibid., 116). Or, even more clearly, Collins writes that "[i]f we did not experience enduring, causally connected objects immediately, we would not have experience at all and *could not even be conscious*" (ibid., 57; emphasis added).

25 I agree with Guyer here, who observes that the fact "that representations just are impingements on consciousness, and thus cannot exist except as states of consciousness, is incontestable" (1980: 209). Cf. Butts 1981, 266 and Brook 1994, 139.

26 Cf. Butts 1981, 260–261.

27 I should note that, properly speaking, one must differentiate between sentient states such as feelings, representational states and sub-cognitive subjectively valid experience respectively.

28 See Leibniz, *Principes de la nature et de la grâce*, §4.

Kant indeed appears frequently to equate consciousness and apperception (especially in the A-Deduction).²⁹ Moreover, at times Kant appears to suggest that for consciousness to occur, whether subjectively valid or objectively real, a combination, more specifically, a synthetic act of the imagination, should at least have taken place (see e.g. B233).

Now even if it were granted that, in general, first-order mental states must ex hypothesi be empirically conscious states for them to *be* mental states (existentially), someone reasoning in accordance with Allison's line of thinking could still insist that for such states to be *conscious* states they necessarily entail a second-order state (viz., transcendental consciousness).³⁰ Proponents of NER (and I believe not Allison) might then further qualify this requirement by maintaining that such representations must be synthesized, in order to be conscious of them, but that they

29 Kant appears to identify empirical consciousness and the transcendental identity of the self at A115–116. At A117n. he writes that it is “absolutely necessary that in my cognition *all consciousness* belong to one consciousness (of myself)” (emphasis added). Also, at A350 Kant asserts that “consciousness is the one single thing that makes all representations into thoughts, and in which, therefore, as in the transcendental subject, our perceptions must be encountered”. See also MAN 98 Anm. (AA 4: 542) and Metaphysik L₂, AA 28: 584/LM 344. But see R 5923 (AA 18: 386) and AA 28: 227/LM: 46, 47. For a less moderate conception of consciousness that might appear to give credence to NER, consider for example a passage in Metaphysik Mrongovius, where Kant appears to hold the view that the self of transcendental apperception is the condition of consciousness: “Consciousness is the principle of the possibility of the understanding, but not of sensibility. [...] The self underlies consciousness and is what is peculiar to spirit.” (AA 29: 878/ LM 247) Or, a few pages further on: “Inner sense is the consciousness of our representations themselves. (Apperception is the ground of inner sense).” (AA 29: 882/ LM 250–251) By this latter assertion Kant seems to waver between granting inner sense some form of consciousness independent of apperceptive consciousness (in conformity, it seems, with the Critical doctrine of the distinction between inner sense and apperception [B153]) and propounding the view that, if it is to amount to conscious representations, inner sense must have its ground in transcendental apperception, which is the view of NER. Most probably following Baumgarten regarding inner sense, the critical Kant however clearly distinguishes between inner sense and apperception. Given that Baumgarten regards inner sense as “*conscientia strictius dicta*” (*Metaphysica* §535), it seems justified to infer that Kant did not just conflate consciousness with apperception.

30 See Allison 1996, 76. Cf. Allison 1996, 72. Here, in a critique of Gurwitsch, Allison appears to identify consciousness and the conditions for synthesis, for, as he says, “the very act of bringing [a preconceptualized manifold] to consciousness would necessarily subject it to determination by means of the categories.”

may not *effectively* be accompanied by a reflective 'I think' (they contra-distinguish the synthetic and analytic unities of consciousness).³¹ In any case, mental states that do not have a relation of entailment to transcendental self-consciousness must be taken, it is argued, to remain hidden in the dark recesses of the mind, indeed they would be, as Kant says at some point, "but a blind play of representations, i.e., less than a dream" (A112).³² A case can then be made for arguing, as we have seen Allison do, that such states have no *real* representational quality (cognitively speaking), to wit that they are 'without an object'. Allison appears to insist on this latter point, when he claims that by association nothing can be represented, let alone represented *consciously*.³³

However, apart from the question concerning consciousness, if that latter claim is taken at face value, the following question crops up again. What is it we do, in having representations which are not synthesized in and by an act of apperception, other than associatively *represent* 'somethings', "in a orderly fashion, as representations connected according to empirical laws of association", thus in the consecutive order in which they are first prompted, that is, to be so disposed so as to pass from one representation to another?³⁴ We should be mindful that the notion 'representation' has a twofold meaning and can be differentiated into 'representing' and 'represented', so that *every* representing refers *per definitionem* to a represented. These can be further differentiated into 'representing₁' and 'representing₂' and 'represented₁' and 'represented₂' respectively. For sure, in the case of mere associative imagination the relation between a representation and a represented would remain epistemically opaque (being 'nothing to me') and could only be characterized in terms of resemblance in the Humean sense (the one representation "im-

31 This has been suggested to me by Stephen Houlgate in discussion.

32 See L. W. Beck 1978.

33 Allison 1983, 154. See also his discussion of Gurwitsch's interpretation of the 1789 letter to Herz, where Kant appears to suggest that atomistic consciousness that accompanies associative successions of representations is possible; Allison disputes this reading (Allison 1996, 72–74).

34 Kant in a letter to Herz (26 May 1789), AA 11: 52.10–15. Cf. Hume, *Treatise*, I, Part I, section iv. Allison insists that by means of "a unity of representations produced by empirical causal factors (such as association) [...] nothing is represented [...] (or intended through) [...], not even the subject's own psychological state." Further, in spite of Kant's explicit words in the letter that I can be conscious of "each individual representation" when I merely associate, Allison avers that "such a unity is [...] not [...] in any sense a *mode* of awareness." (1996: 74)

mediately resembling, contiguous to, or the cause of the other”³⁵). But a representation would in this case still be a representation and be of *some* significance to the representer (in some subepistemic sense).

As such, mere association would amount to representing representeds without producing any referential content (R-Content) that does not collapse into its presentational content (P-Content), hence without any involvement of the unitary representation ‘I think’.³⁶ To maintain, as Allison appears to do, that in associatively representing *nothing* can be represented is effectively to divest the term ‘representation’ of meaning. Through association representeds are surely represented, namely representeds₂ that are represented by representings₂, in contrast to representeds₁ being the intentional objects of objectively valid representations, representings₁. Evidently, in the case of representeds₂, representations that draw forth other representations would lack, strictly speaking, genuine R-Content. Instead, their representational quality (as representings) or R-Content collapses into their P-Content and no objective reference is made by these representations. But these associative representations nonetheless *represent*. That is what representations do. The view that Allison (and also Robert Pippin; see note 23 above) espouses on this score is, I believe, not supported by the general thrust of Kant’s argument for a distinction between subjective and objective significance (see again A197=B242).

In the following section, I examine more closely the difference between ‘having representations’ and ‘being conscious *of* representations’, which presumably parallels the distinction between sheer representing and consciousness tout court. This discussion bears directly on the issue of the nature of the entailment relation between representations and the ‘I think’, as well as on the parallel relation between consciousness and transcendental self-consciousness.

35 Hume, *Treatise*, I, Part I, section iv.

36 I borrow this distinction from Kitcher 1999, 350–354. The referential content is, as Kitcher writes, “what the mind is aware of through its representation” and presentational content is “what it takes itself to be aware of through its representation”.

3. Are Unaccompanied Representations Unconscious Representations?

I want to dwell on Allison's main point a little longer, viz., the claim that a type difference must be made between 'having representations' (being properties of the mind or mental states) and 'being conscious of having them', which presumably he understands to be the same as a second-order reflexive or apperceptive awareness. Consider an ostensibly similar position advanced by Georg Mohr (1991: 106 ff.), whose detailed view on the matter appears to lend support to Allison's distinction. Mohr reflects on the possible equivalence of 'representation' and 'state of consciousness' (*Bewußtseinszustand*) or 'conscious content' (*Bewußtseinsinhalt*). He believes that these designations are not equivalent. If consciousness were to be taken as equivalent to representation, Mohr reasons, 'having a representation' would indeed imply that one is *eo ipso* conscious of it. It seems that, if representation were equivalent to consciousness this would result in a surreptitious conflation of representing and *apperceiving*, which obviously cannot be true. It is then only appropriate to insist that Kant, as Mohr puts it, "keine Bedeutungsgleichheit zwischen 'Vorstellung' und 'Bewußtseinsinhalt' angenommen [hat]" (107).³⁷

Several reasons seem to corroborate Mohr's distinction and, hence, to bear out Allison's position on this issue. First, Mohr refers to the *Stufenleiter*, which Kant provides at A320=B376–377, where it seems that Kant holds that representation is not to be equated with consciousness. However, I believe reference to the *Stufenleiter* does not lend undeniable support to Mohr's view, for 'representation' is to be taken as the genus of *all* possible species of representation (perceptions etc.), and not itself an actual instantiation of it. The passage does not appear to imply the view that a representation in general (that is, without being a representation with consciousness, i.e., perception) *actually* exists as modification of the mind—as Kant says, "a *perception* that refers to the subject as a modifi-

37 Also Ameriks (2000b: 109) stresses that 'representation' must not be taken to be equivalent to or coextensive with 'consciousness'. I take it that Ameriks does so because he wants to warn against an all too quick identification of consciousness and pure apperception and specifically against Reinholdian speculations regarding the principle of consciousness as a presumed basic ground of cognition (cf. de Muralt 1958, 25, who appears to adopt the Reinholdian view). See further Ameriks 2000b, 238 ff. on what he calls the Strong Apperception Theory (SAT). In many ways, Ameriks' critique of SAT is similar to my critical account of NER.

cation of its state is a *sensation*” (ibid.).³⁸ This would appear to mean that a *perception* is the *minimally* instantiatable form of representation for a mind such as ours. Thus, since any perception is a ‘representation with consciousness’, a sensation is *eo ipso* always conscious, and hence, any *actual* representation, regardless of whether it is objectively or merely subjectively valid, is at least a minimally conscious representation. Given that representations as modifications of the mind must always have a psychological content of some intensity for them to be mentally real (cf. A197), I believe one cannot consistently argue on the basis of the *Stufenleiter* that there are representations that have *no* consciousness attached to them.

The second, systematic, reason Mohr adduces is that, as Mohr writes, “Aufnahme ins Bewußtsein [ist] eine Zusatzbedingung, unter der eine Anschauung stehen muß, um allererst als ‘bewußte Vorstellung’, als Vorstellung ‘vor uns’ gelten zu können”; and further: “Eine Anschauung (sinnliche Vorstellung) erfüllt also die Bedingung, bewußte Vorstellung zu sein, *nicht schon an sich*.”³⁹ Mohr thus asserts that consciousness is the very condition under which a representation can count as a conscious representation, a representation ‘for us’. Apparently, Mohr reasons that it would be logically nonsensical to claim to be consciously representing without the condition for consciousness having been fulfilled. Thus, Mohr rejects the possibility that “A [...] kein Bewußtsein davon [hat], daß es Bewußtsein von X hat” on the grounds that it entails a contradiction. He notes: “Wenn A sich nicht bewußt ist, daß in ihm X vorgestellt wird, dann ist A sich X nicht bewußt.”⁴⁰ Mohr appears to mean that having no second-order consciousness *that* one has a representation implies that there can be no first-order consciousness either.⁴¹ If this is what he means, I believe Mohr commits a fallacy here, which consists in the assumption that consciousness ‘for me’ and consciousness ‘per se’ are equivalent. Presumably, he wants to emphasize that it is trivially true that to be conscious of *x* is not *not to be conscious of x*. But it appears that he understands the notion of consciousness as being already in itself attentive consciousness, that is, consciousness ‘before’ the subject or the ‘I’, although elsewhere he carefully separates intransitive from apperceptive consciousness. One should pay heed that the fact that one does not

38 Notice that Mohr differentiates ‘Bewußtseinsinhalt’ explicitly from Kant’s technical ‘Modifikation unseres Gemüts’ (Mohr 1991, 107; 107n.2).

39 Mohr 1991, 107; emphasis added.

40 Mohr 1991, 115.

41 Cf. Thöle 1991, 68.

consciously attend to one's representations does not constitute in itself a proof of the unconsciousness of representations which are not attended to.⁴²

There is an additional ambiguity in the way Mohr articulates the problem. Mohr is careful not to conflate representing and apperception and also inner sense and apperception. However, given that he argues that *consciousness* is the "Zusatzbedingung" for an intuition to become an intuition "vor uns" and given that according to B132 apperception is precisely that condition which makes a representation be "something for me", apperception and consciousness apparently do coincide for Mohr. On this account, NER would seem unavoidable, the interpretation I take it Mohr works to avoid.

But if one heeds the distinction between mere consciousness and attentive consciousness (only this latter consciousness being coextensive with apperception) there is nothing problematic about the hypothesis Mohr sets up at the beginning of his account and works to undermine, namely the hypothesis that a representational state of mind would perforce be a conscious state of mind (of a particular intensity). The difference, to which Mohr is careful to draw our attention in respect of the epistemically relevant additional condition of *apperceptive* consciousness, would then not be a difference between representing (R) and consciousness (C), but between consciousness₁ (C₁R) and consciousness₂, a 'consciousness *that*' (C₂[C₁R]). This distinction would correspond with the difference between *having* a representation x (a representation being a modification of my mind, viz., a representing₂) and *representing that* one is having a representation x, i.e., having a complex representing₁. What I mean to say here is that differentiated modes of representing parallel differentiated modes of consciousness. In general, when Kant, especially in the A-Deduction, talks about consciousness he means a second-order consciousness, a "consciousness that...", which introduces an obligatory clause (see A103), or "possible consciousness" (B131n.), not just any first-order consciousness.

The transcendental or possible consciousness, which Kant argues is requisite for representational manifolds to be synthesized, is merely formal and not psychologically contentful. This is a point that has been frequently emphasized by Allison. It is not controversial. However, what is often not so clear is that this formal transcendental consciousness should also not be conflated with the empirical *conditions* for psychological con-

42 Cf. Sturma 1985, 42.

sciousness, which are not at issue in TD (see B152). What I am driving at is that nothing in Kant's reasoning with regard to second-order transcendental self-consciousness indicates that unaccompanied or unsynthesized representations (representings₂) must *ipso facto* be unconscious, presumably because transcendental consciousness is a condition of any consciousness. More boldly, I believe that such representations *cannot* really be unconscious, at least insofar as *sensible* representations (percepts of empirical representeds) are concerned, especially if one heeds Kant's thesis that the "proper material [*den eigentlichen Stoff*]" of inner sense consists of the representations of outer sense (B67). Kant says that a sensation—the material of perception (immediately relating to the existence of something= x as that which is not yet determined)—has an intensive magnitude or a degree. In apprehending the sensation at a particular point in time (in abstraction from the extensive magnitude of an appearance, of which sensations constitute its reality or actuality), an empirical consciousness with a certain degree of intensity is effectuated (Kant relates it to "a degree of reality"). The degree of intensity can increase on a scale from zero "until its given measure" or decrease until its magnitude= 0 , which effectively amounts to its negation.⁴³

As I read this, regardless of the issue whether the matter it furnishes pertains to a subjectively or an objectively valid representation, any sensation is necessarily (empirically) *consciously* apprehended, as consciousness is the measure of intensity. I should note that this does not alter the fact that the intensity-principle itself, as part of the system of synthetic principles, must be regarded as a *categorical* principle that is co-constitutive of objective experience (cf. Prol. §24). This principle designates the a priori form (the category of quality) under which one can synthesize the *reality* of appearance, the *quale* of sensation, into an *objective reality*, viz., the existential content of a determinate object.⁴⁴ The property of sensations "of having a degree" is a priori determinable (A176=B218). However, as is generally the case in Kant's theory of experience, a distinction must be heeded between the transcendental character of the anticipation of the intensity of sensations and the *quid facti* with respect to their reality (as having been affected by the things-in-themselves).

This leads me to believe that sensations as such, that is, as the matter of purely sensible apprehension, must be considered to *have* an existential 'quality', a *quale*, before even what Anneliese Maier has called the *Inten-*

43 A167–168=B209–210 and B208. See also B414. Cf. Prol. §§24 (AA 4: 306, 307).

44 Cf. Maier 1930, 60–61.

sitätskategorie can be applied to it so as to constitute a qualitative formal intuition which is subsequently *eo ipso* amenable to an intellectual synthesis and hence to TA.⁴⁵ It is thus that, contrary to Allison (1996: 73), I believe that, by implication, we may ascribe to Kant the view that sub-categorical consciousness, ‘atomistic consciousness’ of qualitative mental percepts, is a perfectly viable notion and even necessary for any representation.⁴⁶

4. Consciousness, Unconsciousness, and Obscurity

At this point we might want to consider a clearer definition of what one understands by ‘unconscious’: does ‘unconscious’ indeed mean ‘not conscious at all’ in the most literal sense, or does it manifest an attempt to express what is conveyed by ‘not *purely* conscious’ (pure in Kant’s sense)?

The former definition would seem to be out of keeping with what we have just discussed as well as Kant’s enunciations at B414 regarding his position on the possibility of a gradual diminishing of consciousness. It would also conflict with the classification of types of representation in the *Stufenleiter* (A320=B376 ff.), as we have seen above. True, in the *An-*

45 Maier 1930, 62. I note that my reading differs in some respects from Maier’s. Maier argues that the *matter* of experience is not identical to the quale, but is “nur zunächst im Quale gegeben” (63).

46 Kant’s position in the Anticipation-chapter, as I have construed it, is confirmed by several passages in his *Lectures on Metaphysics*, for example in *Metaphysik Mrongovius*, where it is reported: “All reality has degree. There are degrees from sensation to thought, i.e., up to apperception, where I think myself with respect to the understanding. *Something can have so little degree that I can scarcely notice it, but nonetheless I am still always conscious of it.*” (*Metaphysik Mrongovius* AA 29: 834/LM: 192; emphasis added) Consider further a passage in the *Metaphysik Vigilantius*: “It follows now from this, that the real, since it has its ground in sensation, therefore in the object of the senses, could not have its abode in the merely intellectual, therefore the degree of the real can thus be thought neither as greatest <maximum> nor as smallest <minimum>. On the other hand, it is certain that the modification of the degree of the intensive magnitude of the real quality must be infinite, *even if it can also be unnoticeable.* Therefore between the determinate degree A until 0=zero there must be found an infinite multitude of qualities of the real, *even if in an unnoticeable degree, e.g., knowledge, representations, yes even the consciousness of human beings have many degrees, without one being able to determine the smallest.*” (AA 29: 1000/LM: 468, emphasis added)

thropology (§5) Kant talks about obscure representations, of which we are “not directly conscious” (AA 7: 135ff).⁴⁷ Kant does not specifically use the expression ‘unconscious representation’ there, although he speaks, somewhat luridly, of “unconsciousness” as “a foretaste of death” in another passage of the *Anthropology* (Anthr. §27)⁴⁸. ‘Obscure’ does however not denote ‘unconscious’ in the strict sense. I believe that here in section 5 of the *Anthropology* Kant merely finds fault with Locke’s view that in any perceiving I simultaneously (ap)perceive that I so perceive, which could be seen as a proto-adverbial view on consciousness (anticipating Pippin’s thesis of ‘ineliminable reflexivity’⁴⁹, which he presents as an adverbial theory of Kantian apperception). Kant is not saying that there could be actual representations with no intensity of consciousness, nor does he say that there could not be conscious representations of which I cannot remember having them. The issue really is whether each or any perceiving is accompanied (individually) by a higher form of consciousness, i.e., transcendental consciousness. Kant negates this question (I believe he follows Leibniz in this). Many perceptions that we have remain unconscious in the sense of not being directly accompanied by this higher consciousness.⁵⁰ Importantly, this is not to say that unaccompanied representations lack *any* intensity of awareness or are unconscious.

Such a reading is confirmed by what Kant asserts at B414n., to wit, that consciousness does not settle the determination of clarity (as the opposite of obscurity), for which belief he in fact criticizes the ‘logicians’ (he presumably refers to Meier). Again, Kant here emphasizes that even in obscure representations there must be a degree of consciousness (hence the label ‘obscure’) to be able to make a minimal distinction but which is short of conceptual recognition, or, second-order awareness. Mere consciousness would not be sufficient to make a representation clear, just as much as there must be possible consciousness, as an ability to make distinctions, that does not already belong to the ‘higher cognitive faculty’. That amount of consciousness in a representation is concerned that enables a consciousness of the difference between it and other representations (cf. Anthr. §6). In other words, a difference must be made between

47 Cf. *Metaphysik* Mrongovius, AA 29: 879/LM 248.

48 Cf. Klemme 1996, 188, who quotes a passage in Kant’s lecture on Anthr. *Menschenkunde*, where Kant speaks of ‘unconscious’ representation.

49 Pippin 1997, 39.

50 See also Kitcher 1999, 346 ff. esp. 348–349.

mere consciousness and its various grades and clear consciousness, not just between consciousness and unconsciousness—notice that the clarity of apperceptive consciousness might equally not be great, psychologically speaking (see e.g. A103–104).

Moreover, as we saw Kant observe earlier, unconsciousness in the literal sense would be close or perhaps identical to (the instant of) death. Even a comatose person therefore cannot be said, on a purely physiological level, to be completely unconscious, given the graded nature Kant accords to consciousness. Evidently, there is a difference between being in a coma, i.e., being in a certain psychological or sensible or even vegetative state that is utterly unreportable, and the instant when death, viz., absolute unconsciousness (brain death), actually sets in. This suggests that absolutely unconscious representations have no real purchase because the corresponding sensations would perforce have no reality (since their intensive magnitude would equal zero). Consciousness is thus strictly related to existence (B414), whilst unconsciousness in the strict sense is equivalent to non-existence.

Two correlated remarks are in order: (1) unconscious representations would not have any physiologically registrable correlate in reality, whether in outer or inner sense, and more importantly, (2) it is impossible that one could perceive the absence of the real, hence consciousness, in sensible intuition, and so prove that unconsciousness is something real. Kant remarks at A172=B214: “[N]o perception, hence also no experience, is possible that, whether immediately or mediately [...], would prove an entire absence of everything real in appearance, i.e., a proof of empty space or of empty time can never be drawn from experience. For, first, the entire absence of the real in sensible intuition cannot itself be perceived, and, second, it cannot be deduced from any single appearance and the difference in the degree of its reality, nor may it ever be assumed for the explanation of that.” Mutatis mutandis, given that for Kant consciousness is coextensive with reality (B414), one could argue that neither proof of unconsciousness nor a disproof of the consciousness of merely subjectively valid representations, i.e., non-apperceptive states, is feasible.

Considering an insight offered by Strawson’s critique of sense datum experience could shed light on this.⁵¹ Strawson argued that in the case of a pure sense datum experience (putatively a unitary consciousness of separate awarenesses at any singular time) the *esse* and *percipi* of a sense datum would collapse into each other. There would be no distinction be-

51 See Strawson 1966, 100 ff.

tween object of awareness and act of awareness in a single sense-datum-experience. The accusative of awareness has no existence independent of the awareness of it. In having the sense datum one would *eo ipso* be instantly aware of it, without however recognizing that one is aware of it, for there is no web of co-referentiality within which the single datum could be contrasted with other such data. Only the relation to an identical item over time (in a co-referential sequence of such awarenesses that refer to this item) saves the recognitional component from being absorbed into its object. For Strawson, evidently, this gives rise to the belief that a pure sense-datum experience is intrinsically contradictory: no awareness of a separate impression (I perceive *x*, I perceive *y*, I perceive *z* and so on) could occur without certain constraints that enable the recognition of the impression as that particular impression, these constraints solely being provided by the connectedness of impressions, which in turn rests on the connectedness of spatiotemporal objects. This then, presumably, invalidates the cogency of the claim that one could be (intuitively) aware of a single sense datum, given that by awareness one understands a *bona fide* consciousness of the recognitional type and not mere animal sentience.

Pace Strawson, however, I believe the opaqueness of the relation between act and object of awareness in an ostensible sense-datum experience does not *ex hypothesi* invalidate the concept of a sub-recognitional relation between an act of empirical apperception and its object (I mean recognition in the specific sense of conceptual recognition). Without the capacity for recognition, one could not know that one was severally conscious of one's sense data (the multifarious representations that I have consecutively), but—and this is in contrast to Strawson—even so one could not know that one was *not* conscious of them severally (i.e. in a sub-recognitional sense).

On Kant's account subrecognitional consciousness is surely possible, given that he elsewhere associates empirical apperception with the intuitive, i.e., non-discursive, consciousness of the 'I' of apprehension, viz., an accompaniment by empirical consciousness that has no relation to an 'identical subject', which latter is the co-referential 'I' of cognitive reflection (see also his account in the letter to Herz [26 May 1789], AA 11: 52.7). Wolfgang Carl has rightly observed, with reference to A107, that empirical apperception, the type of accompaniment also meant by Kant at B133 (AA 3: 109.16 ff.)⁵², is a type of empirical consciousness that is

52 Cf. B235 (AA 3: 168.15–19).

“forever variable”. In other words, as Carl writes, “[d]as Bewußtsein der Apprehension ist [...] ein Bewußtsein, das sich mit der Veränderung der Vorstellungen selber ändert”.⁵³ He further notes that this kind of consciousness “nur die Art und Weise charakterisiert, in der wir gegebene Vorstellungen haben”.⁵⁴ Because this kind of consciousness modulates in accordance with the persistent flow or flux of representations as they are prompted, the relation between such consciousness and representations remains opaque.

I thus maintain that Kant himself did not believe that TA is a condition even of such ‘forever variable’ empirical self-consciousness as NER holds. If we put the difference between the two types of conscious apperception (empirical and transcendental) in terms of Kant’s terminology of ‘begleiten’, I believe we must take ‘begleiten’ in two ways: either (1) in relation to a propositional ‘I think’-accompaniment of representations, in which the ‘accompanying’ relation between the accompanied representations and the ‘I think’ is clear and distinct (at B131–2); this is the sense of ‘begleiten’ that is meant by the ‘I think’ proposition that we started out analyzing; or, (2) in ‘relation’ to discrete representations, in which the relation between the representations accompanied and ‘empirical consciousness’ remains obscure or opaque in Strawson’s sense, that is, cognitively indeterminate (B133). In the latter case, the accompaniment coalesces with the representation so accompanied (as Strawson notes, the *esse* and *percipi* collapse into one; no conceptual recognition occurs). In other words, in such a case consciousness does not differentiate itself from its representation.⁵⁵

5. The Necessary Possibility of Non-Apperceptive Consciousness

But how now to read the apperception principle in a way that accommodates non-apperceptive consciousness? If we look at the possible cases of satisfaction of Kant’s apperception principle, then we can learn by analysis that NER, and by implication SAR and ECR, cannot be true. It is

53 At A169=B210 Kant speaks of “instantaneous [*augenblickliche*] apprehension”, a “moment”.

54 Carl 1992, 64.

55 I expand on Kant’s distinction between the two kinds of ‘accompanying [*begleiten*]’ (an accompanying of “all my representations”, as Kant writes at B131, and an accompanying of “each representation” at B133; notice the important distinction of the determiner ‘all’ and ‘each’) in Schulting 2012.

not at all the case that all possible representations must be accompanied by an 'I think', nor that all representations (sic) necessarily entail the transcendental unity of apperception; nor do all of them (sic) effectively belong to the thoroughgoing identity of my self-consciousness, in the possessive sense (as on ECR). This can be shown in a breakdown of the 'I think' proposition into its possible logical modalities P. Assume the necessity of possibility P1.⁵⁶

de facto, 'I think' accompanies all my representations

If P1, then ex hypothesi it must also be possible that

P2: *de facto, 'I think' does not accompany all my representations*

and/or:

P3: *de facto, 'I think' does not accompany any representations that happen to occur and are so occurrent in the mind at any time t at which the 'I think' is not instantiated*

and/or:

P4: *de facto, 'I think' does not accompany any representations that happen to occur and are so occurrent in the mind at any time t at which the 'I think' is not instantiated, and that are also interminably barred from being able to be so accompanied, i. e., such representations that evanesce immediately after having been prompted and leave no significant traces for possible retention and 'taking up' by an act of apperception (some representations may simply not be able to be retained or retrieved)*

P2 is obviously spurious, for it is logically inconsistent for me, as the subject of thought, to assert that 'I' am thinking (effectively or de facto)—or to assent, whilst thinking, to the proposition 'I am thinking'—and yet not

56 Notice that here an analysis, *ad oculos reflexionis*, of the possible cases of satisfaction of the 'I think'-proposition in terms of its necessary logical purport is concerned; it is not suggested that the existential necessity of the instantiation of the 'I think' or indeed the necessity of an actual occurrence of empirical consciousness is at issue. What is my concern here is to extract the logically necessary possibilities and impossibilities given that the 'I think' either is or is not existentially instantiated.

to accompany my representations that I am *thereby* thinking. In other words, P2 amounts to a contradiction. As Kant says in his early work the *Inquiry*, in accordance with the law of identity, “to no subject does there belong a predicate which contradicts it” (AA 2: 294). The possessive pronoun ‘my’ in the predicate ‘all my representations’ refers rigidly. Those representations are *my* representations that *I* accompany as such by *effectively* thinking them.⁵⁷ This is shown by P1. P1 is analytically true: the totality of *my* representations that are occurrent share the *same* common mark ‘I think’, just in case I am accompanying them (as *my* representations “all together [*insgesamt*]”, as Kant puts it at B132)⁵⁸, by means of the act of thinking, precisely *when* I am in the business of thinking (representing in a particular way).

P3 reflects the case of a representer R representing any arbitrary occurrent representation x,y,z. Whilst in this case P1 is not satisfied, R would nonetheless be the representer of x,y,z, even if not aware of being in the business of representing and *a fortiori* self-aware (stricto sensu) of doing so.⁵⁹ (R does not accompany his representations in the transcendental way, but merely in the empirical way by just *having* them in any arbitrary array peculiar to his actual physio-psychological stance at a particular time. Strictly speaking, R does not *think*.) Furthermore, P3 leaves open whether representations are in future apperceived; it might or might not happen.

57 NER and NER' appear to argue that when P1 is satisfied P2 is still possible, namely when the possibility of reflective consciousness (an 'I think' reflecting on her states) is at any rate necessarily presupposed (which accounts for the 'must' in the proposition) but not actually instantiated (which ostensibly accounts for the 'be able'). This would suggest that 'I think' is indeed some psychological reflection on one's first-order states. But this construal shows a misunderstanding of the modality of the proposition.

58 The predeterminer 'all' in the predicate 'all my representations' creates an ambiguity, for Kant's proposition could, at first sight, be construed such that it posits that the 'I think' does not effectively accompany all, but only some of my representations, which could lead one to presume that P2 is not strictly speaking false. This is indeed the route that NER takes. But this reading of 'all' misconstrues the quantitative aspect of apperception. I deal with this aspect in Schulting 2012.

59 Take the example of Kant's brute in the Jäsche Logic (AA 9: 33) and in ÜE, AA 8: 217n.

P4 is a real Lockean possibility.⁶⁰ Although Kant does not explicitly, at least not in the *Critique*,⁶¹ venture an opinion on the possibilities P3 and P4, of which it is further open to question if they are anything more than merely formally distinguishable, these are surely logically inferable from the ‘I think’-proposition. This is confirmed by some of Kant’s assertions in the text of the Deduction. P3/4-representations are representations, which, as Kant puts it, are “nothing for me” (B132), which is consistent with the rigid reference of the possessive determiner ‘my’ of P1-representations.⁶²

If, in conformity with B132 (AA 3: 108.29–30), where Kant indicates that ‘I think’ designates transcendental *self-consciousness*⁶³, we substitute the predicate ‘all my (episodes of) consciousness’ for ‘all my representations’, an analogous account can be given of the putative entailment relation between consciousness and self-consciousness (as NER and NER’ suppose), so that the necessary possibility P1 reads as:

P1’: *de facto, the ‘I think’ accompanies all my (episodes of) consciousness*

If P1’, then it must also be possible that:

P2’: *de facto, the ‘I think’ does not accompany all my (episodes of) consciousness*

and/or:

60 See Locke, *Essay*, Book II, Ch. XXVII, §20, where he considers the following objection: “Suppose I wholly lose the memory of some parts of my Life, beyond a possibility of retrieving them, so that perhaps I shall never be conscious of them again.” (cf. §14)

61 Cf. *Metaphysik* Mrongovius, AA 29: 908/LM: 274.

62 Notice that, significantly, at A116 Kant speaks of “all possible representations” without the pronominal determiner ‘my’. See also A111, where Kant speaks of “all possible appearances”, which stand in a relation to apperception; also at A113 Kant says that “all possible appearances belong, as representations, to the whole possible self-consciousness”. Kant might be taken to suggest ECR, or at least NER, in these passages.

63 See also B68: “Das Bewußtsein seiner selbst (Apperzeption) ist die einfache Vorstellung des Ich.” The English translation of Guyer/Wood is not precise here; by translating ‘das Bewusstsein seiner selbst’ as ‘consciousness of itself’ it is suggested that Kant speaks of consciousness tout court, rather than self-consciousness. Moreover, the reflexive sense of the German is lost in translation. Kemp Smith is more exact here.

P3': *de facto*, the 'I think' does not accompany any (episode of) consciousness that happens to occur and is so occurrent in the mind at any time *t* at which the 'I think' is not instantiated

and/or:

P4': *de facto*, 'I think' does not accompany any (episode of) consciousness that happens to occur and is so occurrent in the mind at any time *t* at which the 'I think' is not instantiated, and that is also interminably barred from being able to be so accompanied, i.e. because such an episode of consciousness decreases until zero before it can even be retrieved for apperception

P3'- and P4'-consciousness signal the failure of satisfaction of P1'.⁶⁴ P3' allows of possible satisfaction of P1', but P4' does not. Again, since P1' indicates a necessary possibility, it seems that P4' is not allowed for. But P4' is a real possibility, and P1' only concerns episodes of 'all my consciousness', not just any consciousness; there is "complete identity" between the 'I think' and 'my consciousness of 'all my representations'', but not between the 'I think' and any arbitrary consciousness (cf. A362-A363).

Notice that it is necessarily possible that P3'. However, P2' is spurious, because it is contradictory for me to state that 'I am not self-aware of all my consciousness', because 'I-consciousness' is analytic to 'my consciousness'. The possibilities of P3' and P4', which are episodes of non-apperceptive consciousness, are inferred necessary possibilities. As was the case with P3 and P4, P3' and P4'-episodes of consciousness are not reportably dissociable episodes of consciousness for they are psychologically opaque, or, in language that Kant was familiar with, obscure.⁶⁵

From this it follows that the 'I think' does not indicate a capacity for either representation (NER) or psychological consciousness as such. The 'I think'-proposition, or pure apperception, does not engender conscious-

64 Cf. André de Muralt 1958, 55–56 ("Le sujet peut bien avoir conscience de ses représentations, mais l'une lui échappe au moment de l'apprehension de l'autre. Il se produit ainsi un flot continu d'impressions sensible qui apparaissent tour à tour dans la conscience pour disparaître ensuite aussi vite qu'elles étaient venues. [...] le sujet n'est pas capable de prendre conscience de son intégrité [...] le sujet n'est pas capable par lui-même de retenir ses différentes représentations et de lutter contre l'anéantissement des diverses consciences empiriques dans le temps fuyant.")

65 Cf. Kant's letter to Herz of May 26, 1789, in AA 11: 52.10–15.

ness nor is it necessarily coextensive with empirical consciousness, even though it is true that transcendental consciousness or self-consciousness is contingent on psychological, first-order, consciousness.

P3⁺- or P4⁺-consciousness does not play any significant role in Kant's argument for synthesis and pure apperception. These types of consciousness are not synthesized in the purely apperceptive sense; they are not a subspecies of self-consciousness, nor do they necessarily entail transcendental self-consciousness; this then disproves NER, NER⁺, ECR but also SAR, which I haven't discussed. Also Pippin's controversial thesis that all consciousness is 'ineliminably reflexive' (1997: 39) must be dismissed on these grounds. P3⁺ or P4⁺-consciousness is what could be called non-apperceptive consciousness and the ground for it is, as I have argued, provided by the apperception principle itself.

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