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Message from the President

Francis Peddle

This issue of *ELEUTHERIA* contains a series of book reviews by Peter McCormick on Japanese philosophy and culture, and a piece by myself on Kant's "Amphiboly of the Concepts of Reflection." Next year will be the tenth anniversary of the publication of *ELEUTHERIA*. The Board of Directors has decided to publish a bound copy of all ten volumes, or twenty issues, with an introductory essay on the role of speculative philosophy in modernity. Those members wishing to order copies in advance should contact the Institute as only a limited number will be published.

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The Dominican College of Philosophy and Theology, where James Lowry and myself are professors, recently inaugurated a Ph.D. program in philosophy. We think this program is unique in its concentration on the history of philosophy, the theory of the history of philosophy, metaphysics, value theory and philosophical anthropology. The description states that "the programme is designed so that the more traditional history of philosophy courses tie in with the theory of the history of philosophy courses and so that both will intersect with themes in metaphysics." For more information about the Ph.D. program please contact the Chairperson of the Philosophy Department,

Gabor Csepregi at (613) 233-5696. The Dominican College will celebrate its centenary in the year 2000.

As reported in the last issue the Internet is rapidly becoming a vast storehouse of information on philosophy. It now provides access to all the major texts of our philosophical and cultural traditions. We will regularly update our readership on philosophical resources on the Internet that are of particular interest to speculative philosophy and the objectives of the Institute. A particularly useful site is a hypertext version of Norman Kemp Smith's translation of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* at <http://www.arts.cuhk.edu.hk/Philosophy/Kant/cpr>. This web site is especially valuable for scholars, and those engaged in graduate work on Kant, because it allows for word searches of the English text. Another excellent site, organized by topic, with links to an extensive range of philosophical information, is Philosophy in Cyberspace at <http://www.personal.monash.edu.au/~dey/phil/index.htm>. As any user of the Internet knows once you get online you can go just about anywhere with enough persistence. I encourage members who utilize the Internet to send us via Email their web site recommendations.

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With the Fall issue of *ELEUTHERIA* we once again enclose our annual request for membership renewal. If anyone has professional questions about charitable donations for the Institute, or about how to contribute to the Institute's Endowment Fund, they should contact me.

MODERN JAPANESE PHILOSOPHY: UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXTS

Peter McCormick

One major difficulty in coming to intellectual grips with the extraordinary richness of philosophical reflection in twentieth-century Japan is understanding its unfamiliar and still controversial contexts. With new translations of the most important work in this substantial body of materials appearing regularly, and with growing curiosity about Japan's intellectual and not just economic importance, and, unlike the case of Germany, with the still unsettled business of Japan's politicians and people finally assuming full responsibility for the unresolved burdens of the past, coming to a critical appreciation of the complicated contexts of such work is no longer the business of Japanologists only. Fortunately, a number of recent and excellent books have appeared that will prove indispensable for shouldering that difficult task.

For philosophers both in Japan and abroad, perhaps the most challenging part of that task is coming to critical terms with the very substantial ties during the war years from 1933 to 1945 between Japanese political and military nationalism and the philosophical work of such Kyoto School philosophers as Nishida Kitaro and his students, Tanabe Hajime and Nishitani Keiji. At a time when Heidegger's ties with Nazism in Germany and Paul de Man's ties with anti-semitism in Belgium have sensitized Anglo-American philosophers and others to the vulnerabilities of philosophical reflection to pernicious ideologies, it comes as no surprise that the relations between Kyoto School philosophy and nationalism in Japan have occasioned fresh scrutiny. Nonetheless, understanding those relations is no easy matter.

An essential starting point for such understand-

ing surely is history. And, although much distinguished work on the modern history of Japan has been available outside Japan and has been pursued vigorously in a clutch of different European languages for several generations now, two new works are especially helpful. The first, despite its title and university textbook flavor, G. D. Allinson's *Japan's Postwar History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), supplies in its long first chapter, "Antecedents: 1932-1945," an impressive synthesis of the political, economic, and social backgrounds of modern Japanese philosophy. A professor of East Asian Studies at The University of Virginia and a close student of Japanese political dynamics for many years, Allinson stresses the general climate of inequality, instability, and insecurity that characterized this period. But even though his book provides a very helpful, and concise, reading of Japanese history across roughly a sixty-year period, and supplies the usual resources of maps, photographs, chronologies, and suggested readings, Allinson resolutely keeps his analysis free from any contamination by intellectual history. So, little of direct interest is available here for those who would try to develop a critical grasp of the intellectual contexts of modern Japanese philosophy. Nonetheless, the larger and indispensable frameworks within which that philosophy developed are set out with admirable thoroughness and care.

To win access to a larger view that might encompass the intellectual together with the social, economic, and political requires standing at a somewhat greater distance from the

times Allinson details. Such a standpoint is what S. N. Eisenstadt, an emeritus professor of sociology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and at the University of Chicago, has elaborated in his magnum opus, *Japanese Civilization: A Comparative View* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996). Eisenstadt is a very well-known scholar who brings to this extraordinary book a life-time's study of languages, travels, readings, friendships, and reflections.

His book begins in the mid-nineteenth century with the emergence of the modern Japanese state and society in the Meiji Era. In a richly orchestrated work of more than 450 pages (with another 100 plus pages of notes), Eisenstadt presents his synthesis of Japanese society, religion, and culture in three main parts: modern and contemporary Japan, aspects of Japanese historical experience, and the framework of Japanese historical experience in a comparative perspective. The amount of material Eisenstadt has managed to integrate in this far-ranging and searchingly critical work is truly impressive. Evaluating the perspective he finally constructs will occupy scholars in different disciplines for some years to come.

Those however who may turn to his work in search of greater clarity about the sources of the instability, insecurity, and inequalities that marked the thirties and forties of our own century can only delight in the richness of detail Eisenstadt provides for the formative periods of modern Japanese intellectual history in the mid and late nineteenth century. Without that detail in view, for example in the chapters on the transformations of Confucianism and Buddhism and on Japanese modernity, any understanding of the appropriate contexts of modern Japanese philosophy must remain superficial.

These historical and sociological backgrounds, however, whether viewed from a relatively short-range as in Allinson's work or even from the

much longer perspective that opens out from the very beginnings of the modern Japanese state and society in the middle of the nineteenth century, remain incomplete. Closer attention is required to the cultural particularities of the twenties and thirties of this century to situate properly the distinctive body of work we think of today as modern Japanese philosophy. For even if Eisenstadt provides a necessary corrective to Allinson's exclusion of the cultural from his survey of that period, Eisenstadt's own purposes are much more general than what would allow of a sufficiently detailed picture of the intellectual and artistic movements that make up the immediate situation of Japanese philosophical reflection during that period. Two quite recent works are helpful in filling this gap. The first provides a preeminently literary focus on these crucial years, while the second looks carefully at the philosophical aesthetics of a thinker who, while connected with several of the leading figures of the Kyoto School, nonetheless remained apart from that group.

In his relatively short, well-written, and well-researched book, *Dreams of Difference: The Japan Romantic School and the Crisis of Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), K. M. Doak studies closely the writings, both texts and translations, of a group of some fifty Japanese writers and critics over a ten-year period from the mid-thirties to the mid-forties. He is particularly concerned to trace their various understandings and responses to what they themselves took to be a "cultural crisis" and not just a political or social crisis.

Many of these writers understood this cultural crisis in terms of a loss of tradition. In trying to respond to that loss, they turned often for imaginative inspiration and resources to early nineteenth century European romanticisms. These resources however were not substantial enough to keep the Japanese romantic movement from succumbing eventually to immensely

powerful nationalism of the times.

A very different approach to some of the central ideas and discussions of these same years is to be found in Leslie Pincus's book, *Authenticating Culture in Imperial Japan: Kuki Shuzo and the Rise of National Aesthetics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996). Pincus tries to bring out the peculiar struggle of Japanese intellectuals with European modernism, their attempt to appropriate an alien modernism while maintaining their own cultural identity, by adopting a much sharper focus than Doak does. Thus, instead of examining closely an important group of intellectuals from the thirties and forties, Pincus focuses on one figure only, the cosmopolitan Japanese aesthete, Kuki Shuzo (1888-1941). Moreover, Pincus restricts herself mainly to the last ten years of Kuki's life and activities after his return from a seven-year stay in Germany and France.

During this long stay abroad Kuki studied first in Germany with the neo-Kantian Heinrich Rickert and then with the phenomenologists, Husserl and his student, Heidegger. Later he moved to France to study with the aged Bergson and subsequently with Sartre. Returning to Kyoto in 1929, Kuki began his teaching career at the Imperial University, becoming a full professor in 1935. His most important work, a very highly influential study in aesthetics entitled *The Structure of Iki* and his difficult thesis *On Contingency*, is just starting to appear in English. Quite importantly, during his years in Kyoto which were the heyday of the Kyoto School, Kuki kept himself very much apart from Nishida and his successor Tanabe. He died prematurely in 1941.

Pincus wants to examine the general intellectual strategy so many intellectuals of Kuki's time had adopted of trying to determine the authenticity of Japanese culture while continuing to appropriate the forms and discourse of European

modernism. Her approach is to examine this general strategy by looking quite closely at a case study. Kuki Shuzo is an almost ideal figure since he developed an extensive first-hand knowledge of European modernism intellectual trends in both Germany and France. Moreover, he tried to personify in his own way of life, even after his return to the academic rituals and expectations of Kyoto's Imperial University, an aesthetic ideal he had already carefully studied while preparing his book on the structure of Iki. The already evident drift of Japanese society however toward mass politics, mass culture, and increasing militarization fatally compromised this ideal.

Pincus's study, sometimes marred by its eclectic uses of post-structuralist, neo-Marxist, and Frankfurt cultural studies jargon, is nonetheless a thoughtful and searching investigation of a key representative of the cultural turmoil surrounding the more famous Kyoto School philosophers and their activities. Her epilogue, "How the Cultural Landscape Became the Property of the State," is a fine summary of original study.

Whatever the many merits of these studies--the precise and careful overview of Japanese politics, economics, and society in Allinson, the extraordinary and original synthesis of almost a hundred and fifty years of Japanese society and culture in Eisenstadt, Doak's diagnosis of cardinal features in the central period in twentieth-century Japanese intellectual history after his dissection of the Japanese Romantic movement, and Pincus's carefully chosen privileged instance of Kuki Shuzo's unsuccessful struggle with the nationalization of culture--none alone is so helpful for understanding the contexts of modern Japanese philosophy as the collection of articles, edited by J. W. Heisig and J. Maraldo, entitled *Rude Awakenings: Zen, the Kyoto School, and the Question of Nationalism* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1995).

The editors have brought together fifteen papers by Japanese and non-Japanese scholars, mainly in philosophy and religion, first presented at a specially convened symposium in Santa Fe in March 1994 under the auspices of the Nanzan Institute of Religion and Culture (Nagoya) with the support of the Taniguchi Foundation (Kyoto). The Japanese papers were specially translated for this volume.

The collection divides easily into four parts. In Part One, "Questioning Zen," four papers, two by Japanese scholars and two by Americans, examine Zen Buddhist attitudes to the war, Zen nationalism, and the philosophies of D. T. Suzuki and Nishida. The second part's three papers including two by Japanese scholars one of whom is the very well known religious philosopher, Ueda Shizuteru, focus sharply, under the heading of "Questioning Nishida," on Nishida's relation to tradition, nationalism, and totalitarianism. Part Three, "Questioning Modernity," with again three papers this time two by Americans including K. M. Doak and one by a Japanese scholar, take up the difficult issue of Japanese understandings of modernity and especially the discussions in the revealing symposium, "Overcoming Modernity," held in July 1942. Finally, Part Four entitled "Questioning the Kyoto School," comprises five papers that widen the scope of the inquiry to examine not just Zen and Nishida but the work of both Tanabe and Nishitani as well from the critical standpoint of whether Kyoto philosophy can be properly described as "intrinsically nationalistic."

One of the most important contributions in this final section of the collection is Horio Tsutomu's searching analysis of three notorious discussions between November 1941 and November 1942 (called the Chuokoron Discussions after the journal sponsoring them) involving four members of the Kyoto School. These discussions came to be seen as symbolic of the Kyoto School's ultimate capitulation to the militaristic ideology of the times.

In addition to gathering in one place a set of very distinguished pieces by some of the most knowledgeable persons working in the area of modern Japanese philosophy today, the editors have also provided a superlative cumulative index which complements the very rich bibliographical material appearing in the footnotes.

This collection is an outstanding contribution to our still quite imperfect understanding not just of the intellectual contexts of modern Japanese philosophy but to its extremely difficult and dangerous themes – religious experience, philosophical reflection, and ideological subversions. No one who wishes to come to intellectual grips with any of the major works of modern Japanese philosophy, even those of philosophers like Watsuji Tetsuro, Kuki Shuzo, and others who were not members of the Kyoto School, will need to read and carefully study this superb collection. Understanding these materials however will still require reaching out beyond the confines of intellectual history and philosophical inquiry themselves into the areas of economics, sociology, politics, aesthetics, and cultural studies that works like those of Allinson, Eisenstadt, Doak, and Pincus so ably elucidate. We are fortunate indeed to have such work on hand today.

KANT'S AMPHIBOLY AND THE FIRST DIVISION OF TRANSCENDENTAL PHILOSOPHY

Francis Peddle

The Appendix to the Transcendental Analytic of Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* is entitled "The Amphiboly of the Concepts of Reflection." The nomenclature can be arresting, but "amphiboly," from the Greek *amphiballein*, to throw around, merely signifies the ambiguous, the confused. The concepts of reflection (Reflexionsbegriffe) are not the well known categories or pure concepts of the understanding, but "comparison concepts."¹ They do not exhibit the object according to what makes up its concept but rather exhibit the comparisons of presentations that precedes the concepts of things. The concepts of reflection are nonetheless the product of transcendental reflection. Kant views them as pivotal to gaining insight into the operations of the understanding.

Understanding (Verstand) is the capacity for judgment, delimited by Kant to subject/predicate relation. All judging requires deliberation (Überlegung). A transcendental deliberation is an act whereby the comparison of presentations (Vorstellungen) generally is such that we are able to distinguish the presentations as belonging to pure understanding or sensible intuition.² The "transcendental" is, for Kant, among other characterizations, a way of

cognizing objects insofar as such cognizing is possible a priori. Transcendental ideality is through and through metempirical, non-contingent and strictly universal, both non-comparatively and non-inductively.

A transcendental amphiboly is the confusion of a pure object of the understanding with appearances or appearances with things-in-themselves.³ A transphenomenal or transcendental employment of the concepts of the understanding is as much an epistemological felony as the extension of noumenal thought-predicates to the space/time-dictions of possible experience. Either misapplication is a transcendental subreption. These errors or fallacies of subreption are a familiar theme of the earlier *Inaugural Dissertation* (1770).

How concepts are to be compared or related to one another falls under four headings: sameness/difference; agreement/conflict; intrinsic/extrinsic and determinable/determination (matter/form). Each heading requires some comment as important noumenal/phenomenal dichotomies can be gleaned therefrom in addition to providing the framework for discussions of the transcendental object in the "Comment on the Amphiboly of the Concepts of Reflection" and of the first division of transcendental philosophy into the possible and the impossible.

¹ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, unified edition, tr. Werner S. Pluhar (Indianapolis, Hackett Publishing Co., 1996), A.262, see also, A.269.

² *Ibid.*, A.261.

³ *Ibid.*, A.270 and A.272.

Only an object of the pure understanding partakes of sameness. It is the same object and not many. The understanding cannot think of two things that are exactly the same because it obviously has no grounds for limning the distinction. In the phenomenal field, difference is pervasive and even space itself, as the condition of outer sensibility, signifies difference and plurality. Space is unitary, but it has an infinite multitude of presentations within itself. Separate spaces and indeed separate times are limited extracts from pure intuitions.

Pure understanding, which is immediately divisible, after the splaying apart of the original synthetic unity of apperception and after the synthesizing and transcendental operations of the pure imagination, into the concepts of reflection and the categories, is described by Kant as *realitas noumenon*. It contains no conflict. The relation between these noumenal realities or subjects is such that they do not annul each other's consequences. Contrariwise, phenomenal realities when united in one subject can displace the consequences of one another, e.g. pleasure counterbalancing pain and the like. With the comparative concepts of agreement and conflict we confront the qualitative phenomenal give and take of reality and negation on the one hand and unifying, non-conflictual realities on the other. Kant seems to once again have Leibniz's monadic simples in mind when contrasting agreement with conflict.

An object of pure understanding is intrinsic, or again *realitas noumenon*. All determinations of phenomena, on the other hand, are nothing but relations and external.⁴ Leibniz is Kant's elder amphibolist, intellectualizing

appearances by an overreliance on the pure understanding. He turned all substances into "simple subjects endowed with the powers of presentation" and thus absolutized the monads.⁵ The diremptive spatio-temporal configurations of experience can only be understood and interpreted as relating externally. To postulate anything beyond such external relation is amphibolic.

Matter is the determinable (Bestimmbare), form is determination (Bestimmung). Leibniz and others thought that matter precedes form because of the amphiboly of linking determination with objects as such or things-in-themselves. The understanding demands that something be given at least in concept and then determined (formed) in a certain way. This amphiboly is held in check by the transcendental aesthetic which tells us that sensible intuition is only of appearances, not of objects directly, and that space and time as the forms of intuition must logically precede all data of experience or all matter, i.e., sensations. The forms of intuition are in a more immediate relationship with sensible intuition and as such cannot be said to fall as decisively on the side of transcendental ideality as the categories and the three previous antitheses in the concepts of reflection.

The following general comments can be made about the concepts of reflection. They correlate with the architectonic of the categories, although Kant only explicitly associates sameness/difference with the quantitative class and agreement/conflict with the qualitative. The comparative concepts also have an uncanny resemblance with the antinomies of the system of cosmological ideas in the Transcendental

⁴ *Ibid.*, A.265.

⁵ *Ibid.*, A.266.

Dialectic. The first concept in each pair correlates with the noumenal realities postulated by the thesis of each antinomy, while difference, conflict, externality and the determinations of form are associated with the experiential field of phenomena. One might say that the latter concepts of reflection are normally the everyday business of science, whereas the former, along with their thetic equivalents in the transcendental cosmology, are the concern of religion.

Both sets of concepts and postulates give rise to a variety of dogmatisms and reductionisms. The thetic side of the antitheses produces thought-predicates that are too small for the understanding, the countertheses ones that are too large. Pure reason rests on a natural dialectic. The logic of illusion is apodeictic. Transcendental delusion is the preeminent critical element in both the "Amphiboly" and the "Dialectic." Tirelessly driving forward the conditions of intelligibility in phenomenal science invariably gives rise to the restraints put on rampant empirical surgery by religion. Equally, the fortresses of religious dogma are assailed by advancing interpretive knowledge and by comparative reflection enmeshed in the phenomenal.

Kant is able to purge the cognitive field of amphibolic doctrines by restricting the categories to possible experience and our knowledge of objects to the phenomenal or the objectively indirect. Noumenal realities, populated by transcendental subjects and objects, are limited in their advances from the opposite direction, as both a negative boundary and a causal influence on phenomenal effect or that which is related wholly externally.

The "Comment on the Amphiboly of the

Concepts of Reflection," which is primarily taken up with a critique of Leibniz's amphibolic crimes, starts with a discussion of transcendental location and transcendental topic. The former is the position of a concept in either the understanding or sensibility. A transcendental topic is the instruction or methodology for how one determines the location of concepts.⁶ The four headings for the concepts of reflection previously detailed provide the framework for such an exercise. Without a transcendental topic it is impossible to discern which concepts belong to the two ultimate sources of cognition, understanding and sensibility. Furthermore, without recognizing the dual origin of presentation one falls into the intellectualization of appearances or the sensualization of the categories as in Leibniz and Locke respectively.

There follows in the "Comment" a lengthy examination of Leibniz's errors of subreption. We need not concern ourselves here with its analysis or apprise its accuracy in relation to Leibniz's intellectual system of the world or monadology. He ignored transcendental location, erroneously argued that things were intelligible substances in themselves, excluded the phenomenal from considerations of the intrinsic and extrinsic and ended up advocating that human beings can have intellectual cognition, which is as fallacious, and possibly as blasphemous, as declaring that we can have intellectual intuitions. The senses no more corrupt and confuse, on Kant's view, than do the categories. However, the misemployment, or the hybristic extension, of either source of presentations leads to the vitiation of our epistemic undertakings.

⁶ *Ibid.*, A.268-269.

Kant then proceeds to deal with the absolutely intrinsic, the concept of relations, the transcendental object, the possible and impossible and finally the concept of nothing.⁷ These passages have been meagrely commented on in the secondary literature industry. They create difficult interpretive problems. However, they also set up important concepts which reappear with considerable vigour in the Transcendental Dialectic. The following exegesis takes the position that the logical and conceptual progression through the aforesaid themes is itself apodeictic.

After abstraction from all external relation, i.e. total suspension of the phenomenal field with its surface alliances and disjunctions, one is left with the absolutely intrinsic. Is this for Kant a mere formalism, a logical cul-de-sac, from which one draws no conclusions except about the process of arriving there? Rationalistic understanding demands more than phenomenal connection or disarray. It is not content with mere external relation *per se*, for example, material bodies simply attracting and repelling, but seeks to find the *sine qua non* of such attraction and repulsion in the inner law or absolutely intrinsic nature of material bodies. Kant sounds the usual amphibolic warnings about the concept of an object *in abstracto*. In abstracting from all conditions of intuition, we are left with nothing but the intrinsic as such and their relations among one another. The necessary possibility of the extrinsic is based solely thereon. The concept of relations in the understanding, as the concept of objects *in abstracto*, is therefore the cause of determinations in another and the presupposition of all empirical causality. It is in the concept of relations, which is a non-categorical concept

of reflection, that are to be found the primary thought-predicates for the transition from the Transcendental Analytic to the Transcendental Dialectic, from the judgmental resources available to the understanding to the inferential speculations which are a powerful and ineliminable touchpoint of pure reason.

Merely intelligible objects within the context of the understanding, *sans* sensibility, are impossible.⁸ Noumena are objects in the negative signification of being neither intuitional nor conceptual cognition. Kant's use of the terms "intuition" and "concept" is necessarily ambiguous since noumena in their negative signification merely indicate that the objective validity of our knowledge of possible experience is bounded by other realities that can admit of other kinds of intuitions and concepts. These references are to extra-sensible objects, which makes "object" itself an ambiguous term, i.e. a problematic object, along with the problematic status of the "concept" of a noumenon. A problematic concept of a thing is defined by Kant as something about which we can say it is neither possible nor impossible, but to postulate either is not a contradiction.⁹ Determining the object through thought, i.e. as mere logical form without content, is to think proto-noumenally and this is the first step in transcending the mere negative signification of noumenal reality as a boundary concept and moving to the more positive signification of it as the transcendental cause of appearances in the phenomenal field.

Thought is neither a product of the senses nor

⁷ *Ibid.*, A.283-292.

⁸ *Ibid.*, A.286.

⁹ *Ibid.*, A.254 and A.287.

is it limited by them as are the categories. The problematic objects and concepts of noumenal reality cannot be absolutely denied, even though nothing about them can be affirmed by the understanding. In thinking a transcendental object it is impossible to determine whether it is inside or outside of us, hence the breakdown in the distinction between transcendental subject and object.

Almost as an afterthought before leaving the "Comment on the Amphiboly of the Concepts of Reflection" Kant declares that transcendental philosophy tends to be firstly divided into the high-order concepts of the possible and the impossible. This division assumes an even higher concept from whence the division arises and this, according to Kant, is the problematic concept of the object as such. As to whether this is something or nothing need not be decided. Both possibilities give rise to parallel tables that, predictably, follow the architectonic of the categories of the understanding. Kant sketches out a table for the concept of nothing and states that the table for the concept of something flows automatically therefrom.

The thought-entity (Gedankending) under nothing (Nichts) associated with the quantitative class of categories is the concept of an empty concept without an object. This is mere invention, although not contradictory invention, and thus cannot be numbered among the possibilities because of the lack of a corresponding object. The concept does not annul itself as does the concept of the none (Keines) or the derivative annulments of privative nothings and empty intuition without an object. Kant alludes to certain new fundamental forces hypothesized by modern natural science. They are thought without contradic-

tion, but are also experientially unillustrable, and therefore cannot be listed as belonging to possible experience.

Qualitative negations grant concepts but their objects have been negated. They are empty data for concepts.¹⁰ It is simply the lack of an object, as shadows signify their absence. Privative nothings are wholly determinate negations and are always relative to a qualitative something.

Under the putative relational categories with respect to the concept of nothing Kant cites space and time as the forms of intuition which are indeed something but are not themselves objects. There can then be empty data as well for the concepts of sensibility. It is noteworthy that *nihil privativum* and *ens imaginarium* respect the methodological restrictions of transcendental location and transcendental topic. Privative nothings or determinate negations presuppose the objective validity of the concept of a thing and the formal condition of all appearances is indeed something as an imaginary being but not as something given in sensible intuition. In the total absence of the perception of extended beings then one cannot assume space as the formal condition of outer intuition.

The modal class deals with impossibility *per se* or the negative nothing of strict contradiction, as in a two-sided rectilinear figure or a square circle. The negative nothing is a thought non-entity or absurdity (Unding). Not only is such a nonentity non-constitutive of a thing real or imaginary, but it is inconceivable as the attempted combination of two utterly incommensurable concepts. The negative nothing

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, A.292.

is not therefore a problematic concept, but no concept at all. There is nothing that can be conceptually said or discursively represented about the negative nothing.

How does the concept of nothing fit within the larger context of the Amphiboly and is it a concept necessary, as Kant says, in order to complete the system? And why does he not seem to attach much importance to this completeness? The section on the concept of nothing is reminiscent of Kant's lectures on metaphysics where he relies heavily on the language used in Baumgarten's *Metaphysics*. A literal application of the categorical architectonic does not help us as much as correlating the table on the concept of nothing with the mathematical and the dynamical. In the Transcendental Analytic the mathematical categories are assertoric and are directed to the pure and empirical objects of intuition.¹¹ They provide direct and unitary conceptual components to the understanding of things. The dynamical categories are directed more to the existence of objects and have an if this, then that, correlative type of structure.

If one moves backwards through the divisions of the table on the concept of nothing, then there is a definite progression from absolute nothingness, the negative nothing *per se*, to imaginary beings, to privative nothings, and finally to extra-sensible, intrinsic thought-entities. The greatest interpretive problems arise with the *ens imaginarium*. Two approaches may be considered. First let us approach it descending through the table. Dynamical relation requires some degree of differentiation and thus the *ens imaginarium* needs a connection with an object, perhaps to the

extent of its lack of an object (*nihil privativum*), i.e. not unlike most imaginary beings it relies more on a relation to a possible being than to an impossible being, in order for its beingness (*ens*) to be established. If the imaginary is possible conceptually, and perhaps even empirically, then empty intuition without object is closer to a privative nothing. This is a degree of determinateness more appropriate to the concept of the lack of an object than to the pure nothingness of the object of a concept that contradicts itself. If, however, the imaginary is so fantastic as to border on conceptual impossibility, then we are closer to the *nihil negativum*.

The second, and perhaps more metaphysically controversial approach, would be ascending from the *nihil negativum* as omni-impossibility, which dirempts itself, or is divisible, into the impossible and the possible. Mere forms of intuition, as in determinate negations, have no real objects. These imaginary beings may be possible, but are not real anticipatory objects within the current field of experiential knowledge. The possibility of their possibility is dependent on their closeness to the principle of contradiction. Within the rubric of synthetic a posteriori judgments the principle is mostly held in abeyance. The closer the *ens imaginarium* is to being an analytic judgment the greater the strength of the principle of contradiction; for example, not all bodies are extended. It is not inappropriate to think in terms of subject-predicate judgments in this context, if we remember dynamical relation can act as our transcendental guide for the *ens imaginarium*.

Another important consideration with respect to the third thought-entity, only the fourth division is nonentity or absolute nothing, is the

¹¹ *Ibid.*, B.110.

unsurprisingly pivotal role that Kant attributes to the imagination when dealing with difficult transitional or interrelational concepts. One need only refer to the pure imagination of the transcendental deduction and the monograms of the transcendental schemata of the pure understanding. As in the transcendental deduction, pure imagination in the totality of the concept of nothing, albeit via a mysterious power, makes possible the first division of transcendental philosophy into the possible and the impossible. Likewise, in the Transcendental Analytic the productive imagination functions as the first transcendental connecting thrust from the understanding into possible experience and the phenomenal field.

Completeness of system is important for all the German idealists and in this regard Kant is no exception. His treatment of the concept of nothing, and its importance for the first division of transcendental philosophy, needs to be compared and contrasted with Hegel's discussion of pure nothing at the commencement of the larger *Science of Logic*.

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