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Prospectus

The Post-Critical Kant

I. Reason for Writing and Proposed Length

Although Immanuel Kant considered the so-called *Opus postumum* (*OP*) his ‘chief work, a *chef d’oeuvre*,’ it has been largely neglected by scholars.¹ In this book, I argue that only by understanding the *OP* can we fully comprehend both Kant’s mature view as well as his Critical project in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (*CPR*). When it comes to the Critical philosophy, Kant says as much in a letter to Christian Garve from September 21st, 1798. There Kant claims that he feels the ‘pain of Tantalus’ given the problem of effecting a ‘transition [*Übergang*] from the metaphysical foundations of natural science to physics,’ without which there will be a ‘gap’ in the Critical philosophy. Kant says almost the exact same thing a month later in a letter to Johann Kiesewetter.² He does not make clear in either letter, however, exactly what this gap is or how the transition is supposed to fill the gap. What is clear though is that one must look to the *OP* for an answer, since it is the only place where Kant works on the transition project.

Kant scholars divide his canon of work normally into two periods. The period before the publication of the A edition of *CPR* in 1781 is conventionally referred to as the “pre-Critical” period. Even though Kant disagrees with philosophers like Leibniz and Wolff on a variety of issues during the pre-Critical period, he remains, nevertheless, within their general philosophical tradition. Although one must admit that the seeds of Transcendental Idealism and the “Critical” period can be found in these pre-Critical writings, Transcendental Idealism does not fully come into its own until *CPR*. According to most scholars, this is where the story ends. Early on in his career Kant was a dogmatic rationalist who eventually turned into a “critical” transcendental idealist. This characterization, however, does not take into account Kant’s final work, the *OP*, and what some have called Kant’s “post-Critical” period.

There is currently only one full-length treatment of the *OP* in English, Eckart Förster’s, *Kant’s Final Synthesis* (Harvard, 2000). The various discussions of the *OP* in the secondary literature find little consensus with regard either to the gap in Kant’s Critical philosophy, or to how the transition project is supposed to fill this gap.³ As I will argue, all of the different views

¹ *OP* 22:754. With the exception of citations to *CPR* (for which I use the A/B edition notation), all Kant citations refer to the *Akademie* edition of *Kants gesammelte Schriften* (G.Reimer (now de Gruyter), 1902-).

² See Kant, *Correspondence*, 12:257 and 12:258-259.

³ Recent books in German dedicated to the *OP* include: Tuschling, B., *Metaphysische und Transzendente Dynamik in Kants Opus postumum* (de Gruyter, 1971), Matthieu, V., *Kants Opus postumum* (Klostermann, 1989), trans. G. Held (German), Blasche, S., Köhler, W., Kuhlmann, W., and Rohs, P. (eds.), *Übergang: Untersuchungen zum Spätwerk Immanuel Kants* (Klosterman, 1991), and Emundts, D., *Kants Übergangskonzeption im Opus Postumum* (De Gruyter, 2004). Recent books in English that are not dedicated to the *OP* but do discuss it include: Friedman, M., *Kant and the Exact Sciences* (Harvard, 1992), Edwards, J., *Substance, Force, and the Possibility of Knowledge*

on the *OP* face serious problems both textual and philosophical. For example, Förster believes the gap arises from Kant's failure to provide a schematism of the pure concepts of the understanding (categories) for outer sense (space) in the *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science (MFNS)*. Without this, Förster believes Kant cannot insure the objective validity of the categories.⁴ In the Preface to *MFNS*, however, Kant clearly distinguishes the 'transcendental part' of the metaphysics of nature (i.e., the Transcendental Analytic of *CPR*) from the 'special metaphysical natural science' he articulates in *MFNS*.⁵ If Förster is right, then, contrary to Kant's intention, *MFNS* would actually belong to the transcendental part of the metaphysics of nature since it would be required to insure the objective validity of the categories, a task that is supposed to have already been performed in the Transcendental Analytic.⁶ Kant's arguments in the Principles of Pure Understanding of the Transcendental Analytic (which establish the objective validity of the individual categories), furthermore, rely simply on the temporally schematized categories as applied to outer sense. In addition, Kant never provides spatial schemata for the individual categories in *MFNS* as he does by way of time in *CPR*. Finally, since Kant holds in the Transcendental Aesthetic of *CPR* that 'all representations, whether or not they have outer things as their object, nevertheless as determinations of the mind themselves belong to inner sense,' is a separate schematism of outer sense really necessary?⁷

This book aims to provide a powerful alternative to all current interpretations of the *OP* and will focus exclusively on how Kant's transition project can solve certain perennial problems with the Critical philosophy that stem from the gap he identifies in his letters to Garve and Kiesewetter. This will require a careful examination of the deep connections between Kant's project in the *OP* and the view he develops in *CPR*. I will argue that Kant's transition project is best seen as the post-Critical culmination of his Critical philosophy. Properly understanding the post-Critical Kant will significantly revise our view of the Critical project and thereby dramatically alter the face of *CPR* scholarship.

Proposed Monograph Length: five chapters + introduction and conclusion, 84,323 words + three black and white illustrations.

II. Level of Presentation and Intended Market

The primary appeal of the book will be to scholars working on Kant. But it will also be a useful adjunct in upper-level undergraduate or graduate courses on Kant as well as the History and Philosophy of Science. The book discusses how Kant's post-Critical philosophy in the *OP* both identifies and solves certain deep seated problems within the Critical philosophy that have been a perennial source of concern for Kant scholars and students of Kant alike. In solving these Critical era problems, I hope Kant's post-Critical philosophy might find a broader audience as well.

III. Author's Credentials

I received my Ph.D. in Philosophy in 2005 from the University of Colorado at Boulder where I completed my dissertation under the direction of Professor Robert Hanna. For academic year

(California, 2000), Westphal, K., *Kant's Transcendental Proof of Realism* (Cambridge, 2004), Guyer, P., *Kant's System of Nature and Freedom* (Oxford, 2005), and Hanna, R., *Kant, Science, and Human Nature* (Oxford, 2006).

⁴ Förster, *Kant's Final Synthesis*, 72-73.

⁵ *MFNS* 4:470.

⁶ Michael Friedman makes this point. See Friedman, 'Matter and Motion in the Metaphysical Foundations and in the First Critique,' in *Kant and the Sciences* (Oxford, 2001), Watkins, E. (ed), 53-69, especially 56.

⁷ *CPR* A34/B50.

2003-2004, I was a Fulbright Scholar at Philipps-Universität Marburg in Germany where I worked on my dissertation under the direction of Professor Burkhard Tuschling. Currently, I am a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Bucharest in Romania. I am also an assistant professor at Indiana University Southeast in the United States. I have published several articles on the *OP* specifically and on Kant's theoretical philosophy more generally. These include: 'A Reconstruction of Kant's Ether Deduction in *Übergang* 11,' *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 14(4), 2006, 719-746, 'Effecting a Transition: How to Fill the Gap in Kant's System of Critical Philosophy,' *Kant-Studien*, 100(2), 2009, 187-211, 'Appearances and the Problem of Affection in Kant,' *Kantian Review*, 14(2), 2010, 38-66, and 'A Dilemma for Kant's Theory of Substance,' *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 19(1), 2011, 79-109. These articles serve as the foundation for the present book. Finally, last year, I published a book with two of my students at Indiana University Southeast which is aimed at students studying *CPR* for the first time. It is entitled *The Arguments of Kant's Critique of Pure Reason* (Lexington Books, 2010).

IV. Intended Completion Date: Summer 2012.

V. Overview

Introduction

This introductory chapter aims to tell a story, both historical and philosophical, about Kant's final work that will explain the historical lack of scholarly work on the *OP* as well as the lack of philosophical consensus among those who have worked on the *OP*. I will argue that these other interpretations face problems both textual and philosophical. I will offer an alternative interpretation of the *OP*, one which aims to avoid the problems that these other interpretations face while inextricably linking the success of Kant's post-Critical transition project with the viability of the Critical philosophy.

0.1 The Structure and Style of the Opus postumum

The *OP* was written between 1796 and 1803. It is broken into thirteen fascicles [*Convoluts*] numbered by someone other than Kant and imply nothing about Kant's intended ordering of the manuscript. The *OP* is less a completed philosophical work, than a philosophical diary of sorts which is often repetitive when not desultory. This led some early scholars of the *OP* to dismiss Kant's final work as the product of a senile mind. I aim to debunk this view in this section. One consideration is the dating of the manuscript itself. Since the vast majority of the manuscript was written between 1796 and 1801, one would have to level the charge of senility against works like the *Metaphysics of Morals* (1797), the *Anthropology* (1798), and the *Logic* (1800) as well, which seems absurd.

0.2 The History of the Manuscript

The *OP* was not published in a form appropriate for philosophical study until 1936-1938, more than 130 years after Kant's death. During this 130 year span, the manuscript itself fell into terrible disorder. Although Erich Adickes reestablished the original chronological ordering of the manuscript in 1916, this is not the order that is used in the *Akademie* edition of Kant's *OP*, the only complete version available for scholarly study. I will discuss the troubled history of the

manuscript which offers a compelling reason for why Kant's final work has been historically neglected.

0.3 The Phases of Kant's Transition Project

The third section of this chapter examines the various phases of Kant's transition project in the *OP* beginning with the very first leaf and ending with his radical reevaluation of the transition project in *Convolut* 1 which Kant started at the end of 1800 and continued to work on until February 1803 (a year before his death in 1804).

0.4 Reception of the Opus postumum in the Secondary Literature

I believe there are four major strands of interpretation of the *OP* that correspond to different views on the location of the gap in Kant's Critical philosophy. (1) One strand of interpretation holds that the gap lies between the special metaphysical natural science that Kant articulates in the *MFNS* and empirical physics. (2) Another strand holds that the gap is the result of a failure in the *Critique of Judgment (CJ)* itself or in the relationship between the *CJ* and Kant's other Critical works. (3) Yet another strand of interpretation holds that the gap lies in the *MFNS* itself which has ramifications for the completeness of Kant's view in *CPR* (this is Förster's position). (4) A final strand holds that the gap lies in *CPR* itself irrespective of the success or failure of Kant's other Critical works. After raising objections to the other strands of interpretation, I will ultimately defend a version of (4).

0.5 Structure of the Book

Chapter 1: A Dilemma for Kant's Theory of Substance

This chapter will examine Kant's theory of substance in the Analogies of Experience from *CPR*. I will argue that Kant requires two concepts of substance within the Analogies. One concept is of relatively enduring individual empirical objects, or what I call "substances." The other concept is of a sempiternal and omnipresent material, or what I call "Substance." Since Kant has only the *category (a priori)* concept of substance at his disposal in the Analogies, however, I will argue that his theory of substance faces a dilemma and that he lacks the tools, within the scope of the Critical philosophy, necessary to resolve this dilemma.

1.1 The Substance Interpretation of the Analogies

This section will provide support, both textual and philosophical, for a Substance interpretation of the Analogies. The central idea is that Kant needs Substance to function as a backdrop by reference to which the subject can experience the succession and simultaneity of substances in a single spatiotemporal framework. I will also examine passages from other parts of *CPR* where Kant seems to require something very much like Substance.

1.2 Another Way of Understanding "substance"

The second section of this chapter will provide support for a substances interpretation of the Analogies. Even if Kant requires Substance, he also needs relatively enduring empirical objects to function as substances in their own right. This comes out most clearly in the Third Analogy where Kant's account of simultaneity requires discreet spatial substances to stand in causal community with one another. Given the nature of empirical intuition, furthermore, I will argue that the category of substance likely has application *only* to substances.

1.3 Kant's Dilemma and the Gap Problem

The final section of this chapter explains the dilemma that Kant faces given his equivocal use of the term “substance” in the Analogies. Put simply, if the category of substance applies to Substance, then although the category would capture that single backdrop by reference to which the subject experiences the simultaneity and succession of empirical objects in a common spatiotemporal framework, the subject could not individuate relatively enduring empirical objects and experience their alterations. In contrast, if the category of substance applies to substances, then although the subject could individuate substances and experience their alterations, the category would not pick out a single backdrop by reference to which these substances could be experienced as either simultaneous with or successive to one another in a common spatiotemporal framework.

Insofar as the application of the category of substance must be limited to substances, Kant requires a new *a priori* concept of Substance different from the category of substance. In my view, this constitutes the gap in Kant's Critical philosophy, one he is unable to deal with given the tools available to him in *CPR*. This is a gap in what Kant calls the ‘transcendental part’ of the metaphysics of nature, i.e., the Transcendental Analytic of *CPR*. In *Farrago* 1 of the *OP*, written in December 1798 not long after his fall 1798 letters to Garve and Kiesewetter, Kant seems to locate the gap in the Analytic of Principles of the Transcendental Analytic (where the Analogies are found). Kant says that the transition project ‘is designed to fill what is still a gap in the pure doctrine of nature and generally in the system from *a priori* principles, and so toward accomplishing completely my metaphysical work.’⁸ Kant suggests, on the same page, that his *a priori* concept of the ether will be instrumental in filling this gap. As I will argue in later chapters, it is the post-Critical development of Kant's *a priori* concept of the ether that provides him with the conceptual resources necessary to bridge the gap I have identified in the Critical philosophy since it performs all the functions that the concept of Substance must perform in the Analogies while at the same time being importantly different from the category of substance in *CPR*.

Chapter 2: The Development of Kant's Ether Theory

This chapter traces the development of Kant's Critical conception of Substance in *CPR* to his post-Critical conception of the ether in the *OP*. Kant's considered position on the ether is that it is an intrinsically structural, compositionally plastic plenum of attractive and repulsive forces. This chapter also examines whether Kant's post-Critical ether theory can solve certain important problems from the Critical period. Although all of the problems I discuss in this chapter are on the periphery of the gap I located in Kant's Critical philosophy, they are important in understanding the immense role that the ether comes to play in Kant's post-Critical philosophy. In addition, the way in which Kant ultimately fills the gap will be instrumental in solving many of these problems.

2.1: Kant's Critical Conception of the Ether

This section examines Kant's remarks on the ether in *CPR* and *MFNS*. Although Kant is critical of ether hypotheses in *CPR*, his disdain for atomism drives him to hypothesize the ether in

⁸ See *OP* 21:626.8-11. Translation is mine. On the previous page, but on the same leaf of the manuscript, Kant mentions the ‘elementary concepts of the moving forces of matter’ (*OP* 21:625.11-12), which he elsewhere identifies with the concept of the ether, as being central to the transition.

MFNS. I will discuss Kant's problems with atomism and how they led him to hypothesize the ether and develop a dynamic theory of matter in *MFNS* as an alternative to atomism. Finally, I will pose some problems for this dynamic theory of matter that his post-Critical theory will aim to solve.

2.2 Kant's Post-Critical Conception of the Ether and the Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science

The second section of this chapter examines the development of Kant's post-Critical ether theory in the early sections of the *OP*. Although I believe that Kant's post-Critical theory does not overcome the most important objection to his view in *MFNS* (*viz.* the circularity in his theory of density), I argue that this problem cannot constitute a gap in the Critical philosophy. Even so, Kant's post-Critical ether theory will play an important role in solving a number of problems from *CPR* (including bridging the gap I identified above). This section provides the background on Kant's post-Critical ether theory necessary to understand the application of it in later chapters.

2.3 Kant's Post-Critical Conception of the Ether and the Critique of Judgment:

Although Kant hardly discusses the ether in *CJ*, this section argues that his post-Critical ether theory helps him to explain the unity of nature in a way that he could not within the context of *CJ*. Most importantly, Kant's post-Critical conception of the ether as an intrinsically structural and compositionally plastic dynamic force plenum allows him to unite both inorganic and organic nature within a single world system.

Chapter 3: Kant's Ether Deduction

This chapter is an attempt to reconstruct a valid and arguably sound version of Kant's Ether Deduction from *Übergang* 11 of the *OP*. I argue that Kant's Ether Deduction establishes the *actuality* of the ether as a necessary *material* transcendental condition for the unity of the whole of possible experience. The structure of the argument, then, is $P \rightarrow Q$, where we are to assume that there is a unity of the whole of possible experience (P) and derive the existence of the ether (Q). Although something very much like (Q) is *anticipated* by Kant's arguments in the Analogies (i.e., Substance), it cannot be *established* by Kant's arguments in the Analogies given the dearth of conceptual resources available to him (i.e., no *a priori* concept of Substance). Consequently, in *CPR*, Kant seems limited to only four necessary and jointly sufficient conditions for the unity of the whole of possible experience: space, time, categories, and apperception. I represent these collectively as (R).

The proof of $P \rightarrow Q$, if successful, seems then to serve two purposes. (1) It exposes a gap in the Critical project since (R) is no longer sufficient for (P). (2) It potentially fills this gap if it can show both that (Q) is a necessary condition for (P) and jointly sufficient with (R). I will argue that (1) reflects the failure of Kant's arguments in the Analogies and that although (2) succeeds in its claim of necessity it fails to meet the standards of sufficiency within the framework of the Ether Deduction.

3.1 The Structure and Function of the *Übergang* Section

This section examines the structure of the *Übergang* section and its function within Kant's transition project. The Ether Deduction itself is found in a series of fourteen *Übergang* drafts. Fortunately, Kant numbered these drafts in his manuscript and we can be fairly certain that they were all written between May and August 1799. Unlike other discussions of the Ether Deduction

in the secondary literature, I will not try to consider all fourteen drafts of the *Übergang* section. Instead, I will focus on what seems to me to be one of Kant's most compelling formulations of the Ether Deduction in *Übergang* 11.

3.2 *Übergang* 11 and its Formal Reconstruction

The second section of this chapter offers the first English translation of an extended selection from *Übergang* 11 as well as a formal reconstruction of Kant's argument there.

3.3 Examining the Ether Deduction in Light of the Critical Project

Section three examines the main steps of this reconstruction of the Ether Deduction in light of the Critical project so that one might see that Kant's Ether Deduction is a significant post-Critical development of the Critical era philosophy. I will argue that Kant's argument in the Ether Deduction not only establishes the existence of something that can perform all the same functions that Substance performs in *CPR*, but that the *a priori* proof strategy of the Ether Deduction also offers an *a priori* concept of Substance importantly different from the category of substance. Thus, the Ether Deduction seems to provide Kant with the tools necessary for bridging the gap in his Critical philosophy, tools unavailable to him in the Critical period.

3.4 Evaluating the Success of the Ether Deduction

The final section of this chapter evaluates the success of Kant's Ether Deduction first with regard to my particular reconstruction, but then also in terms of what Kant might have *intended* with the Ether Deduction compared to what he actually does *achieve*. Although Kant is able to prove the existence of the ether, he is unable to prove that it is an object of physics, understood as an object of experience, on pain of undermining the transcendental proof strategy of the Ether Deduction.

The transcendental conditions of experience, as they stand at the end of the Ether Deduction, are insufficient for establishing the unity of the whole of possible experience. While the formal transcendental conditions of experience and the material transcendental condition of experience are individually necessary for the unity of the whole of possible experience, Kant cannot establish their joint sufficiency since he has no way, in the Ether Deduction, of showing how the categories (transcendental formal condition) apply to the ether (transcendental material condition), as the ultimate object of physics. Without knowing if the conceptual conditions of experience even apply to the material condition of experience, Kant has no way of precluding some *in principle* discontinuity between them. As I will argue in the next chapter, the key to ruling out this possibility is the *a priori* concept of the ether, which Kant has *derived* in the Ether Deduction, but has not yet *integrated* with the formal conditions of experience. Only by understanding the role of the ether both as a formal and material condition of experience can Kant finally bridge the gap in his Critical philosophy.

Chapter 4: Kant's Transition Project in *Convolut*s 10-11

This chapter will examine the development of Kant's transition project in *Convolut*s 10-11 which he started writing immediately after the *Übergang* section and finished in April of 1800. Kant saw a need in *Convolut*s 10-11 to revise the way that the transcendental *formal* conditions of experience (*viz.* space, time, categories, and apperception) function empirically given the addition of a transcendental *material* condition of experience in the Ether Deduction. Kant discusses how the *a priori* concept of the ether is applied by apperception, through the Principles of Pure Understanding (Axioms, Anticipations, Analogies, and Postulates), in order to generate

the unity of the whole of possible experience. Having both the *a priori* concept of the ether (or Substance) and the categories (in their role as principles) in hand, I will argue, allows Kant to avoid the dilemma that he faces in the Analogies and so fill the gap in his Critical philosophy.

4.1 Space and Time in the Transcendental Aesthetic

The first section examines the revisions Kant makes to the Transcendental Aesthetic (space and time) in *Convolut*s 10-11. Kant argues that the omnipresent moving forces of the ether are necessary to make space and time thoroughly *perceptible*, though this does not insure there is any *particular* thing that is *perceived*. Kant believes that particular physical objects or what I have called “substances” are ‘indirect appearances’ (or ‘appearance of appearance’) and should be considered products of the physical activity of the ether (‘direct appearance’) or what I have called “Substance” in conjunction with the subject’s mental activity.⁹ The moving forces of the ether are a necessary though not sufficient condition for our experience of substances. Even though we do not experience space or time themselves as objects, that the omnipresent forces of the ether affect us is absolutely necessary for our experience of particular objects in a unified spatial framework. Consequently, the ether is a necessary condition for the empirical reality of these objects in space and time. Even so, this does not change the transcendental ideality of space as an *a priori* form of intuition. Kant suggests that the relationship between the ether and space/time must be thought *a priori* as necessary. If this is correct, then the ether as material condition and space/time as formal conditions must be *combined* if there is to be a unity of the whole of possible experience.

4.2 The Categories in the Transcendental Analytic

This section looks at the changes Kant makes to the Transcendental Analytic of *CPR* specifically with regard to the categories. In *Convolut*s 10-11, Kant discusses how the *a priori* concept of the ether is applied through the principles (e.g. the Analogies), in order to generate the unity of the whole of possible experience. Within the context of *CPR*, the principles are rules for the objective application of the categories. Unlike in *CPR*, where the principles are objectively valid on their own, in *Convolut* 10, Kant sees the principles as effecting a transition from subjectivity to objectivity. Objectivity itself, however, is achieved only when the concept of the ether has been applied *through* the principles of pure understanding resulting in the unity of the whole of possible experience. This reveals the *formal* role that the concept of the ether has as the *a priori* concept for transition in addition to its *material* role in the Ether Deduction.

4.3 Mind, World, and Apperception

The third section of this chapter discusses the new role that apperception plays in *Convolut*s 10-11. Although apperception (the “I think” that accompanies all my representations) is the transcendental ground for the unity of consciousness, it is, within the context of the Critical project, capable of bringing about only a distributive unity of perceptions. Kant claims post-Critically, however, that this distributive unity of perceptions is by itself insufficient to meet the goals of transition in *Convolut*s 10-11. There apperception must perform two tasks simultaneously: 1) it must insert the principles into perception, and 2) combine these perceptions into the absolute unity of consciousness. This is a much stronger sense of unity than the distributive unity of perceptions in *CPR*. Apperception spontaneously brings about the unity of perceptions in consciousness while at the same time conditioning perceptions themselves *a*

⁹ *OP* 22:340-341.

priori. In *Convolutus* 10-11, perceptions are conditioned ultimately by the concept of the ether. When the distributive unity of perceptions is harmonized within this concept, an absolute unity of consciousness is generated which is itself harmonized with the systematic unity of the moving forces of matter. There is no *in principle* discontinuity between the external world and the subject's conscious representation of it, since the ultimate conceptual condition of consciousness is simply the concept of the ultimate material condition of the external world. Consequently, Kant overcomes the problem that he faced at the end of the Ether Deduction.

4.4 Filling the Gap in the Analogies of Experience

This section explains how Kant is able to avoid the dilemma that faces his theory of substance in the Analogies and so fill the gap in his Critical philosophy. Unlike the Analogies, in the *OP*, Kant clearly delineates between *two* different and mutually irreducible concepts of substance. On the one hand, there is the *a priori* concept of Substance or the ether (where the latter is simply a post-Critical development of the former), and on the other, the category of substance which in its role as a principle has application to ordinary empirical objects or substances and makes possible (in conjunction with the other principles) the application of the *a priori* concept of Substance or the ether to the dynamic force plenum. With these two *a priori* concepts in hand, Kant is able to overcome the dilemma that faces his theory of substance in the Analogies and so fill the gap in his Critical philosophy.

Put in terms of the dilemma, the category of substance (in its role as a principle) applies to substances and makes possible the application of the *a priori* concept of Substance or the ether to the single substrate (dynamic force plenum) by reference to which the subject experiences the simultaneity and succession of substances in a common spatiotemporal framework. In other words, applying the concept of Substance or the ether unifies substances within the spatiotemporal framework that the dynamic force plenum underpins. Far from being separate issues, Kant's transition project and the gap problem are intimately connected and it is only by recognizing both the transcendental material and formal functions of the ether that the transition can be effected and the gap in Kant's Critical philosophy filled. There is a great deal of disagreement in the secondary literature on the metaphysical status of the ether. Some scholars suggest the ether is simply a concept while others suggest the ether is something actual. There is textual evidence to support both interpretations. By emphasizing both the formal (conceptual) as well as the material (actuality) role of the ether, however, my interpretation can make sense of these seemingly conflicting passages.

Chapter Five: Kant and the Problem of Affection

In the final chapter, I examine how the results of Kant's post-Critical transition project can be applied to the problem of affection. Although recent commentators on the *OP* tend to focus on the transition project itself rather than on the problem of affection *per se*, early commentators tended to ignore the transition project *per se* in favor of how the *OP* might offer a solution to the problem of affection. I will argue that if one accepts the results of Kant's transition project, as I have articulated them, one will be in a position to solve the problem of affection. If I am right, then Kant's transition project should be considered the post-Critical culmination of his Critical philosophy.

Hans Vaihinger presented the problem with Kant's theory of affection in the form of a trilemma: (1) If things-in-themselves are the affecting objects, then one must apply the categories beyond the conditions of their application (space and time). (2) If one holds that appearances are

the affecting objects, then one must hold that these appearances which are the effects of affection are themselves the causes of affection. (3) If one holds that things-in-themselves affect the noumenal subject in parallel with appearances affecting the empirical subject, then that which is a representation for the noumenal subject must serve as a causally efficacious thing-in-itself for the empirical subject's production of an empirical representation of the very same object (so-called "double-affection").¹⁰ This chapter is dedicated to finding a way of avoiding this trilemma by examining not only Kant's Critical conception of affection, but also how he develops this conception post-Critically in the *OP*.

5.1 Double Affection and the *Opus postumum*

The first section will examine the case for double affection. Some early commentators defended this horn and claimed that evidence for double-affection could be found within the *OP*. After articulating Erich Adickes' canonical version of double-affection, I will discuss the philosophical and textual problems that the theory faces.¹¹ I argue that double-affection is an understandable though ultimately incorrect reading of Kant's view in the *OP*.

5.2 A Relational View of Appearances?

This section will examine a rather novel way of understanding Kant's conception of appearances proposed by Rae Langton.¹² While early commentators and most contemporary Kant scholars assume that appearances are particulars, Langton argues that they are *extrinsic* relations. Phenomena are extrinsic relations between independently existing things-in-themselves. Appearances are a subset of these relations obtaining between things-in-themselves and human minds. Although I think that Langton is right about appearances being relations, I pose some problems for her view of appearances as *extrinsic* relations. I argue that Langton is *minimally* committed to the first horn of the trilemma, but *maximally* committed to double affection itself if appearances must be relations between things-in-themselves and human minds understood as things-in-themselves (i.e. noumenal subjects).

5.3 Appearances as Intrinsic Relations

In this section, I will develop a new theory of appearances as *intrinsic* relations, i.e. appearances are relations between subjects and objects, but neither subjects nor objects can exist outside of the appearance relations they bear to one another. I will discuss a number of passages from *CPR* that seem to support this view. Even if this is Kant's view, however, he still requires some argument for it. This argument is the subject of the next section.

5.4 How Objects and Subjects Make One Another Possible

I locate such an argument in Kant's Transcendental Deduction of the Categories in *CPR*. There Kant suggests that the subject of representation (phenomenal subject) makes the objects of representation (phenomenal objects) possible by unifying representations, through the spontaneity of apperception, in the concept of what it is to be an object (categories). At the same time, however, the synthetic unity of these representations is what makes the subject of

¹⁰ Vaihinger, H., *Kommentar zu Kants Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, (Union Deutsche, 1922), vol. 2, 53.

¹¹ Adickes, E., *Kants Lehre von der doppelten Affection unseres Ich: als Schlüssel zu seiner Erkenntnistheorie* (Mohr, 1929).

¹² Langton, R., *Kantian Humility: Our Ignorance of Things in Themselves* (Oxford, 1998).

representation possible. Without the synthetic unity of these representations, one would not be able to represent oneself as an identical subject enduring throughout these representations.

In an important way, however, determined phenomenal objects (and so consequently determined phenomenal subjects) do not exist prior to the activity of apperception organizing representational content in accordance with the categories. What is the cause of the representations that apperception synthesizes into objects of representation and through which the subject of representation is possible? Put simply, what is the corollary of apperception's activity on the side of the phenomenal object? One cannot say that the *determined* phenomenal object is the cause of the representational content that apperception organizes since this representational content must itself be organized before there is a determined phenomenal object. As I will argue in the next section, the ether is the *undetermined* object of empirical intuition that affects us in sensibility and so provides the representations that apperception synthesizes into the *determined* phenomenal objects necessary for determined phenomenal subjects.

5.5: Kant's Theory of Affection in *Convolut 7*

Returning to the issue of double-affection, I claim that Kant is committed to two levels of affection, but that neither kind of affection requires recourse to a noumenal source. The ether is an undetermined phenomenal object which stands in *direct* appearance relations with undetermined phenomenal subjects. The physical activity of the ether produces the representations (or perceptions) that the mental activity of apperception organizes into determined phenomenal objects which stand in *indirect* appearance relations with the determined phenomenal subject that apperception posits. Both determined phenomenal objects (physical bodies) as well as determined phenomenal subjects (embodied cognitive subjects) emerge from the joint activity of the ether and apperception. Neither the ether nor apperception can be positively determined in themselves, but only insofar as they together generate a phenomenal world of physical bodies and embodied cognitive subjects. At either level, neither phenomenal objects nor phenomenal subjects are possible outside of the intrinsic appearance relations that they bear to one another. Key components of this picture are familiar from both the *Übergang* section and *Convolut 10-11*. Consequently, Kant's view in *Convolut 7* (written in late 1800) can easily be seen as a natural outgrowth of his post-Critical transition project.

Neither the physical activity of the ether nor the spontaneous activity of apperception, however, implies a noumenal source. Such an inference would commit the very error that Kant attributes to Descartes' argument for the *cogito* in the Paralogisms section of *CPR* and which he mentions again in *Convolut 7*.

5.6 Revisiting Vaihinger's Trilemma

Whereas Langton is minimally committed to the first horn and maximally to the third, my solution to the problem of affection seems to share much in common with the second horn insofar as I affirm that phenomenal objects (*substantiae phenomena*) are the affecting objects while making no appeal to things-in-themselves understood as positive noumena (*substantiae noumena*). It attempts to avoid the problems associated with the second horn, however, by viewing appearances not as *objects* themselves which could lead to Berkeleyian phenomenalism, but rather as *intrinsic relations*, between phenomenal objects and subjects. Whereas the intentional or virtual objects of phenomenalism are wholly *dependent* upon the subject's mental activity, Kant views the relation between subjects and objects as one of *interdependency* where neither objects nor subjects are possible without one another. Although Kant's Critical view of

appearances remains unchanged at the level of *indirect* appearance, at the level of *direct* appearance, Kant comes to recognize, in *Convolut 7*, that the unification of physical activity and mental activity is necessary to generate both determinate phenomenal objects as well as determinate phenomenal subjects. In other words, Kant acknowledges the important role that physical and mental *activity* plays on both sides of this intrinsic relation.

Conclusion