

Kant's First-Critique Theory of the Transcendental Object*

by Robert Howell**

Summary

The paper discusses major issues concerning the A104-10 transcendental-object theory. For that theory, our *de re* knowledge becomes related to its object just because our understanding (using the concept of a transcendental object) *thinks* a certain object to stand related to the intuition via which we know. Employing an apparatus of intensional logic, I argue that this thought of an object is to be understood as a certain sort of intuition-related, *de dicto* thought. Then I explore how, via such a *de dicto* thought, we can nevertheless achieve *de re* knowledge. This question involves an important Kantian reduction of *de re* to *de dicto* outer-object thinking, which I consider. Finally, I investigate some further topics about the transcendental object. I endeavor to show, throughout, that Kant's theory of that object is crucially related to matters of intensionality.

Résumé

Cet article discute les problèmes principaux soulevés par la théorie de l'objet transcendantal A104-10. Selon cette théorie, notre connaissance *de re* est mise en relation avec son objet précisément parce que notre entendement (utilisant le concept d'objet transcendantal) *pense* un certain objet comme étant relié à l'intuition à travers laquelle nous connaissons. Employant un formalisme de logique intensionnelle, je montre que cette pensée d'un objet doit être comprise comme une pensée *de dicto* reliée à l'intuition. J'explore ensuite comment, à partir de cette pensée *de dicto*, nous pouvons néanmoins atteindre une connaissance *de re*. J'examine la manière dont Kant réduit ainsi la pensée d'un objet extérieur du *de re* au *de dicto*. Finalement, j'explore quelques autres points concernant l'objet transcendantal. Dans tout l'article je montre combien la théorie kantienne de l'objet transcendantal est fondamentalement reliée à l'intensionnalité (au sens logique).

Zusammenfassung

Der Aufsatz behandelt wichtige Themen, die die in A104-10 formulierte Theorie des transzendentalen Gegenstandes betreffen. Dieser Theorie nach bezieht sich unsere *de re* Erkenntnis auf ihren Gegenstand eben deshalb, weil unser Verstand, indem er den Begriff eines transzendentalen Gegenstandes verwendet, *denkt*, dass ein gewisser Gegenstand in Beziehung zur Anschauung steht,

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durch welche wir erkennen. Mit Hilfe eines Apparates der intensionalen Logik argumentiere ich, dass diese Konzeption eines Gegenstandes als ein auf die Anschauung bezogener *de dicto* Gedanke gedeutet werden muss. Dann untersuche ich, wie wir auf Grund eines solchen *de dicto* Gedankens eine *de re* Erkenntnis erzielen können. Diese Frage bringt eine bedeutsame Kantische Reduktion des *de re* Denkens von äusseren Gegenständen auf ein *de dicto* Denken mit sich. Schliesslich untersuche ich einige weitere, den transzendentalen Gegenstand betreffende Streitfragen. Ich versuche nachzuweisen, dass Kants Theorie dieses Gegenstandes sich durchweg in entscheidender Weise auf Fragen der Intensionalität bezieht.

Kant's first-*Critique* theory of the transcendental object is presented by Kant in the course of the first-, or A-, edition version of the Transcendental Deduction of the Categories. This theory is meant to answer a question of fundamental importance both to Kant's work and to philosophy in general: namely, the question of what is involved in our knowledge's being about (or having or being related to) the particular object or objects that our knowledge does or may have. According to the theory of the transcendental object, this question — which I call the knowledge-object question — cannot be answered by citing the object's causal or quasi-causal role (if it has one) in producing in us the knowledge (and the relevant intuition via which we know). Rather, the theory of the transcendental object argues, this question must be answered by citing a certain operation which our understanding performs on the intuition through which we know the object. Specifically, the theory holds, our knowledge comes to be about this particular object just because our understanding *thinks* a certain object — which Kant calls the transcendental object — to stand related to that intuition (and thus to that knowledge).

In this paper I discuss some of the central philosophical and exegetical questions that are raised by Kant's transcendental-object theory. In the first and second sections of the paper I offer interpretive accounts of the Transcendental-Aesthetic and Transcendental-Analytic pictures of knowledge and of Kant's main reasons for proposing the transcendental-object theory. Then in the first part of the third section of the paper I introduce an apparatus of intensional logic that, I think, can be used to clarify many of Kant's basic views about intuition, the synthetic operations of the understanding, and the object that is known via intuition and those operations. In the remaining parts of the third section, and in the fourth section, I apply this apparatus to the transcendental-object theory itself.

Throughout, my discussion is selective. I focus only on the most important aspects of the transcendental-object theory, and I do not consider how that theory meshes with the wider concerns of the entire Transcendental Deduction. Thus I ignore the relations of that theory to Kant's views on transcendental apperception, and I do not discuss why Kant dropped the *term* 'transcendental object' — although not, I believe, the essentials of the theory itself

— from the passages that he rewrote for the second-, or B-, edition of the first *Critique*. I also restrict attention to the appearing rather than to the appearance version of Kant's picture of knowledge, although all of the points that I make below could be duplicated, in one form or another, by points about that appearance version¹. Finally, I should note that I do not discuss how my findings in the present paper relate to two previous papers in which I apply intensional logic to the study of Kant². But perhaps I should say immediately that the overall, basic framework of these three papers is the same, and important relations do seem to me to exist between the results of all three papers.

I. The Transcendental-Aesthetic and Transcendental-Analytic Picture of Knowledge

Writing for those who know Kant's general views, I need only recall here that for Kant our knowledge of objects is achieved through the combined operations of intuitions and concepts. Intuitions are singular representations that represent their objects as single, individuated entities. More specifically, intuitions are representations that are produced in the mind by the quasi-causal action, on our sensibility, of non-spatiotemporal objects existing in themselves. (I say 'quasi-causal' here and below because of familiar questions about noumenal causality.) According to Kant's picture of knowledge, these intuitions are *of* those non-spatiotemporal objects, as those objects so exist. But these intuitions represent those objects to us not as those objects are in themselves, but rather as being single, individuated spatiotemporal things. And we then know those objects only in the spatiotemporal forms that they are represented to us by the intuitions as having.

Concepts are, for Kant, general representations that are yielded us through the operations of our understanding. Through our subsumption, under concepts, of the objects that our intuitions display to us, we come to know those objects as being particular, individuated spatiotemporal things of general types or kinds — *this* triangular, wooden lamp rather than *that* one over there, *this oval, silver spoon* rather than that *circular, pewter bowl*. Kant's discussion of concepts as general representations has a number of exegetical complications. But for our present purposes we may say that, for Kant, an or-

¹ For the appearing-appearance distinction, as applied to Kant, see Barker (1969) and also Howell (1979). Texts like the B137 definition of an object strongly suggest that the B-edition preserves the essentials of the transcendental-object theory. (Note also A247/B304 on an object 'that is merely transcendental', at the beginning of a text rewritten for the B-edition.)

² Howell (1973) and (1979). See also Howell (forthcoming).

dinary empirical or mathematical concept is best regarded as *being* a general property, insofar as that general property is thought of by (and so is treated by) our understanding as marking out the general class of objects that do or can possess that general property. Thus, for example, my concept of a tree is, roughly, the general property of being a tree, insofar as that general property is so treated by my understanding³.

II. *Synthesis and the Theory of the Transcendental Object*

II. A. *Synthesis*

Besides holding that through intuition and concept we always know objects as single, individuated things that are of various general types or kinds, Kant of course also holds that our knowledge of objects always takes a sequential form. We know objects only by perceiving them from successively different points of view, by attending one by one to their various properties and spatial parts, and so on. In the case of our knowledge of a given outer object — which is the case on which I focus in this paper — Kant puts this point by supposing that the intuition through which we know this outer object is given to us in the form of a manifold of representations that sequentially displays to us the various general properties and individual spatial parts that belong to that outer object⁴. And then we have to synthesize this manifold of

³ As developed in the *Logik*, in the corresponding Reflexionen in Academy edition (hereafter 'Ak.')

vol. 16, and in the first *Critique*, Kant's theory of concepts supposes roughly that by a process of comparison, reflection, and abstraction, our understanding focuses on what a group of objects has in common, gives a form, or generality, to that common thing, and makes it into a *Merkmal*, or ground of knowledge, of all of those objects. This *Merkmal* Kant thus treats in a conceptualistic way as *being* a general property whose generality arises owing to the operations of our understanding. And Kant supposes that our understanding uses this *Merkmal*, or understanding-regarded general property, to mark out or to represent the various things that possess that general property and so fall under the *Merkmal*. (See *Logik*, Introduction, VIII. C; §2; §4, Note; §5, Note 1; §7 and Note; §8 and Note; §11, Note; and A67-70/B92-94. Observe especially Reflexion 2279; *Logik*, §11, Note, on iron, metal, body, etc., as concepts which are — by §7, Note — *Merkmale*; and B133 note on red in general as a concept that is both property and *Merkmal*.) I here harmlessly simplify Kant's view by ignoring its conceptualistic side (and by ignoring, as well, Kant's distinction between concept as *Teilbegriff* and concept as *Erkenntnisgrund*). Thus I take a concept simply to be a general property, insofar as that general property is properly regarded by our understanding.

⁴ For the role of both general properties and spatial parts in the manifold of intuition, see, for example, A8, B12, A43/B60, A69/B93, A79/B104, A105, B128, B131, B140 (in the heading), B143, A169/B211, A399-400, and *Prolegomena*, §13, Note 2 (Ak. vol. 4, 289). Of course in reality, for Kant, the given elements of the manifold only potentially display to us determinate general properties and determinate spatial parts; synthesis of those elements by our understanding and imagination first actualizes this potential. Moreover, in the case of general properties matters like those indicated in note 3 must also play a role, although Kant does not make the relation of that role to such synthesis particularly clear.

representations in order to arrive at a single, unitary intuition that displays to us the single outer object in question as possessing all of those various general properties and spatial parts.

For example, let us consider henceforth the knowledge that a representative human knower H gets, via a given intuition i , of the triangular, wooden lamp that is before H . Then Kant's view is that i is given to H in the form of a manifold of representations i_1 , i_2 , i_3 , and i_4 , say. With some simplifications that are harmless for our present purposes, we can suppose that first i_1 displays to H the property P_1 of being wooden, then i_2 displays to H the property P_2 of being a lamp, then i_3 displays to H the spatial part s_1 that in fact amounts to the lamp top-part, and finally i_4 displays to H the spatial part s_2 that in fact amounts to the lamp bottom-part⁵. Having been given such a manifold of representations i_1 to i_4 , H now has to synthesize that manifold in such a way as to arrive at the relevant single, unitary intuition: namely, the single, unitary intuition i that displays to H a single object as having all of these properties and spatial parts and so as being the triangular, wooden lamp that is before H .

According to Kant, H performs this process of synthesis by taking up the elements i_1 to i_4 into H 's imagination and there reproducing them to form a single, overall display that embodies all of the properties and spatial parts that I have just mentioned. Moreover, this single, overall display must function as a representation that displays an *object* as *having* all of these properties and spatial parts and so as falling under the concepts of being a wooden lamp and of being triangular. And, Kant supposes, this single, overall display can so function only insofar as H 's process of synthesis is carried out in a conceptually rule-governed fashion. Specifically, Kant holds that H must take the general properties P_1 and P_2 , as they are presented to H in the above single, overall display, jointly to constitute the concept of being a wooden lamp. H must also take the spatial parts s_1 and s_2 , as they are so presented to H , jointly to specify (when they are taken together) the presence of the shape-concept of being triangular. And, in addition, H must use a certain concept of an object in order to take all of these properties and spatial parts, as they are so presented to H , to belong to a single object. By proceeding in this way, H thus takes the above single, overall display to function as a single representation that does display a single object as having P_1 , P_2 , s_1 , and s_2 , where P_1 and P_2 jointly constitute the concept of being a wooden lamp and s_1 and s_2 jointly specify the concept of being triangular. And hence by so proceeding, H brings

⁵ See note 4 for one simplification (and compare Parsons, 1964). Another simplification concerns the fact that it is unlikely H would ever really come to know the lamp in exactly the above sequential fashion. None of these simplifications causes trouble here.

it about that the above single, overall display functions as the relevant single, unitary intuition i that displays a single object as falling under the concepts of being a wooden lamp and of being triangular⁶.

The concept that H uses, in the above process, to think of a single object as possessing all of the relevant properties and spatial parts is identified by Kant in an important passage at A93/B126. Kant writes⁷:

All experience [which by B1, B147, B165, and the next sentence is empirical knowledge of objects] does indeed contain, in addition to the intuition of the senses through which something is given, a *concept* of an object which is given in the intuition, or appears. Concepts of objects in general thus underlie all empirical knowledge as its a priori conditions.

It is this concept of an object in general — that is, this concept of an object in the most general sense of ‘object’ — that Kant supposes H to employ in thinking, in synthesis, of there as being a single object to which all of the above properties and spatial parts belong⁸.

II. B. The A104-10 Theory of the Transcendental Object

To state Kant’s transcendental-object theory itself with the utmost clarity and plausibility — and without, I think, altering Kant’s fundamental intentions — we must draw a distinction that Kant himself does not bother to draw: namely, the distinction between, on the one hand, what thoughts are required of H considered as the knower of the object and, on the other hand, what

⁶ The above account of synthesis is that of A98-104 (and A119 ff.) taken in conjunction with concept-of-an-object-in-general and transcendental-object texts like A104-10 and A50/B74 ff., A92-93/B125, B137, B146-47, B158, A190-91/B235-36, and A197/B242-43. For the specific points about P_1 , P_2 , and the concept of a wooden lamp, see especially A101 and A106; and observe A7-9/B11-12, A20-21/B35, A43/B61, and B131 note. In the case of the specific points about s_1 , s_2 , and the concept of being triangular, complications emerge since (among other things) Kant is not wholly clear about how the conceptual synthesis of the spatial-part manifold occurs. I avoid these complications here by talking simply of s_1 and s_2 as jointly ‘specifying’ the presence of the relevant concept. See A77/B102-103, A102, A105, A124, B137-38, B162, A162/B202 ff., and A224/B271. Throughout this paper I abstract from the important role of the logical functions in synthesis.

⁷ I cite Kemp Smith’s translation throughout, sometimes with alterations. Note that by Axvii the A92-93/B124-26 text that contains the present passage is of a particularly crucial significance to the Transcendental Deduction and hence to Kant’s picture of knowledge as a whole.

⁸ Kant’s overall use of ‘*überhaupt*’ supports the present reading of ‘concept of an object in general’ (*Begriff von einem Gegenstande überhaupt*). Kant speaks at A93/B126 of concepts of objects in general because he is, I take it, there thinking of the various categories as being realizations of the concept of an object in general — that is, as being themselves concepts of an object in general. But that fact is unimportant here.

thoughts are required of us considered as philosophers reflecting on *H*'s knowledge of the object. Having drawn this distinction, we can now represent the relevant parts of the A104-10 text as proceeding as follows.

The Aesthetic has shown us, Kant in effect argues, that as philosophers we must think of the object of *H*'s knowledge as being an object — call it *o* — that has an existence in itself and appears to *H* via intuition *i*. Yet we cannot know objects as they exist in themselves. And thus in thinking of the object *o* in the way just indicated we cannot be *singling it out* as some particular thing, existing in itself, which particular thing, as so existing, we are then taking to appear to *H* via *i*. Rather, we must be thinking the simple, *indeterminate* thought that *some object in general*, a 'something in general = *X*', exists in itself and appears to *H* via *i*. Or, as Kant says, we must be thinking such a something-in-general = *X* to be a thing 'corresponding to, and consequently also distinguished from', *H*'s knowledge and intuition *i*⁹.

Given this last point, Kant now continues, let us turn to the knowledge-object question itself. From our foregoing results we see clearly that for *H*'s knowledge to be related to the object that *H* knows via *i*, the elements of the manifold of *i* must bear a certain unitary relation to one another: namely, those elements must bear such a unitary relation to one another that those elements do in fact function together, for *H*'s mind, to display to *H*, and so to make available for *H*'s knowledge, the triangular, wooden lamp before *H*. Thus we can arrive at the answer to the knowledge-object question if we can determine what exactly this unitary relation comes to.

Now it is indeed true, Kant in effect observes, that we philosophers must think, in the above sort of indeterminate fashion, that the object of *H*'s knowledge has an existence in itself and appears to *H* via *i*. But *H*'s knowledge — and thus the above unitary relation — is 'something to us'. That is, *H*'s knowledge — and thus the above unitary relation — is something that both we and *H* do or can know. The object *o* that we think, indeterminately, as having an existence in itself is, however, 'nothing to us [*für uns nichts ist*]' (A105). Thus we reach to following conclusion. Suppose that we are talking, as we are in asking the knowledge-object question, about the *precise* fact of *H*'s having knowledge via intuition *i*, and thus about the *precise* fact of the obtaining of

⁹ Both quotes are from A104. At A104 and A105 Kant himself does not appeal to the Aesthetic to show that we cannot single out object *o* in the way noted above. Rather, he seems to argue that *H* cannot escape the circle of representations via which *H* knows and so single out *o* in such a way. This argument, familiar from the classical idealists, is, however, worthless by itself, since *H*'s representations — as far as this argument by itself goes — may actually yield *H* knowledge of *o* as *o* exists in itself. Moreover, to argue that *H*'s representations cannot yield *H* such knowledge, Kant can appeal here only to the Aesthetic. And once that appeal is made, the actual circle-of-representations argument at A104 and A105 becomes redundant.

the above unitary relation. Then object o , insofar as object o is thought as having an existence in itself, cannot be any part of these precise facts. Nor can any factor like object o 's quasi-causal affection of H 's sensibility, as object o so exists, be a part of these precise facts.

If, however, we have reached the last conclusion then it is clear, Kant supposes, what exactly the above unitary relation — and thus the relation of H 's knowledge to its object — comes to. Earlier we have seen that this unitary relation, whatever it is, obtains among the elements i_1 to i_4 of i 's manifold just insofar as those elements do function together to display to H , and so to make available for H 's knowledge, the triangular, wooden lamp. Our last conclusion shows that this unitary relation can only be some relation that obtains among those elements *after* (in the order of logic) those elements have been given to H . But then given these points it is clear in the light of our earlier discussion of synthesis that this unitary relation can only be some relation that obtains among those elements insofar as those elements, once they have been reproduced by H 's imagination, do then jointly function for H as the single, unitary intuition i that we have been discussing. Yet those elements do jointly function for H as the single, unitary intuition i just insofar as those elements jointly function for H as a *singular* representation: namely, as that singular representation that displays to H a single object as possessing all of the properties and spatial parts that those elements individually display to H . And in the light of our earlier discussion it is clear *when* those elements do jointly function for H as that singular representation. Those elements do jointly function for H as that singular representation just insofar as H , in synthesis, uses the concept of an object in general to *think a single object* as being such that to *it* belong all of the properties and spatial parts in question.

We thus see, Kant says, that intuition i , and hence H 's knowledge, is related to the object of H 's knowledge, the triangular, wooden lamp before H , just insofar as H , in synthesis, uses the concept of an object in general to *think a single object* in the way just noted¹⁰. Moreover, so thinking that single object of course *is*, in the relevant respects, unifying the synthetically reproduced elements i_1 to i_4 into that singular representation that is the single, unitary intuition i . And thus we also arrive here at Kant's basic result that the

¹⁰ Note that, as I here interpret Kant, he has been considering what, metaphysically speaking, constitutes the *precise* fact of H 's having knowledge via intuition i and thus the related *precise* fact of the obtaining of the relation between intuition i and the object of H 's knowledge. He here concludes that the latter, *precise* fact is constituted simply by H 's using the concept of an object in general to think a single object in the way just noted. In so arguing, Kant does not, as I interpret him, mean to deny that various factors (having to do with matters of evidence and of the empirically rule-governed organization of the manifold) lead to H 's so thinking and justify H in so thinking. Rather, Kant is simply not here interested in such factors.

relation of intuition i to the object of H 's knowledge just *is* the synthetic unifying, via the concept of an object in general, of the elements of the manifold of intuition i .

Having arrived at this last result we can now see how the notion of a transcendental object — or the concept of a transcendental object — enters into the present discussion. Suppose, Kant in effect suggests, that we consider H 's use, in synthesis, of the concept of an object in general. And suppose that we focus on this concept as H 's concept of an *object* and we therefore ignore the fact that, in synthesis, H goes on to take this object to possess all of the relevant specific properties and spatial parts. Then it is clear that, merely in conceiving or thinking of a single object via this concept, H is thinking of no object in particular. Rather, H is evidently thinking, in the same sort of indeterminate manner that we philosophers employed earlier, of some object in general, a 'something in general = X '. Indeed, it is clear that, in thinking our above indeterminate thought as philosophers, we must ourselves have been employing the same concept of an object in general that H employs in synthesis, although of course the content of our thought differs greatly from the content of H 's thought¹¹.

Suppose, however, that via the concept of an object in general H is indeed thinking, in synthesis, of some single object in general = X in the above sort of indeterminate fashion. Then in H 's thought of this single object H is, so far, making no connection of this single object to what appears to H in intuition. And so H is thinking of this single object in a way that allows H to take this single object to exist in itself, even though in the usual case of knowledge the philosophically unsophisticated H is certainly not thinking of this single object as existing in itself. But now, Kant in effect observes, an object that, in H 's precise thought of it, has no connection to what appears to H in intuition and is thus allowed to be taken by H to exist in itself, is an object that we can describe as follows. It is an object that, in the form in which H is here thinking of it, is not intuitable by H or by any other human being. Hence it is not of an empirical sort. Rather, it is an object that we can call transcendental. Thus the thought (of an object) that H achieves in synthesis is simply (and whether or

¹¹ We philosophers employ the same concept of an object in general simply because, given Kant's economy of the mind, that concept is the one that any human being must use in order to think of a single object in an indeterminate manner. That Kant does not explicitly discuss our philosophical employment of that concept is of course not surprising given his refusal to distinguish us as philosophers from H as knower.

not H realizes the fact) the thought of a transcendental object = X ¹². Indeed, Kant seems at A109 (where he reaches these last results) to hold that the concept of an object in general and the concept of a transcendental object are one and the same concept¹³. And hence we now see that all of our above results about the concept of an object in general have really been results, also, about the concept of a transcendental object.

In particular, we now see that the concept of a transcendental object is that concept whose use in synthesis is exactly responsible for the unification of the manifold of intuition i and hence for the obtaining of the precise relation of H 's knowledge to its object. And we see also that when we philosophers think, in an indeterminate fashion, that the object of H 's knowledge has an existence in itself and appears to H via i , what occurs is this. Using the concept of an object in general or of a transcendental object = X , the knower H himself (or herself) thinks of a single object which H goes on to take to possess all of the relevant properties and spatial parts. This single object, insofar as it is taken by H to possess all of those properties and spatial parts, is the concrete, particular spatiotemporal object that H knows via i . Using our own concept of an object in general (or of a transcendental object = X), we philosophers then think, in an indeterminate fashion, of a single object o that has an existence in itself and appears to H via i . And we take that object o , as it so appears to H , simply to be the above concrete, particular spatiotemporal object — that is,

¹² I here interpret Kant's A109 line of thought. Much hangs on the A109 sentence

Now, however, these appearances are not things in themselves, but are themselves only representations, which in turn have their object — an object which thus can no longer be intuited by us, and which may therefore be named the nonempirical, that is, transcendental object = X .

Kant's language in the first sentence of the first (and only) full A105 paragraph suggests that in the above A109 sentence Kant in fact runs together H as knower and us as philosophers. That is, Kant seems to be arguing at A109 that we (as knowers and philosophers) must think in an indeterminate fashion that there is an object that corresponds to our representations, an object the concept of which we use in unifying those representations. But this object, as it so corresponds and as we thus think of it, is a thing in itself to which we have no access. And so (Kant's argument concludes) this object, as we think of it in our knowledge, cannot be intuited by us and must be named the nonempirical or transcendental object = X . It is clear, however, that such an argument fails once one draws the needed H /philosopher distinction. I therefore indicate above how, merely by sticking to H 's own thought, as knower, of the relevant single object, Kant can nevertheless introduce the transcendental object in a legitimate fashion. For the idea, there noted, of focusing on the concept of a single object in general = X and ignoring the fact that H goes on, in synthesis, to attribute various specific properties and spatial parts to that object, see A247/B304. ('Thought is the act which relates given intuition to an object. If the mode of this intuition is not in any way given, the object is merely transcendental'.) Observe also A109 on 'empirical concepts in general', B144-45 and B161 on the unity prescribed by the category to the manifold of a given intuition in general, A250-51, and A289/B345-46. In section III. B. (and note 22) we see another reason why the transcendental object is not of an intuitable sort.

¹³ Or else the concept of the transcendental object is the determination (in the Kantian sense) of the concept of an object in general, as the next-but-last full sentence of A108 suggests. But that point does not matter here.

simply *to be* the single object that *H* himself (or herself) thinks, *insofar as* that single object is indeed taken by *H* to possess the properties and spatial parts that are in question¹⁴.

Kant summarizes our above results about the knower *H*'s own specific use of the concept of a transcendental object in synthesis by saying at A109 that

The pure concept of this transcendental object (which in reality throughout all our knowledge is always one and the same = X) is that which can [alone] confer upon all our empirical concepts in general relation to an object, that is, objective reality.

Kant then goes on at A109 to say that the concept of a transcendental object can contain no determinate intuition and thus 'concerns [*betreffen*] nothing other than that unity which must be met with in any manifold of knowledge which stands in relation to an object'. We have just seen why Kant holds that the concept of a transcendental object can alone confer upon the elements of intuition (via the properties and spatial parts that they display) relation to an object. But it is not clear why, on the basis of his above reasoning, Kant should here take there to be only one transcendental object for all of our knowledge. Nor is it clear why, on the basis of that reasoning, Kant should take the concept of a transcendental object to concern only a unity of the sort just mentioned. After all, this concept seems also to concern, in fact, an object: namely, the object in general or transcendental object = X that we have just been discussing. We must return later to these two puzzles about Kant's A109 remarks about the transcendental object. For the present, however, we have completed our exposition of the main points of importance to us in the A104-10 theory of that object.

III. The Transcendental-Object Theory in the Light of Intensional Logic

III. A. Preliminaries

Although I have tried to present Kant's transcendental-object theory as clearly as I can, I can scarcely hide the fact that numerous problems for the theory emerge upon reflection. Here I do not think of various familiar ques-

¹⁴ I here ignore the complications suggested by note 12 and indicate how we philosophers must think of the single object *o* if the distinction between us as philosophers and *H* as knower is respected. If that distinction is not respected, then we, as philosophers and knowers, simply think there to be a single object *o* that exists in-itself and appears to us via *i*. And in that thought we suppose that this single object *o*, as it so appears to us and is then taken by us to possess the relevant properties and spatial parts, is the concrete, particular spatiotemporal object of our knowledge.