

Allison, Guyer and Kant on the «Neglected Alternative Charge»¹

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Introduction

Since Kant's contemporaries, such as Pistorius, Mass, Feder² (and in a certain way, Mendelssohn, Lambert and Sulzer)³ raised objections against his theory of space and time as mere subjective conditions of perception, the major charge seems to be that Kant was wrong in thinking that between Newton's substantialist and Leibniz' relational account of space and time one can have only one alternative, i.e. precisely to accept that space and time are mere *forms of our perception*; because it is *still possible* that space and time be the forms of our perception and *also* the form of the very things in themselves! Thus, among the longstanding disputes on the status of space and time, it has been postulated that Kant would have *neglected* an *alternative* theory of space and time⁴. So it was in Kant's times as well as in the last quarter of the XIX. century, when A. Trendelenburg and K. Fischer engaged in the same famous polemic initiated by Pistorius, Mass und Feder a century before⁵. And even today, after a new century of scholarship, it does not seem one has reached a consensus in solving the many aspects implied in the very question of the possibility of things in themselves being spatial and temporal like the whole world of appearances. Moreover, if one takes a look at the current landscape and pays attention both to the standard answers and the various ways of interpreting the issue, one will realize that there are many disputed questions involved. One of them, perhaps the most important, is between people who think that Kant has really neglected the so-called »third possibility« and people who think that Kant has not forgotten nor neglected the point at all, but rather that he did take into account the objection and proved it to be based on a mere misunderstanding⁶. Yet even though I am not willing to support the thesis of the first team, I am not sure Kant would have good reasons to demonstrate that the charge consists of a simple misunderstanding (at least not at the level of the metaphysical expositions, wherein

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² See on this my *Kant and the problem of Thing in Itself in German Idealism* (Bonaccini, 2003). Cf. Falkenstein (1991, 1995: 289ff., 336ff.); Beiser (1997: 181ff., 188ff.); Allison (1976: 313ff., 1983:102ff.); Chenet (1994: 187ff., 339ff.) and Vaihinger (1922: II 134f., 311f.).

³ See on this Bonaccini (2002). Cf. Kant's Correspondence (1900: X, XI and XII).

⁴ Cf. Kitcher, 2001; Allison, 1976, 1983 and 1996; Guyer, 1997; Baum, 1990; Parsons, 1992; Falkenstein, 1989, 1991 and 1995; Chenet, 1993 and 1994 ; Gardner 1999; Vaihinger, 1922.

⁵ Vaihinger (1922: 134f.). It is worth noting that there is a difference between Pistorius' and Trendelenburg's version of the objection, which I treated extensively in another place (2003) (Cf. Chenet 1994: 353-4). Here I have deliberately ignored it.

⁶ Like many Kantians thought in Kant's times. See on this Chenet (1994: 342-343). More recently Kitcher did defend this view (that the objection is based on a mere misunderstanding), which Allison already seemed to suggest in some way in 1976.

he still didn't prove the transcendental ideality thesis)⁷. I intend this time to put myself on this last side and to defend that Kant not only did not neglect the old charge, but rather that he really was aware of it. I will argue that it is mainly because of being quite conscious of the entire point that Kant has written the «Conclusions» (A26/B42ff.) in *a certain way*, precisely to challenge every defender of the Neglected Alternative Charge. In doing so I differ in several ways from recent interpretations. Thus, first of all I examine Allison's and Guyer's interpretations of the so called *nonspatiotemporality thesis* and suggest that they are both not incompatible but rather complementary. Then I present a reading which explains the compatibility of their interpretations but disagrees with their way of interpreting the Kantian text. My conclusion is that according to Kant one has to face both unexpected and untenable metaphysical consequences, unless one accepts that space and time are merely the forms of our perception.

Allison versus Guyer?

No matter how the thesis of the transcendental ideality of space and time is interpreted, either as a preceding condition of the thesis of the nonspatiotemporality of things in themselves (Allison), or as its consequence (Guyer)⁸, initially the point I wish to highlight is the fact that Kant tries to prove first the apriority of space and time, second their singularity, and only then their formal character (at least concerning space, defined as "form of external sense" in A25/B41, insofar as the formality of time only is asserted at A33/B49, i.e. not in the context of a transcendental exposition, but rather in the second conclusion (b))⁹. Thus we can see that at least in respect to space (whose results are going to be applied *mutatis mutandis* to time) the so-called "formality" thesis is demonstrated only in the transcendental exposition.

It is, however, always possible to read the first pair of arguments for the apriority thesis in light of A19/B34, wherein Kant defines the form-matter distinction of appearance and holds that form must be seen as a priori because the element which orders matter cannot be itself matter and must be previously disposed in the mind. Guyer seems to favor this reading by claiming that the metaphysical expositions prove not only that space and time are pure a priori intuitions, but also pure *forms* (1997, pp.345-6). Again, in order to admit that the mere establishment of the apriority of space is enough to consider it as formal representation, and thus as a pure form, it seems that it must be supposed first that what is a priori is form, and not matter, according to the definition at A19/B34. This, however, would not be sufficient to claim that the metaphysical exposition demonstrates the transcendental ideality thesis concerning space (remember that the formality of space only is asserted for the first time in A25/B41), as Guyer seems to do (Ibid., pp.348-9).

In any case I think the formality thesis is just suggested there (at A19/B34) through the mere definition of the form of appearance, but it is still not proven. Indeed, it is not proven before establishing the subjectivity thesis in the transcendental exposition, or better, not until

⁷ See on this last point my "Concerning the Relationship Between Non-spatiotemporality and Unknowability of Things in Themselves in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*" (Bonaccini, 1999), as well as my "A Short Account of the Problem of the Apriority of Space and Time" (Bonaccini, 2001).

⁸ Allison defends that the transcendental ideality thesis precedes the nonspatiotemporality thesis (1983: 102ff.; 1996: 22-23). Guyer interprets in contrast the transcendental ideality thesis as a consequence of the nonspatiotemporality thesis (1987: 342).

⁹ As I have defended in 1999, 2001 and 2003.

establishing form as subjective in A25/B41. This is carried out by appealing to the only way of explaining the special character of a priori knowledge Geometry yields¹⁰. Only then do we really know for the first time that space has to be subjective as the "form of external sense", that is, by the form of the property of our minds which enables us to represent objects as outside us and as outside one another (#3)¹¹. This last point seems to give support to Allison's contention (1996, pp. 22-3), as well as my own (2001), according to which the transcendental ideality thesis is a necessary condition for the nonspatiotemporality thesis. Nonetheless it is worth noting, as Allison did (p.23), that Guyer thinks Kant intends to prove the formal character of space and time as a consequence of the nonspatiotemporality thesis just because of his reading of conclusion (b) as a consequence of conclusion (a) (A26/B42). Now, I think Allison is right in deeming the assertion of the formal and subjective character of space and time as the condition of the assertion that they do not apply to things in themselves at all¹². But even taking this for granted I think Guyer is not totally wrong in reading of conclusion (b) as a consequence of conclusion (a). Of course, Allison's and Guyer's positions seem to be completely opposite; yet they do not need to be so, at least not entirely.

Let's suppose that after having established that space could be only the form of our external sense Kant would have perceived this was insufficient to abolish contrary alternatives like, say, versions either of Newtonian or of Leibnizian Theses; not until demonstrating definitively (I mean *explicitly*) the Transcendental Ideality Thesis, which, obviously, has not yet been explicitly demonstrated up to the conclusions¹³. In this case the point Kant would have had in mind, after the establishment of the transcendental exposition of space, would be a way of making the subjectivity thesis stronger, i.e. the essentially subjective character of the formality thesis (space as form of external sense). For at this moment, whatever may be the thesis supported by the opponent, whether Leibnizian, Newtonian, or others, it could only create a real difficulty for Kant by relating space or spatial predicates to things in themselves. That is why Kant would have had a very good reason to draw the nonspatiality thesis as first conclusion (a) and only after the transcendental ideality thesis (b). Even accepting that Kant would have derived the transcendental ideality thesis from the apriority and the singularity theses conjoined with the argument from geometry (as I defended in 1997, 1999, 2000, 2001 and 2003, quite similar to Allison, yet regarding the argument from geometry as fundamental), precisely what amounts to interpreting the assertion of space as the form of our external sense, so as to be the *first formula* of the

¹⁰ Allison thinks of this point different (1983: 81-2, 98-9) because he is mainly concerned in putting aside classical objections against Kant's Aesthetic based on the allegation his theory is not valid for non-Euclidean Geometry. I think that we need not to deny the important role of the argument of geometry for the establishment of the transcendental ideality thesis in order to defend the validity of Kant's account. I think we could maintain both the relevancy of the argument from geometry and the validity of Kant's account by making a subtle distinction between "aesthetic" and "Euclidean" space (Fichant 1999: 11ff.) Cf. Gardner 1999:103-4.

¹¹ Guyer 1997: 349-50, 359ff., 365; Parsons 1992: 74ff.; Strawson 1966: 57ff.

¹² There seems to be here a real difference on this point. Whereas Allison (1983) suggests that the transcendental ideality thesis is established out of the results of the metaphysical exposition, based on the apriori and intuitive character of its representation (p. 99), Guyer seems to think, like Strawson and Parsons, that the subjectivity implied in the transcendental ideality thesis necessarily requires the argument from geometry (A25/B41). Yet for Allison this latter does not suffice to prove the transcendental ideality thesis (1983, 99-100). Cf. Fichant (1999).

¹³ Chenet 1993:130. Cf. Chenet 1994: 187ff.

transcendental ideality thesis, we could read all of this as Kant's effort to emphasize his own view against the possibility that an opponent could argue for both the subjectivity and objectivity of space and time (just the "neglected alternative charge" point). If the first formula depends upon a systematic proof of transcendental ideality of space in both the metaphysical and transcendental expositions, according to my reading, then the second one within the conclusions functions in a polemical context against dogmatic metaphysicians. *Pace* Allison, Guyer could be right at least in reading conclusion (b) as the consequence of conclusion (a) in #3. To eliminate dogmatic objections such as the neglected alternative charge, Kant might well have argued deductively first from the subjectivity thesis to the nonspatiality thesis (just because space is the form of external sense, as a form of *sensibility*, it cannot be applied to things in themselves); and then again by moving from this latter result to the transcendental ideality thesis in the strict sense, as a proof against those who think of space as a thing in itself or a property of things in themselves.

Now, it is very important to understand here that the first formula says the space is the form of external sense, but the the second one in conclusion (b) says more than that: it really proves space to be *the form of all external appearances* (because on the contrary one would have to accept that human beings intuit things in themselves, which would be first required in order to apply spatial predicates to things in general or speak of space in itself as transcendently real!).

The distinction between these two sets of sentences intended to prove nearly the same point is crucial, because it guarantees no repetition in the argument and safeguards the relevance of both claims. It allows different aspects to be saved in both Guyer's and Allison's readings. The most important thing, however, is to understand the theoretical context in which the discussion takes place, i.e. if we are able to know things in themselves or not, in order to assert if they are spatial or have spatiotemporal predicates.

Now let's remember how Kant arrives at the first formula of the transcendental ideality thesis. We will then be capable of comparing it with the second, in order to explain how, if ever at all, Kant would have given a reflected response to the defender of the neglected alternative charge. For the first formula was proposed by Allison as the major alibi against the proponent of this objection and the second is entangled in the core of Guyer's position against Allison, as well as in his answer to the charge. Since I said that both Guyer's and Allison's accounts are not totally incompatible, and that both could be understood as picking up different steps of one and the same argument from different contexts intended to prove the transcendental ideality thesis, I would like to suggest from now on that it is perhaps the lack of awareness thereof which gives rise to neglect the very reason why Kant has never neglected any alternative, but rather presented an argument to abolish it¹⁴.

The First Formula

Allison understands the metaphysical exposition as demonstrating that space and time are pure a priori intuitions. The first two arguments would prove, the first negatively, the second positively, that space and time are necessary a priori representations; all the same with the third and fourth of space and the fourth and fifth of time in the 1787 edition: first negatively, and then positively, both intend to prove that space and time are not a priori

¹⁴ Even authors like Chenet, Falkenstein, Kitcher, Gardner and Buroker do not appear to have grasped the point I intend to suggest.

concepts but intuitions. The transcendental exposition of space, however, would derive all of its strength for explaining geometry from the a priori and intuitive (and thus presumably subjective) character of space demonstrated in the metaphysical exposition. Therefore the transcendental ideality thesis would be asserted only in the conclusions, above all to the extent that Kant would move "from the nature of the representation of space to the ontological status of space itself" (1983, p.102). Nonetheless Allison thinks that it is not obvious how the transcendently ideal character of space follow from the expositions and searches for an argument different from that of the a priori character of geometry (p.104). He sees this argument in the Prolegomena and in the second conclusion: it consists of asserting the transcendently ideal character of space as its *a priori* character and saying that it "is only possible, if and only if it contains or presents to the mind a form of its own sensibility" (p.105). I confess I do not agree with him on this last point, because it is clear to me that it is the same point made implicitly in the transcendental exposition (B41). Now, I do not deny that Kant establishes the transcendental ideality thesis of space definitively in the conclusions, but I tend to see this thesis as the assertion of the subjective and formal character of the representation of space, viz. as form of our external sensibility, which has already been demonstrated in the transcendental exposition (although from the results of the metaphysical exposition).

My thesis, as suggested, is that in the transcendental exposition we can find a *first formula* of the transcendental ideality thesis and that the assertion at the conclusions is a *second formula* of the same thesis; this time, however, related to the necessity of eliminating a serious objection, precisely the abovementioned in the title of this paper. Before presenting it, however, I will briefly conclude the analysis of the first formula by expounding Allison's answer to the objection. Then I will present both the second formula and Guyer's response followed by the explanation of my own thesis.

What does Allison's position concerning the charge at issue really consist of? First, he thinks (and I agree with him on this point), that Kant was aware of the difficulties in his own account of a priori intuition (p.108ff). Second, he considers giving an answer to the objection by arguing that "a Kantian form of sensibility is, as we have seen, a form that only pertains to objects in virtue of our peculiar mode or manner of representing them(...) as products of our peculiar mode or manner of representing the data given to the mind in intuition, neither spatial nor temporal properties can be meaningfully assigned to things as they are in themselves" (p.114). This thesis has been exhaustively discussed and criticized, although I agree with the general point. Indeed, it seems to me relatively clear that from the subjectivity does not follow the "objectuality": if space and time are structures or properties of the mind and only because of it do we perceive (intuit) objects as spatiotemporal, then *a fortiori* neither things, nor their properties, nor their relations could be said to be "spatiotemporal" in themselves. This kind of answer is an analytical implication of the argument, yet not the answer Kant explicitly might have given¹⁵.

The Second Formula

Now I turn to the second formula in the Conclusions. The conclusions, concerning space at least, seem to be drawn from the transcendental exposition but it is not altogether clear if this is so. It could relate to the concept of space in both expositions, to the many concepts

¹⁵ Chenet (1994: 360) and Gardner (1999:99-100, 104f., 107-9.) give relatively similar answers on this issue.

applied in the two expositions, or in just one of them. I think we have to accept that the conclusions are not only derived from the transcendental exposition, but from both expositions. On the contrary we do not understand how to derive the nonspatiality thesis (a) and the transcendental ideality thesis (b) from the transcendental exposition alone, i.e. how to do it without establishing first that space is a priori intuition. That in some way they are derived from the transcendental exposition is also clear, because we have already pointed out that the first formula only occurs when Kant proves that space is the subjective form of external sense, and the only way by which something can be represented as outside us and occupying a different place from the other objects. As the first conclusion (a) asserts the nonspatiality and only the second (b) asserts the transcendental ideality theses explicitly, Guyer infers from this situation that the conclusion (b) is deduced from the conclusion (a). We suggested above the two formulations, the implicit in the metaphysical exposition, and the explicit in the second conclusion, in order to explain how Allison is right even by supporting a reading which apparently collides with Guyer's correct reading of the sequence of arguments presented by Kant in the conclusions. Moreover, I suggested Guyer is not totally wrong in defending that in the conclusions the transcendental ideality thesis is formulated as if it were a consequence of the nonspatiality thesis¹⁶. Just for the sake of recalling my strategy, I should add that if we take a look at the overall argument for transcendental idealism we are going to see a sequence of theses: Kant proves first the apriority and thereafter the singularity (called by Allison "the intuition thesis"), then he draws from them the formality and subjectivity theses, which can be viewed as aspects of the first formula of the transcendental ideality thesis; and only after having established the most important elements of the transcendental ideality thesis Kant concludes the nonspatiality thesis. Then he finally draws the second and stronger formula for the transcendental ideality thesis.

Now I turn to Guyer's account. The first thing I find strange in his account of the Aesthetic is, as mentioned above, that he seems to think the metaphysical exposition proves that space and time are forms of our sensibility (1997, pp.345-6). I find it strange because this is precisely what I called and demonstrated to be the first formula of the transcendental ideality thesis in the transcendental exposition: why then, if so, arguing that the transcendental ideality thesis is proven as a consequence of the nonspatiotemporality *only* in the conclusions?¹⁷ If I did not misunderstand Guyer's point, then there is a real problem in his account. However, for my purpose it is now interesting to set aside this apparent inconsistency and analyse his reading of Kant's overall argument. It is better to grasp the point he picks up in his interpretation of the neglected alternative problem.

As Allison already pointed out, in Guyer's "counterintuitive" reading, Kant would not have argued that space and time cannot be properties of things in themselves because they are subjective forms of representation, but rather that "space and time can *only* be mere subjective forms of representation because they *cannot* be properties of things as they are in themselves"¹⁸. Our reading however, by distinguishing two formulas sheds a good deal of

¹⁶ Allison criticizes this point emphatically (1996: 23.)

¹⁷ If we remember that the *transcendental ideality thesis* consists of asserting *space as the form of our (external) sensibility*, then we shall see the problem: is it consistent to postulate that the *metaphysical* expositions prove space and time to be the *forms of our sensibility*, while maintaining at the same time that the transcendental ideality thesis is a *consequence of the nonspatiotemporality thesis* (which only occurs in the Conclusions)?

¹⁸ See Guyer 1997: 342 (Apud Allison 1996: 22-3.)

light on this polemic. Guyer thinks that Kant's main point is to assert that "things in themselves *are not* spatial and temporal" (p.334) and that he does it "by a rich budget of arguments"(p.335). Although Guyer defends that Kant would have presented many arguments, he argues that the principal would consist in deriving "the nonspatiality and nontemporality of things in themselves...most prominently from the absolute *necessity* of both intuitions and certain judgments about space and time" (p.342). What does it mean? Guyer assumes that Kant offers metaphysical and theological arguments (pp.350-54), which are well known¹⁹ (and differ from the metaphysical argument we have mentioned at the outset of this paper), but he insists Kant's main reason against the charge is related to the *necessity* that synthetic a priori knowledge based on pure intuitions has, as in the case with Geometry. The spatiotemporality of things in themselves would be incompatible with Kant's own conception of necessity. Things in themselves cannot be spatial nor temporal because they lack the necessity spatiotemporal representations do have. Spatial and temporal properties and relations cannot be predicated of things in themselves because of the inherent a priori necessity they carry out, which is incompatible with the latter.

Guyer argues first, against Allison, that "Kant's key inference is *from* the nonspatiality of things in themselves to the merely subjective status of space as a form of representation" (p.354), second that "Kant's inference [is] from the necessary truth of the contents of our knowledge of space to the nonspatiotemporality of things in themselves"(pp.354-55). So Guyer understands that Kant did not *overlook* the so-called third alternative, i.e. that he did not neglect the alternative proposed by Trendelenburg in the old charge, because "obviously, he meant to *exclude* it on the ground that it is incompatible with our *a priori* knowledge of space and time, particularly with the necessity of this knowledge" (p.363). However, he defends that Kant's argument does not work. The assumption of the necessary truth of our knowledge of space is not necessarily controversial, insofar as Kant would never admit such a necessity as derived from experience. But this for Guyer cannot be grounded by Kant, mainly because he would have confused a *de dicto* necessity with a *de re* necessity. This amounts, for Guyer, to assuming that a necessary condition of experience is not necessarily transcendentally ideal, which makes his point controversial: for while maintaining Kant would not have neglected the alternative, *he seems nonetheless to argue in defense of the neglected alternative charge position against Kant*. So both Baum and Allison have interpreted Guyer's analysis, for instance, as non-Kantian and dogmatic, insofar as his result admits in a certain way applying spatiotemporal predicates to things in themselves²⁰.

The Kantian Answer

From the above analysis we can draw some conclusions. The first is that the reading carried out until now, by trying to show the compatibility in some aspects of Guyer's and Allison's accounts, enables us to see in what sense Allison and Guyer offer partially right answers of their own views (inspired in Kant's theory) to the old objection, but nevertheless without presenting good evidence that Kant would have argued explicitly like them. The same can

¹⁹ Cf. Chenet 1994: 359.

²⁰ Even Falkenstein (1995: 304-5) seems to favor this point of view.

be said of the other commentators cited above (Kitcher, Falkenstein, Chenet, etc.)²¹ The second one is that the compatible aspects highlighted by Guyer and Allison allow us to reinterpret the line of argument Kant would have defended to face the question in accordance with his theory and in a nontrivial way. I present this point briefly as follows. The "Conclusions (*Schlüsse*) from the above concepts" (A26-30/B42-45) may be interpreted as referring to both the concepts mentioned in the metaphysical and in the transcendental expositions²². Kant established at least three theses: first, that space is a priori; second, that it is an a priori intuition; third, that this pure intuition is nothing but "the formal disposition (*Beschaffenheit*)...qua form of external sense in general" (A25/B41). From these follows directly the two famous conclusions²³: (a) that space represents nothing concerning things in themselves, i.e., things conceived of as in abstraction of the subjective conditions of our sensibility (or better, the structural subjective conditions of human sense-perception), to the extent that space is one of these conditions *qua form of human external sense*; and from (a) Kant then draws (b) against the proponent of the neglected alternative charge: if space is an a priori intuition, which qua form of our external sense constitutes the perceptual picture of what it is intuited according to the manner in which it is received by the mind (i.e. as spatial), whereby we represent objects as outside us and outside each other; and if, therefore, space cannot be derived nor applied to things in themselves, nor to their properties and relations, then space can be nothing but "the form of all appearances of the external senses, i.e., the solely subjective condition on that external intuition is possible for us"(A26/B42). Why? Because to think otherwise, Kant seems to have contended, implies denying the discursivity of our knowledge and committing ourselves to a strange assumption: "*Because we cannot convert the particular conditions of sensibility into conditions for the possibility of things, but only of their appearances, we could very well say that space and time encompass all those things which can externally appear to us, yet not all the things in themselves, whether or not intuited, whatever may be the subject. For we cannot judge at all the intuitions of other thinking beings to be attached to the same conditions which limit our intuition and are universally valid for all of us...*"(A27/B43; my emphasis).

In a word, to claim that space and time are not only the form of sensibility, but also something which can be applied to or predicated of things in themselves presupposes that we have immediate access to them and thus that we have immediate knowledge (intuition) of things in themselves. Yet to the extent that our intuition is only sensible and must necessarily be based upon affection as the only mean by which objects can be given to us, i.e., as appearances (A19-20/B33-34), the assumption entails that our intellect can intuit things considered in abstraction of the sensibility. Now, our intellect is essentially discursive: we can only know something whatever by applying concepts to sensible intuitions. That is why our intellect cannot have direct access to things in general, but merely mediate knowledge through sensible intuitions. Only an intuitive intellect, an

²¹ And specially of those commentators who thought Kant would have answered the objection in the antinomies (K. Fischer, A. Ewing, R. Torreti, E. Boutroux, and others), a strategy Kant could have never put forward without committing a circle, as I have demonstrated in my "One Point for the Neglected Alternative Charge?" (2000) (unpublished manuscript).

²² As I suggested in my paper "The Argumentative Status of the Conclusions from the Above Concepts" (2002) (unpublished manuscript).

²³ Here I disagree with Falkenstein, for whom "it is hard to see how" the nonspatiotemporality thesis follows from the above concepts (1989, and 1995: 290).

intellectus archetypus would be capable of an immediate knowledge of things. Even if we can think of its logical possibility, we can say nothing about its real possibility. It seems, however, that presupposing the possibility of applying spatial or temporal predicates, or even extending space and time to the realm of things in themselves would amount to committing the *heresy* of making the finite and peculiar conditions of our sensibility into conditions for the possibility of things in themselves, as if our intellect were not finite! As if it were an *intellectus archetypus* instead of being a mere *intellectus ectypus*!²⁴

It is perhaps worth noting that precisely in the same paragraph Kant draws the so called Unknowability Thesis (from the nonspatiality thesis): as if Kant were about to suggest to his opponent that he could never defend the third supposedly neglected alternative without committing the arrogance of claiming a knowledge of things in themselves. A kind of knowledge quite different from ours, a kind which only a god would be able to justify and possess.

So we can say in conclusion that there really exists a relatively consistent response of Kant to the proponents of the neglected alternative charge, which is not merely trivial but rooted so in (i) conceptual as well as in (ii) metaphysical claims²⁵. All the same, Kant's ontology of spatiotemporal appearances is based in the metaphysical assumption we cannot claim a kind of knowledge which precludes the nature of our faculties (i) and supposedly "make us into gods" possessing the faculty of intellectual intuition (ii), yet having neither support nor reasons to accept the real possibility of such an intellect or being. And although we can only offer a merely conceptual reinterpretation of this answer, I am quite sure the main problem for Kant was the act of making a claim which only God would be able and allowed to make.

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²⁴ This could be understood as an interesting argument for the ontological denial of transcendental idealism in the strong sense implies, in contrast to Gardner's point (1999: 110-111).

²⁵ Here I ought to confess my difference with P. Kitcher's epistemological reading (2001:608). Her main tenet, if I understood it correctly, seems to me that it could be read as an *ignoratio elenchis* by people like Falkenstein and Guyer. In addition, I wonder if such a point of view, although quoting Prauss two aspect theory, is consistent with Kant's transcendental approach, for instance, while saying that "objects apart from our sensibility must be understood as spatial, temporal and causal"(!?).

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