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Two Difficulties for Kant's First Analogy

Andrew F. Roche

Centre College, Danville, KY, USA
Email: andrew.roche@centre.edu

Abstract

In the First Analogy of Experience in his *Critique of Pure Reason,* Kant argues, on the ground that it is needed for a united time, that everything in the world is (permanent) substance or a determination thereof. In this paper, I advance what I call a *representational reading* of this text, and I explain how it addresses two concerns. The first is that Kant's argument should have no leverage to establish (permanent) substance in experience, since pure intuition already represents a 'united' time. The second is that even if Kant can establish the existence of (permanent) substance, he cannot prove that this substance is the substratum for everything else.

Keywords: Kant; First Analogy; substance; time; pure intuition

1. Introduction

In the First Analogy of Experience in his *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant argues that everything in the world is, or is a, (permanent) substance or a determination thereof.[1] There are various interpretations of the First Analogy. I endorse, and, in this paper, I develop, what I call a *representational reading* of the text. In what follows, I articulate two important objections that Kant's argument faces, for which satisfactory solutions remain wanting, and explain on Kant's behalf how a representational reading can address them.

Kant's primary argument in the First Analogy seeks the preconditions of our representation of the persistence (*Beharrlichkeit*) of time, one of time's three '*modi*' (A177/B219). Time 'lasts and does not change' (B224-5). This is somehow ground for finding something permanent (*etwas Beharrliches*) in appearances that 'gives general expression to time' (A183/B226), *viz.*, (permanent) substance. This argument strategy raises the following two questions. First, is the representation of time for which Kant seeks preconditions our pure intuition of time? Second – and this yields the first difficulty that I want to address – if this representation of time is not our pure intuition of time, how can there be any basis to argue that we must represent (permanent) substance in experience? For the nature of pure intuition is such that it would seem to explain how time appears to last and not change. Through pure intuition, we represent '[d]ifferent times . . . only [as] parts of one and the same time' (A31/B47).

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A second important and more commonly discussed objection to Kant's argument – setting to one side the previous concern – is that he can establish at best the existence of (permanent) substance and not the further thesis that everything else is a determination of substance. Perhaps we must grant that something permanent exists among appearances, but why must, say, this table be a mode of it?

The structure of my paper is as follows. In section 2, I nail down what I have in mind by a 'representational reading' of the First Analogy and distinguish it from other kinds of interpretation. In section 3, I present Kant's First Analogy argument, so understood, highlighting the representational readings of Henry Allison and Andrew Ward, both of whom emphasise – rightly, in my view – that Kant seeks to explain our representation of time's 'unity'. In section 4, I provide an elaboration of and resolution to the first difficulty. In fact, the representation of time the conditions for which Kant seeks in the First Analogy is not our pure intuition of time. Inspired by work, not on the First Analogy, by Paul Guyer, I argue that there are important limitations on our pure intuition of time that make it unable to represent time – or, thereby, the permanence of time – in the sense at issue in the First Analogy. In section 5, I respond to the second difficulty. In fact, Kant fails to establish the existence of substance as an all-encompassing substratum in the text that he gives us. But it is also my view that he had the resources to do it. In section 6, I conclude.

2. Readings of Kant's argument

As I construe it, a representational reading of one of Kant's arguments has Kant contending that representing the world thus-and-so in experience requires experientially representing the world in other ways. As applied to the First Analogy, my proposal will be (with qualification to come in section 5) that it is Kant's goal to establish that any experience requires the representation of any object of that experience either as (permanent) substance or as a determination of substance.[2] From this result, Kant infers, about the phenomenal world, that everything is (permanent) substance or a determination thereof.

A few words about how I am articulating things. First, the point of adding 'experientially' to 'representing' is to make clear that the representation is constitutive of the relevant experience. Thus, it is not a plausible representational reading of Kant's Analogies that having such-and-such experience requires having *a belief* that is not itself part of the experience.[3] Second, I include 'permanent' in parentheses because Kant seems to take it to be analytic, at least in the First Analogy, that substance is permanent. The parenthetical is redundant but worth bearing in mind.[4] Third, Kant sometimes treats 'substance' as a mass noun, sometimes as a count noun. Rather than hedging between these uses, I will typically just treat 'substance' as a mass noun. But I mean to remain agnostic about whether substance is better understood as stuff or as a thing.

One more word on representational readings. I take it that on any reading of Kant's First Analogy, Kant is ultimately trying to establish a metaphysical claim about *the world*: it contains (permanent) substance, of which everything else is a determination. One might think that a representational reading cannot, in principle, bridge the gap between conclusions about how we must represent the world and how the world is. But on my view, this is where Kant puts his transcendental idealism to work. We must

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represent the world spatially and temporally, Kant argues back in the Transcendental Aesthetic, and this suffices for it to be the case that appearances *are* spatial and temporal. Space and time are transcendentally ideal but 'empirically real'.[5] Representational conditions on our being able to experience the world are just conditions on appearances. As he also famously puts it: 'The conditions of the **possibility of experience** in general are at the same time conditions of the **possibility of the objects of experience** . . .' (A158/B197).[6]

Representational readings of the First Analogy are not the only game in town. We might call another an *epistemological reading*. Essential to such readings is that they concern the conditions both on a representational state that is not itself constitutive of the relevant experience (it might be a belief or a judgement) and on that state's accuracy or justification. Thus, perhaps Kant's view is that to *measure accurately* a time interval (Melnick 1973: 58-77), or for me to be *justified* in believing that a change has occurred (Guyer 1987: 224-30), there must be, or I must be justified in believing that there is, (permanent) substance of which everything else is a determination.

Finally, on a *metaphysical reading*, Kant argues for the existence of (permanent) substance of which everything else is a determination by way of arguing that it is necessary for the existence of something else that is not in dispute: say, change (Van Cleve 1979; 1999: Ch. 8) or perhaps time itself. On such readings, the conditions of possible experience play no role in Kant's argument.[7] There is no inference to make, as there is on a representational reading, from how we must represent the world in experience to how the world is.

But I mention these other readings only to clarify the style of interpretation that I want to defend.

3. Kant's argument and two objections

Commentators on the First Analogy have found different argument strategies within its pages, but the passages on which I focus appear at the beginning of the A-edition text (A182-4/B225-7), as well as in the paragraph inserted at the beginning of the B-edition (B224-5). Kant observes that the experience of 'both **simultaneity** as well as **succession**' (B224; see also A182-3/B225-6), and indeed '[a]ll appearances' (B224), 'can alone be represented' (B224) in time. But time itself 'lasts and does not change' (B224-5; see also A144/B183). And as Kant claims in each of the Analogies, we cannot perceive time 'by [or in] itself' (B225). Presumably, it is the lastingness of time that is the salient feature, for Kant infers that something equally '**lasting** and **persisting** [*Beharrliches*]', not itself time, must be found among appearances. Moreover, 'everything [else] that belongs to existence can be thought only as [its] determination' (B225, my interpolations; see also A183/B226-7). With the appeal to transcendental idealism – not explicit in the First Analogy – Kant can infer, about appearances only!, that everything either is substance or a determination thereof.[8]

There are many questions and concerns that one might have about this argument. Edward Caird is frequently cited for questioning the meaningfulness of the premise that time lasts and does not change.[9] Things *in* time last or change; to claim that time itself lasts or changes seems like a category mistake. I think that Allison's response here is right. 'The essential point is that the constant flux occurs in a single time'.[10] But we should add that, for Kant, permanence is 'existence at all times' (A242/B300;

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see also *MSI*, 2: 417), so since time exists at any of its moments, it follows that time itself is permanent, or 'lasts', or 'does not change'.

A more significant issue is the inference to the representation of (permanent) substance. Part of the rationale is our inability to perceive time by itself. I will have more to say about this thesis below (§4.3). For Allison, this is the claim that we cannot 'determine the temporal order of appearances by referring them to time itself as a quasi-object' (2004: 238). It is then supposed to be 'necessary to presuppose some perceptually accessible model for time itself as a condition of the possibility of determining the temporal relations of appearances. ... [I]f everything were in constant flux, then we could not even be aware of succession as such, not to mention simultaneity' (p. 239). But this is not yet to establish either that this thing is permanent or that it functions as the bearer of all modes. It is the former point on which I want to focus for now. According to Allison, Kant later argues that the 'model for time' must itself be permanent. Otherwise, Allison's analysis seems to imply, there would be 'a rupture in the unity of time, and therefore in the unity of experience' (p. 243).

Similar considerations animate Ward's presentation of Kant's argument. We experience, he claims, a 'temporal continuum' in which objects appear to us (2001: 394). But fleeting perceptions offer up nothing that would provide for the appearance of continuity for such a continuum, and there is no appearance of an enduring self that could do this, either. 'The solution Kant offers is that this consciousness [of a temporal continuum] can only arise if we are able to join together the contents of the manifold so as to perceive them as the coexisting or changing states of one or more spatial object, whose substance remains the same ...' (ibid.). Ward thinks that Kant is licensed to infer the *permanence* of this substance because, should there be no permanence (e.g., if at some point nothing exists), we would be forced to acknowledge a 'hiatus in experience and, thereby, destroy the consciousness of a single temporal continuum' (p. 397).

I think that these presentations of Kant's argument, as far as they go, are fundamentally correct. But they need to go further.

Both Allison and Ward think that substance is a phenomenological proxy for time, providing the appearance of unity in a sea of flux. But neither explains why the experience of substance is necessary in light of one's pure intuition of time. It is important to recall that it is a ground of Kant's argument that our original representation of time is an intuition and not a concept or conception that '[d]ifferent times are [represented as] only parts of one and the same time' (A31-2/B47). There is unity baked into our pure intuition. Does the experience of substance make our pure intuition of time possible?[11] If not, why is representing substance necessary? It would seem that pure intuition represents the temporal unity that Kant is concerned about.

There is also the other issue that I have promised to address. How does Kant establish not only the existence of substance as a permanent 'backdrop'[12] but also its role as the substratum of everything else? Allison confronts this difficulty head-on. His response works like this. (1) If I am to experience a change, *AB*, in the world, then it must be the case that *B* replaces *A* in an enduring object. 'The crucial point ... is that the assignment of the successively represented states of affairs to an enduring substratum (as its successive states) functions as the rule through which we think such change' (2004: 241-2). Allison later attempts (2) to extend the point in order to

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justify permanent substratum. There could be no merely temporarily persisting ultimate substratum because this would require, for example, that it end.[13] Let this ending event be *AB*, where the ultimate substratum goes from existing (*A*) to not (*B*). This would be a case of a change *without* a substratum enduring through and bearing the change, which is, by (1), impossible (pp. 242-3). But the issue here is (1). Why can I not experience something *that is a determination of nothing else* simply disappearing from existence? Call this an 'absolute perishing'. Here, it may pay to have an example at hand, such as Jonathan Bennett's disappearing porcelain pig (1966: 188-9). Why could the pig not be a determination of nothing and be able simply to vanish?

Allison attempts to reconstruct an argument for (1) on the basis of text at A188/B231. He highlights the difference between experiencing a change – say, wooden-ness disappears and ashen-ness arises – and experiencing 'coexisting states of affairs' (2004: 241). What is the difference? In the former case, I experience some enduring thing changing states; not so in the case of co-existing states. The point is supposed to generalise to the experience of all change.

But the point does not generalise. First, why would I not be credited as experiencing an event or change if it turned out that what I was experiencing was the molecule-by-molecule swapping of a piece of wood with ash? Perhaps, as I now look at the pile of ash, the original piece of wood exists somewhere in a physicist's lab? Of course, if this is what actually happened, then I did not experience the event that I thought I did, that is, the burning of some wood. All the same, I experienced a change. And we need not invoke science fiction. It seems that changes can happen at places without supposing substrata bearing the change: for example, the broken traffic sign gets replaced. There may be an insight here that *the place* must endure through change if I am to experience it, but this insight does not support the inference to an enduring *object* bearing the change.[14] Second, it is hard to tell a convincing story with these materials about why Bennett's example (understood as an absolute perishing) is impossible. Presumably Allison, and Kant, must hold that if we really did encounter a vanishing porcelain pig, then we must accept that the pig was but a determination of something more fundamental. But Allison's point must also be – given his invocation of experiencing co-existing states – that if we did experientially represent the pig as a determination of nothing else, it would be undetermined whether we were rather experiencing a porcelain pig followed by some different pig-free region of the world: an experience not of change but of co-existence. But why should this follow? Presumably, I will experience the pig disappearing against a detailed backdrop: I am in my office, replete with familiar furnishings, etc. Incredibly, the pig vanishes before my eyes! But I am still in my office, and everything else looks the same. It seems unmotivated to suppose that if I represent the pig's disappearance as an absolute perishing I now no longer represent the same place that I did before.[15]

Plausibly, Ward holds that the representation of a temporal continuum requires 'join[ing] together the contents of the manifold'. But this is far from specifically experiencing these contents as 'states of an object or objects whose substance persists throughout all of their changes' (2001: 394), which he quickly infers.[16] He later asks us to consider (1) the experience of a change from liquid to solid that is not supported by an underlying substratum. (2) 'This means that we must in principle be able to experience a period of time, however minute, when nothing existed, i.e. the period between the liquid absolutely ceasing to exist and the solid absolutely coming into

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existence'.[17] (3) We cannot in principle experience such a gap. Therefore, (4) we cannot represent the change from liquid to solid as unsupported by an underlying substratum. But it is unclear why we ought to accept (2). Why suppose that there would have to be, or that there would have to be able to be, a period of empty time between the two states? Ward seems to think that this is the only way we could conceive of the states *not* being joined by an underlying substance (the break would interrupt the persistence (pp. 397-8)). But if this is Ward's analysis – which, to be sure, mirrors Kant's text at A188/B231 – it just *takes for granted* that experiencing the continuity of time requires experiencing appearances as determinations of an underlying substratum.[18]

4. Making possible the experience of time's permanence

4.1 But not making possible pure intuition

I have asked these questions about the representation of time at issue in the First Analogy: Is it our pure intuition of time? If not, why does our pure intuition not explain the represented lastingness and changelessness of time? My answer to the first question is 'no', which means that there is work to do answering the second.

But I should linger on the first question. There is a respected school of thought according to which it might seem to merit a 'yes' answer. In the Transcendental Deduction, Kant seems to hold that a category-involving synthesis of the understanding is required so much as to have representations of space or time (B136n, B144-5, B160-1, B160-61n). According to those whom Colin McLear calls 'intellectualist' interpreters, Kant is indeed arguing that our pure intuitions of space and time require this synthesis (or at least *a* synthesis).[19] Despite, they continue, what earlier in the *Critique* seems a clear division of labour between the sensibility and the understanding, only the forms of the former making possible human intuition, it is part of the project of the Transcendental Deduction to establish that there are also intellectual conditions on pure intuition. Intellectualists tend to restrict their claims to Kant's argument in the Deduction. But one can see how they might sympathise with the suggestion that the First Analogy spells out in greater detail how a synthesis guided by the category of substance helps make possible our pure intuition of time.[20]

Others have argued that intellectualism is wrong, and that case stands as one serious reason to deny that the First Analogy articulates a condition on the pure intuition of time. McLear contends that Kant's arguments in the Aesthetic require that our pure intuitions of time and space be prior to any synthesis. We originally represent time and space as wholes; representing parts is a focusing on what is already there. But synthesis operates only part-to-whole, generating representation of the whole from the parts (2015: 86-93). James Messina argues that our pure intuition of space (and by extension, of time) is of something infinite, and 'we cannot complete an infinite successive synthesis'.[21] Against a general intellectualism about intuition, Robert Hanna and Lucy Allais emphasise §13 of the Transcendental Deduction where Kant is explicit that even without use of the categories '[a]ppearances would nonetheless offer objects to intuition, for intuition by no means requires the functions of thinking'.[22]

A second reason to deny that the representation of time the preconditions for which Kant seeks in the First Analogy is pure intuition is that, in the Aesthetic, Kant

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does not seem to think that our representation of time depends on something among appearances. In the Aesthetic, Kant claims that our pure intuition of time makes possible our representation of everything in time. This surely includes permanent stuff or things. But the dependence is asymmetric. Appearances 'could all disappear, but time itself (as the universal condition of their possibility) cannot be removed' (A31/B46). Since it would seem that the representation of time in the First Analogy *does* depend on the representation of (permanent) substance in appearances, that representation cannot be pure intuition.

Finally, there are basic textual difficulties reading Kant's First Analogy as articulating the conditions on our having a pure intuition of time. Kant had the vocabulary to claim that there is no pure intuition of time without experiencing (permanent) substance. Nowhere in the First Analogy, however, does he say this. I would not want to overemphasise some of Kant's terminological decisions, but it seems relevant what words Kant tends to use for the representation of time at issue. 'The time ... in which all change of appearances is to be *thought* [*gedacht*], lasts and does not change' (B224-5, my emphasis). Time 'cannot be *perceived* [*wahrgenommen*] by itself' (B225, my emphasis). At stake seems not the mere intuition of time but some higher-level representation. Plausibly, since the First Analogy is in the Analogies of Experience, the relevant representation of time is the *experience* of time.[23] This does not commit me to the claim that there is a sensation of time or an empirical intuition of time. It will, below, commit me to the view that synthesising empirical content is required to generate the pure representation at issue in experience.

4.2 Understanding the relevant representation of time

But if the First Analogy does not articulate a condition on our having a pure intuition of time, then why is our pure intuition of time not enough to explain how we represent time's permanence?

We should first consider what more precisely the content of our pure intuition of time is. Clearly in pure intuition one has a moment of time before one. But Kant also thinks that one's pure intuition is of something 'unlimited' (A32/B48), and I suggest that according to Kant a pure intuition includes the representation of an endless 'horizon' of time both before and after (see Figure 1).[24]

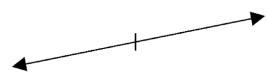


Figure 1. Time as represented through pure intuition alone.

Since permanence is existence at all moments (A242/B300) and since Kant seems to treat pure intuition as representing time containing all moments (A31/B46, A31-2/B47), it is hard to deny that in pure intuition we also represent permanence in time.

But pure intuition cannot represent that the time (temporal framework) that I intuit at one moment is the *same* time that I intuit at some other moment. Thus, suppose that one experiences objective succession *AB* or objectively simultaneous states *A-B*. The perceptions of *A* and *B* are (in the cases that Kant considers) successive either way. One condition on these experiences (of *AB* or *A-B*) is that one represent

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both *A* and *B* as in the same temporal framework (see Figure 2). (It would not be the experience of, e.g., an event if we represented *A* as in one timeline and *B* as in another, as though one were transported to an alternative universe while perceiving *A*.)

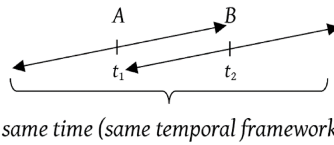


Figure 2. Time as represented over time.

Representing the time of which *A* occupies a moment as the same time of which *B* occupies a moment requires synthesis. Pure intuition alone does not suffice.[25]

The point that I am making is about the kind of unity at stake in our representation of time in the First Analogy. But there is another way in which the referent of this representation differs from that of pure intuition. Compare what once confronted cartoon film illustrators. Here are the sheets of celluloid on which you will paint. Before you set to work, do these blank sheets represent the space in which the story occurs? I say: they represent *a* space, but each is straightforwardly undetermined, not only in the sense that the sheets are currently empty but also in the sense that there is as yet no fact of the matter about *what* space they depict. Perhaps these sheets will be used to depict the world of *Snow White*, these others the world of *Bambi*? I suggest that the sheets of celluloid are like our pure intuitions of time. By contrast, the representation of time at stake in the First Analogy is the time of the concrete world in which we live.

Through pure intuition alone, we always represent a moment embedded in a boundless but also undetermined past and future. In experience, we represent more. We represent this moment as part of the same time that we encounter in all of our other experiences, required for the representation of 'both **simultaneity** as well as **succession** . . .' (B224). I represent this moment as part of the same time that I experienced two years ago and the time waiting for me in the future. Indeed, I think that we must extend the point well beyond our individual experiences of simultaneity and succession, which all told are not likely to last more than 100 years. At stake for Kant is how I represent the temporal framework that I currently intuit as the same as I would represent in any *possible* experience of objects that are connected by way of relations of simultaneity and succession, had by even merely possible cognisers (e.g., when there are no human beings left to have experiences).[26] The next question is: How is this representing of time and its permanence accomplished?[27]

4.3 Synthesising the representation of time

Here is a potential solution: we simply synthesise the content of our various pure intuitions of time (and represent, further, that times connected to these by relations of simultaneity and succession are the same).

I think that Kant holds that this cannot work. The reason, I suggest, is that we cannot perceive time in itself. But the story here must be filled out.

One possible explanation of why we cannot simply synthesise, moment to moment, our pure intuitions of time into the representation of the time of our world

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is that *there can be* no pure intuition of time at all absent this synthesis. Perhaps, indeed, to have a pure intuition of time, one needs a synthesis that specifically involves representing (permanent) substance in the world. This would be an instance of the intellectualist view that I discussed in §4.1. Helpful as it might be to me here, I will continue to pass it over. There is another way forward.

In an illuminating paper, Guyer (2018) takes seriously Kant's contention that our original representation of time is *formal*. Our pure intuition of time does not represent a particular thing. '[D]ifferent instances of pure intuition do not ... present the *same single object*, but only the *same form* of objects'.[28] Here Guyer is making a point about specific objects in pure intuition (and his examples are spatial rather than temporal), which is a fine place at which to begin. One reason to endorse his claim is that it helps explain how Kant thinks mathematicians can appeal to pure intuition to yield *general* mathematical conclusions. If the objects of geometry – now focusing on spatial intuition – were particular, then the geometer would be able to establish claims only about the, say, particular triangle before her. But if the objects are indeterminate – i.e., not determined in various ways, such as having a specific length, specific angles, etc. – this opens the way to establishing general claims about mathematics. And Guyer extends the point to our pure intuitions of space and time themselves (pp. 191, 195). These pure intuitions are not like an intuition of a desk: It is 'not like representing my desk before me now, at 10 AM, then representing the same desk at 11 AM when I come back from the kitchen with a fresh cup of coffee, and then again ... at 1 PM when I come back from lunch' (p. 190).

I want to take over Guyer's insistence that our pure intuitions are formal, as well as his view that they do not represent (fully) determinate objects. He claims that 'pure intuition does not present a single space and a single time, but a single form of space and time' (2018: 191). I take this to mean not that there is not *something* singular presented in pure intuition alone but that one is not presented space or time as re-identifiable *particulars*.[29] This was my point above that through pure intuition alone we do not represent the time of the concrete world in which we live.

I should pause here for clarification. 'Particular' serves as jargon for Kant. It is a label for a form of judgement ('Some *A*s are *B*.'), from which he derives the category of plurality (A70/B95, A80/B106). It would seem to follow that items that are formal, such as points on a line in pure intuition, might be 'particular' despite my claim above that they are not.[30] But Kant's is not the sense of 'particular' that I have in mind when I claim that in pure intuition alone we do not represent time as particular. Rather, I take myself to be using the word in P. F. Strawson's sense (e.g., 1996 [1959]: Ch. 1), indicating a concrete individual.

In fact, I think that we should want to dissociate the representation of singular things and the representation of particulars independently of the task of making sense of pure intuition. Suppose, for example, that I am asked to imagine an imaginary dog. Following Berkeley (1999 [1710]: 10-12), I am probably not imagining a dog 'in general'. Perhaps, in this instance, what I represent looks a lot like a black labrador. On the other hand, it does not seem right that I represent a concrete particular, either. Much about this dog is undetermined: its height, its weight, the number of teeth that it has, etc. (Van Cleve 1999: 50). While my representation is clearly singular (it is just one dog), it seems wrong to insist that simply imagining a

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dog yields the representation of something particular – as we have in my *perception* of, say, my neighbour's orange cat.

Returning to pure intuition: if we acknowledge Kant's claim that what is given in pure intuition are 'infinite **given** magnitude[s]',[31] we now have the ingredients of a picture of our original, pure intuitions of space and time.[32] Consider specifically our pure intuition of time. I say, again, that this amounts to intuiting a moment while representing a boundless past before it and future after it. Since it is all-encompassing – one cannot intuit two times at once – it is single, as Kant insists (A31-2/B47). But it is also formal and generic. What one represents in pure intuition alone is not particular.[33]

If the foregoing is correct, one can see how it would be impossible for Kant to hold that we represent time as *the same* temporal framework throughout our experiences just by synthesising pure intuition. If every pure intuition of time is of something formal and generic, then simply bringing together their content still leaves one with a representation of something formal and generic. A generic line, together with two more generic lines, might yield a triangle, but that triangle will also be generic.[34] The operative representation of time in the First Analogy, however, is not of something generic. It is the time of the objective world: the time in which we are born, in which we later die, in which historical events have occurred, and in which future events will transpire.

What would it be to perceive 'time by itself'? I propose that it would be to cognise time – i.e., objective time – independently of cognising anything else in the world.[35,36] The story that I have told above is the story that this cannot be done. Thus, we cannot perceive time 'by itself'. To cognise objective time independently of cognizing anything else would be to cognise it merely through pure intuition (with whatever concepts one would like to add to the mix). But this would not yield a cognition of something particular, as objective time is. It could at best yield something formal, generic.

We can now justify why Kant thinks that experiencing objective time requires experiencing something permanent in appearances.[37] There must be something particular among the objects of our experiences so that the form of time can 'in-form' it, be the form of *it*, yielding an experiential representation of time that is objective and particular.[38] Compare: I have the concept of redness. With it, alone, I represent nothing particular. Now here is a red fire truck. In experience, I can represent this particular thing, *and also* I represent some particular redness, the redness of *this* fire truck. So, too, when I experience substance, I experience time made particular by dint of in-forming this thing. And this thing must be *permanent*, not merely persisting for some finite period of time. We must represent objective time now as the same objective time that we will experience two hours hence and that will exist eons before and after our lifetimes. It is not just that we represent (some) time to extend forever into a past and future. That much is the content of our original representation of time. It is rather that we represent this time as *identical* to something encounterable in all other possible experiences of objects connected by way of relations of simultaneity and succession.

5. Substratum

Thus far, I hope to have provided an improved rationale for Kant's conclusion that the world of appearances must contain (permanent) substance. Once Kant establishes

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that we must experientially represent substance, his transcendental idealism implies that substance must exist – among appearances.

Of course, this is not yet the conclusion that Kant is ultimately after – that, additionally, everything not substance is a determination thereof. Kant must establish that substance serves as the one and only fundamental substratum. And many have held that Kant cannot get this further conclusion.[39] Arguably, all Kant needs in order to account for the permanence of time is to show that we must experience something permanent among appearances – a backdrop – not that we must represent appearances as determinations of this permanent thing.

I think that this objection is a genuine problem for the argument that Kant offers in the First Analogy. But I also think that a response was available to him.

My plan in the rest of this section is as follows. First, I will explain how the argument that Kant actually offers in the First Analogy fails to address the objection. Second, I will explain how Kant nevertheless had the resources to provide a compelling response. Finally, I will defend a lemma that this reformulated argument requires.

5.1 The limitation of Kant's argument

Recall the argument strategy that I have attributed to Kant. On a representational reading, Kant is attempting to establish that

(1) We must experientially represent everything as (permanent) substance or as a determination thereof.

From (1), he can infer, by invoking transcendental idealism, that

(2) Everything is (permanent) substance or a determination thereof.

The objection that I am currently considering really applies to (1). Perhaps I must represent (permanent) substance in the world. Thus (by transcendental idealism), there must be (permanent) substance. But why must I represent everything else as a determination of it? I do not think that Kant does, and I do not think that Kant plausibly can, answer this question.

He can go some way toward an answer, and this will matter below. He should hold that what is particular in experience will be distinct empirical objects. So for us to experientially represent particular substance – the requirement that I advanced in section 4 – particular objects of experience must have an intimate connection to substance: say, be *its* determinations, so that to experience one of these objects *is* to experience that substance. Thus, we cannot experientially represent substance as a mere backdrop, floating free of everything else that we experience.

Still, this argument falls short of what Kant needs. Kant's view is that we must always experience substance, and this can be so as long as we are always experiencing determinations of substance. But this is compatible with representing *some* things as neither substance nor determinations thereof. As I look at my houseplant, for example, perhaps I represent the pot as a determination of substance but not the plant.

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Remarks that Kant makes at A188-9/B231-2 might encourage the following response. He entertains the possibility that 'substances' (he should instead call them 'things that are not determinations of anything') arise or perish. But this 'would itself remove the sole condition of the empirical unity of time, and the appearances would then be related to two different times, in which existence flowed side by side, which is absurd'. I read Kant as saying that if something arose that was not a determination of substance – an absolute arising – it could not be in the same temporal framework as everything else. But since it must be in time, it would be in its own framework, which is absurd. (Other things that *are* determinations of substance are in that temporal framework straightforwardly just by dint of being determinations of the substance whose form is objective time.)

As I will explain below, I think that this passage is very important for understanding how Kant should address the substance-as-mere-backdrop objection. As it stands, however, it does not provide grounds for (1). (1) is a thesis about how we must represent the world. Kant's remarks at A188-9/B231-2 do not address how we must represent the world. They address how the world must *be*, appealing to the as-yet undefended metaphysical principle that for *x* to be part of objective time, *x* must be substance or a determination of substance.

5.2 Modifying Kant's argument

The way forward, I propose, is to amend the argument strategy that I have attributed to Kant. Instead of arguing from (1) to (2), Kant should argue from the more modest

(1′) We must experientially represent (permanent) substance in the world and at least some things as determinations of it.

As I argued in §5.1, Kant is entitled to (1′). From (1′), by invoking transcendental idealism, he can legitimately infer

(2′) There is (permanent) substance, and at least some things are determinations of it.

(2′) in hand, we have a metaphysical, not a representational, question to address. Can anything that is not substance fail to be a determination of substance? *Now* it is appropriate to appeal to Kant's points at A188-9/B231-2. If my table were not a determination of substance, it could not be in objective time. For objective time is the form of substance, and something disconnected from substance would be disconnected from objective time. (It would be in its own time, which is absurd.)

5.3 Defending inherence-in-substance

I must still address a lacuna in this argument. The undefended principle that I mentioned in §5.1 – for *x* to be part of objective time, *x* must be substance or a determination thereof – still requires defence. The difficulty is that there seem to be other candidate relations for the job: asymmetric causal relations or two-way causal interaction. Accordingly, something might not be a determination of substance but nevertheless exist in objective time by way of being causally connected to things that are.

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But Kant could marshal a plausible response. Let me begin by distinguishing permutations of the case that we are asked to consider. The thing that is not a determination of substance – call it *R* – might be (i) something that arises in time or (ii) something that perishes in time. (If (iii) it is around forever, then it is substance, or a substance, and not in conflict with the principle at issue.)

Consider (i). Kant can claim that it is impossible. *R* must first exist to bear causal relations to substance, which means that those causal relations cannot explain *R*'s *arising* in objective time.

The trouble, then, is with (ii), at least if we specify that *R* has up to some moment always been around (i.e., it has not arisen in objective time, as in (i)). Still, I think that there is a difficulty that (ii) encounters. Causal relations of the sort that might be appealed to here – i.e., phenomenal causal relations – presuppose a temporal framework. Since they and their relata must already be in a temporal framework, the relations cannot *explain* how those relata exist in a temporal framework. This is the nub of my response to the objection that causal relations might explain belonging to objective time.

But I should elaborate. One might point out Kant's position that causal relations ground relations of succession and simultaneity, as he argues in the Second and Third Analogies. Thus, causal relations do, for Kant, explain temporal relations. We must attend here, however, to what precisely grounds what. I claim that objective time – not temporal relations within time – makes possible causal relations. This is compatible with causal relations grounding relations of succession and simultaneity.

Matters are admittedly more complicated than this reply suggests. For as I touched on in §4.3, I take relations of succession and simultaneity to be essential to objective time, which implies (by the foregoing) that causal relations are, too. Causal relations and objective time are thus *mutually conditioning*: no causal relations outside of a temporal framework, but no temporal framework without those causal relations. And if objective time requires causal relations, then it seems that causal relations help explain objective time itself. Why can they not explain how something *belongs* to objective time?

But the answer is that these are different *explananda*, and the proposals under consideration are importantly different. On the account that I attribute to Kant, causal relations are in time because their relata are in time; and the relata are in time because they are modes of substance. To be sure, modes will not be in time without those causal relations – there would be no time without them – but that is not *why* those modes are in time. On the proposal of Kant's opponent, *R* is in time because it is causally connected to a determination of substance. But to be causally connected to a determination of substance, *R* would already need to be in time – to explain how the causal connection is so much as possible.

I should stress that my response to Kant's opponent is not that she misses the more fundamental question of how *R* is in time at all. The foregoing causal proposal *is* an attempt to explain *R*'s being in time. A slightly different version of Kant's opponent might contend that by explaining *R*'s temporal relationship (before/after, simultaneity) with a determination of substance, this also explains how *R* is in time. My reply would be that it matters how Kant thinks this explanation must go. Temporal relationships are, Kant holds, grounded on phenomenal causal relationships. And phenomenal causal relationships and thus their relata, I am suggesting, can

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exist only in a unified time. Causal relationships cannot explain *R*'s existence in objective time, and thus neither can relations of succession or simultaneity.

6. Conclusion

I have presented a representational reading of Kant's First Analogy, highlighting how it responds to two difficulties that Kant's argument faces. First, in light of the fact that the First Analogy is not articulating conditions on our pure intuition of time, we need an account of why pure intuition is not enough to explain how time appears to last and not change. I have argued that our original representation of time is of something formal, not particular. Thus, we must represent something permanent in the world (more specifically, although I have not argued the point, in space[40]) that bears the form of time so as to yield a representation of the (objective) time of our world. This still leaves a significant objection to Kant's argument: that he can establish only the need for a permanent 'backdrop' among appearances, not that the permanent functions as a substratum for all appearances. Properly understanding the way his representational argument can work, however, helps us see the resources that Kant has to address this objection, too.

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Notes

1 He adds, in the B-edition, that the 'quantum' of substance 'is neither increased nor diminished' (B224). To keep this paper focused, I ignore this facet of the First Analogy.

I follow the standard practice of appealing to the first- and second-edition pagination of the *Critique of Pure Reason* (Kant 1998) using A and B page numbers, respectively. For other of Kant's works I appeal to the *Akademie Ausgabe* pagination (Kant 1968). '*MSI*' stands for *On the Form and Principles of the Sensible and Intelligible World* (in Kant 1992); '*Prol*' stands for *Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics that Will Be Able to Come Forward as Science* (trans. Gary Hatfield in Kant 2002); '*MAN*' stands for *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science* (trans. Michael Friedman in Kant 2002); 'Refl' stands for *Reflexionen* (in Kant 2005).

2 Scholars who have developed representational readings of the First Analogy include Paton (1936): vol. 2: 184-220; Guyer (1987): 216-21; Longuenesse (1998): 334-45, esp. 334-35n22, 337-38n24, 342-45; Ward (2001); Allison (2004): 236-46; Landy (2014); and Osborne (2022). (And Osborne offers his own tripartite division of readings, slightly different from what I go on to offer.) Guyer is rightly often held to advocate what I call below an 'epistemological reading' of Kant's Analogies. But he finds three different arguments for the thesis of the First Analogy, and his analysis of the first – which covers the text on which I focus – is representational. His analysis of the third, on which he places greater weight, is epistemological (e.g., pp. 224, 232).

3 But if, say, 'judgments of experience' (*Prol*, 4: 298) help constitute experience, then these will count as experiential representations.

4 A184/B227; see also A185/B228. The thesis of the First Analogy in A also recommends this understanding of 'substance' (A182). But Kant does not always understand 'persistence' (*Beharrlichkeit*) as permanence. E.g., B415, *Prol*, 4: 335.

5 Kant writes of the '**empirical reality**' of space and time at A28/B44 and A35/B52, respectively.

6 See also Ward (2001): 399.

7 Though one might attempt to account for them separately, since the conditions on the existence of an *F* could be construed also as the conditions on the experience of an *F*, if one assumes that one cannot

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experience what does not exist. This move, however, would make appeal to the 'conditions of possible experience' strangely irrelevant.

8 Allison and Ward, too, emphasise the relevance of transcendental idealism (Ward (2001): 395-6; Allison (2004): 233-4).

9 Caird (1889), vol. 1: 541; see also Kemp Smith (2003 [1923]): 359; Broad (2010 [1978]): 160; Guyer (1987): 219; Thöle (1998): 277.

10 Allison (2004): 238; see also Paton (1936): vol. 2: 199.

11 Allison's answer to this question is clearly 'no' (2004: 112-6, 192), though this does not come out in his discussion of the First Analogy.

12 To use language from Wolff (1973 [1963]: 251) and Allison (2004: 239).

13 Or begin. I will focus on its ending.

14 Allison might well claim that the examples that I am using are not the kinds of changes with which he is concerned. He claims that I might experience a desk being removed from a location and a bookcase being put in its place. 'I would certainly experience this as a change, but not as a replacement change . . . ' (2004: 241). By a 'replacement change', Allison seems to have in mind only those changes borne by an enduring object in which *A* disappears and is replaced by *B* (see p. 240). But if this is Allison's position (and it is not clear that it is, for Allison also claims that it must be *shown* that every 'replacement' is an alteration of an enduring thing, indicating that it is not an *assumption* (ibid.)), he has no argument for the general thesis of (1). He is licensed only to the weaker claim that *some* kinds of events require an enduring object to bear them. This weaker claim will not support the inference to (2).

15 A further complication is that some of Allison's language in presenting Kant's argument lapses into the language that one finds in epistemological readings. Consider: 'Any such experience [of a change] requires two successive observations and the noticing of some difference between what is observed in each case. One cannot, however, infer from a difference in two successive observations that a replacement change has in fact occurred' (2004: 241). It is hard not to read Allison as saying that one cannot *justifiably* infer that a change has occurred. I of course fully agree with Osborne's insistence that Allison's is a representational reading of the text; but I am not convinced that Allison is fully consistent about it (see Osborne 2022: 14).

16 One way to imagine an alternative would be to imagine a world of only temporary objects that are united by, but only by, causal connections.

17 Ward (2001): 397. Ward's reconstruction operates on the simplifying assumption that there are no other objects in space (p. 396).

18 In fairness, Ward's discussion occurs where he is attempting to show how Kant's argument at A188/B231, important to those who embrace what Ward describes as the 'shared interpretation', is really just a *reductio* version of the argument from the unity of time. His interest in justifying Kant's view that all appearances are determinations of something permanent seems secondary.

19 McLear (2015): 81. McLear's label applies to those who think that *any* intuition requires synthesis; I limit my discussion to our pure, 'original' representations of time and space.

20 Intellectualists about pure intuition specifically or about intuition generally include, but are certainly not limited to, Longuenesse (1998): Ch. 8, (2005): Ch. 3; McDowell (2009): Chs. 2-3; Griffith (2010); Friedman (2012); Williams (2018); Rosefeldt (2022); and Onof (2023). I do not claim that all of these authors would sympathise with the proposal that the First Analogy describes a synthesis that makes possible our pure intuition of time, and indeed the details of some of their views seem uncongenial to the proposal.

21 Messina (2014): 20. See also McLear (2015): 87-8; Allais (2015): 165-6; Onof and Schulting (2015): 9, 19.

22 A90-1/B123; Hanna (2005): 259-60; Allais (2015): 162. We might add the following passage from the opening of the B-Deduction: 'The manifold of representations can be given in an intuition that is merely sensible, i.e., nothing but receptivity, and the form of this intuition can lie *a priori* in our faculty of representation without being anything other than the way in which the subject is affected' (B129).

23 Tolley reminds us of the progressive structure of the Analytic of Principles: there are the Axioms of *Intuition*, the Anticipations of *Perception*, then the Analogies of *Experience* (2020: 3228). Kant repeatedly notes that experience is the product of synthesising perceptions (e.g., A110, B161, B218-9).

24 Talk of 'horizon' I borrow from Parsons (1992): 70.

25 See also Melnick (1973): 59 and Roche (2018): 50-1.

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26 To be clear: I claim above that the experience of temporal relations requires the experience of a persisting temporal framework, but I am *also* claiming that in representing a persisting temporal framework, I must represent these temporal relations. The reason is this: we need some way to specify what is (our) temporal framework, rather than, to continue with the example that I mentioned above, the framework of a parallel universe or some other possible world. These temporal connections deliver that specification. If we hold that in representing our temporal framework, we represent this moment as connected to any possible experience whatever, we seem to include experiences of these other possible worlds, capturing too much.

27 In what sense *must* I experientially represent that this time is the same time as times connected by way of relations of simultaneity and succession? I am inclined to think that experiencing this permanence of time is a requirement of experiencing one world, which is a requirement of there being a single subject or unity of apperception. To suppose an experience of a distinct temporal framework and thereby a distinct world would be tantamount to postulating a distinct cognitive subject. Experientially representing this permanence of time is a condition on *my* having a unified experience (see also A110). See also Ward (2001): 403 (and Allison (2004): 244), who finds this point in both editions of the Transcendental Deduction and at A177/B220.

28 Guyer (2018): 190. I have elided 'obviously' from this claim; Guyer is in this passage making a more cautious point than I make it appear. Ultimately, however, he unconditionally adopts the position stated.

29 E.g., 'Each time I represent space or time in pure intuition I represent a single space or time . . . ' (Guyer 2018: 192). He writes of pure intuitions representing 'a region of space or time' (p. 194; see also p. 195).

30 I owe this point to a reviewer.

31 B39; see also A25. This Guyer does, but much of his paper is dedicated to explaining why Kant is mistaken.

32 The language of an 'original' representation is, of course, Kant's (A32/B48). Everyone should accept that this representation is our most primitive representation of time, I think. It is up for debate how it differs from other representations of time. My debatable contention, of course, is that its content is singular but not particular.

33 This is not to say that one's pure intuition, at that moment, is not particular. It is had by a particular person at a particular point in time. Further, I do not want to insist that creations of the imagination cannot be made particular. Fictional characters in stories, for example, seem particular to me. My claim is that representing something single is not *ipso facto* to represent something particular; and I am proposing, for Kant, that *what pure intuition represents* is not particular.

34 A reviewer rightly cautions that Kant characterises the geometer as generating a 'determinate space' in her constructions – of, for example, lines (B202; see also B147 and A724/B752). I read Kant as claiming that a construction in space is *more* determinate than empty space. Geometrical constructions will still be *relatively* indeterminate for being undetermined in the sorts of ways that I mention above (e.g., no determinate length, no determinate angles, etc.). See also Guyer (2018: 194-5), as well as A713-4/B741-2.

35 This proposal makes nice sense of another gloss of the claim that Kant offers: 'To be sure, time itself persists, but time *alone* cannot be perceived . . . ' (Refl 6311, 18: 611; my emphasis).

36 I do not mean to offer the foregoing as a full account of what it would be to perceive time in itself. On its face, what I write here would be irrelevant to the Second and Third Analogies. We should add, I think, to our conception of perceiving time in itself that we have all of objective time – say, a timeline – available to us such that we can inspect the temporal positions of states of objects. Objective temporal *order* is the problematic of the other Analogies.

37 It is frequently objected, in different ways, that Kant can establish at best the existence of temporarily enduring things that are determinations of nothing else, not full-blown (permanent) substances. See Broad (1925-26): 194; Bennett (1966): 199-200; Strawson (1995 [1966]: 141-6, (1997): 275; Dryer (1966): 365-8; Melnick (1973): 67; Thöle (1998): 277; and Van Cleve (1999): 107-8.

38 Hanna suggests, though in reference to the Refutation of Idealism rather than to the First Analogy, that space itself could serve as the permanent thing in our experiences (2000: 160-2). On my reading, Kant would reply that what is needed is *material* to bear the form of time. See also *MAN*, 4: 503: 'Now matter is the subject of everything that may be counted in space as belonging to the existence of things. For, aside from matter, no other subject would be thinkable except space itself, which, however, is a concept that

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contains nothing existent at all, but merely the necessary conditions for the external relations of possible objects of the outer senses.'

39 Broad (1925-26): 194; Paton (1936): vol. 2: 201; Melnick (1973): 70-1; Guyer (1987): 220-1; Strawson (1997): 275-6; Thöle (1998): 278.

40 E.g., B275, B278, B291, B292, B412-3, *MAN*, 4: 542.

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