The Copernican Shift and Theory of Knowledge in Immanuel Kant and Edmund Husserl.

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research and contains as its main content work which has not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary education institution.

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Abstract

In this thesis I explore the foundations of the respective theories of knowledge for both Immanuel Kant and Edmund Husserl. Particularly I direct attention towards Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* and Husserl’s lectures given at the University of Göttingen entitled *Introduction to Logic and Theory of Knowledge*; which were given between the release of his *Logical Investigations* and *Ideas I*. I wish to explicate the similar questions that the two philosophers addressed, and that both saw the answers to the issues of knowledge as being founded in the Copernican view of an analysis of subjectivity and the a priori. Kant’s Copernican revolution establishing grounds from which Husserl was able to enact his phenomenological investigation of the role of subjectivity. Yet, I also wish to explore the distinction within their methodologies of arriving at what constitutes a priori knowledge and the effect this difference of methodology causes in their respective epistemological theories, leading to the conclusion showing their different respective concepts regarding the accessibility of *das ding an-sich*, or the thing in-itself.
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Introduction

In this thesis I discuss the foundations of both Immanuel Kant and Edmund Husserl’s respective epistemological theories. My focus has been particularly on Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* and Husserl’s earlier phenomenological works; his lectures on logic and theory of knowledge given at the University of Göttingen, and his *Logical Investigations*. I have sought to compare and contrast the two philosophers’ positions, particularly by looking at the influence of the Copernican revolution, not only in Kant’s works, but also that which Husserl took from this. Though they both held to the Copernican view of the importance of the a priori as grounds for theory of knowledge, how they arrive at and what constitutes a priori knowledge is different for both philosophers.

I begin by discussing the context of Kant’s critical project and the importance of David Hume’s skepticism concerning knowledge. Kant’s critical project began as a response to the scathing critique Hume had lain against causality, and as what Kant took to be all synthetic a priori knowledge. In seeking to resolve this issue Kant enacted what he called his Copernican revolution, where he changed the focus from the objective constraints on knowledge to the subjective constraints on knowledge, just as Copernicus had shifted the viewing of the celestial bodies. This allows Kant the ability to establish the categories of the understanding as the synthetic a priori concepts that afford us the ability to come to knowledge.

The categories become crucial to Kant’s further arguments regarding the analogies and the possibility of experience. Of particular importance is the category of causality that Kant sought to defend from Hume’s critique, which Kant further uses, in his
analogy, as that which gives an objective time determination to our experience of successive states of affairs. What this eventually leads Kant to is the argument that the systematic unity of reason is the arbiter of truth. Truth becomes about fitting within a coherent system of nature, and from this we can establish knowledge. Truth and knowledge are thus liable to change as experience changes, what is important is the coherence to the systematic unity of reason.

From this I move on to discuss Husserl’s theory of knowledge. I have chosen for the purpose of this thesis to focus on his earlier works to avoid being drawn into a discussion of the two thinkers respective transcendental arguments. Furthermore, I have focused predominantly on Husserl’s lectures, since Husserl himself intended them to surpass his arguments regarding epistemology in his *Logical Investigations*. Husserl founds his arguments on questions concerning the possibility of the grasping of the objective by the subjective, referring to the importance of observation in the empirical sciences as giving something objective within a subjective act.

From this Husserl establishes a unique type of skepticism, that of the phenomenological reduction or epoché. In enacting the epoché we are able to establish the grounds of any knowledge; that of the reduced, transcendent ego of pure consciousness, through the separation of the act and content of any direction of the consciousness. What becomes crucial is this separation of what Husserl distinguishes as the intentional act and intentional content of any conscious act; the division of act, meaning and content.
This is also the point from which I explicate the major divergence in the two thinkers respective theories. Husserl holds that we must establish the a priori from this base point of consciousness, as that which relates to essences, which are the transcendent-in-immanence. Where Kant had held that an analysis of synthetic a priori laws of reason are the grounds from which any knowledge can be established, Husserl argued that even these principles of reason must be established from the position of the epoché. This being what leads to a major difference in their respective theories, including Husserl’s holding that objects in-themselves can be grasped, contrary to Kant’s concept of noumena.

Chapter 1: David Hume and Issues Concerning Knowledge

I. Hume on Knowledge

Putting Kant in context is crucial to understanding what it was he originally sought to achieve with his critical project. During the period in which Kant found himself the dominance of rationalist metaphysics had been overtaken by the emerging realm of British empiricism. The champion of this empiricism was the Scottish philosopher David Hume, who with Book I of his Treatise of Human Nature (1740) and his Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding (1777) explicated many issues traditionally associated with metaphysics, which in turn had flow on effects into other disciplines. The principal ideology behind Hume’s empiricism being that “all the materials of thinking — perceptions — are derived either from sensation (“outward sentiment”) or from reflection (“inward sentiment”)” (Morris 2013). Hume directing his questioning towards the possibility of how we could come to know anything about
the world and ourselves, not attacking a particular philosophical theory, but the possibility of knowledge itself (Biro 1993, 37).

Firstly, we must acknowledge that for Hume knowledge is strictly limited to relations of ideas and matters of fact. This is explicitly put in his Enquiry, where Hume states; “All the objects of human reason or enquiry may naturally be divided into two kinds, to wit, Relations of Ideas, and Matters of Fact” (EHU 4.1). Furthermore, Hume also states in the Treatise under the section entitled “Of Knowledge”; “… of these seven philosophical relations, there remain only four, which depending solely upon ideas, can be the objects of knowledge and certainty” (T 1.3.1).

Secondly, we also see that Hume, particularly in the passage above from the Treatise, links knowledge to that of certainty. For Hume certainty excludes all doubt, thus anything that can be considered knowledge must not contain any form of doubt, and to remove all doubt is to find the claim to be necessarily true, thus this is required if it is to have such certainty that allows for knowledge. Since if the opposite of something is plausible, there remains doubt, if the opposite is not plausible the proposition is necessarily true and it holds certainty. Meeker (2007, 229) puts Hume’s theory of knowledge as “…S knows p if and only if (i) S’s assent to p arises from a comparison of ideas and (ii) S is certain that p.”

However, for Hume certainty, taken as above, can only be obtained for relations of ideas. It is that we could never deny that a triangle has three sides, as it is necessarily true and thus certain as a relation of ideas. As regards matters of fact, we cannot hold such certainty, for as Hume states “The contrary of every matter of fact is still
possible; because it can never imply a contradiction, and is conceived by the mind with the same facility and distinctness, as if ever so conformable to reality” (EHU 4.1). The example Hume himself uses to explicate this, in the Enquiry, is that of the sun rising, for it is not an unintelligible proposition that the sun will not rise tomorrow in the same way that a triangle without three sides is, this issue being that the contrary of a matter of fact is not a logical impossibility. In this matters of fact cannot hold the same certainty, derived from necessity, that relations of ideas hold, which allow them to be known for Hume.

Thus, for Hume, knowledge of matters of fact are always contingent. This is because since it is plausible, no matter how improbable, that the opposite of any matter of fact could occur, then we cannot be certain of that matter of fact until it occurs, we can instead have belief based on probability. However, without such certainty it cannot be considered knowledge in the Humean sense and must remain contingent. Thus matters of fact can never be considered to be known universally for Hume, as they can only become knowledge once they have occurred, for it is always plausible that the opposite could have occurred, thus we could not know prior that the opposite would not occur, because we are uncertain and this cannot, for Hume, amount to knowledge.

II. The Critique of Causality

From Hume’s explication of knowledge we can begin to see issues forming with regard to that of causality and inductive reasoning, Hume going as far as to say “All reasoning’s concerning matter of fact seem to be founded on the relation of Cause
and Effect” (italics in original, EHU 4.1). Of course this leads to issues for scientific
knowledge which is often based upon causal connections, say for example, Hume’s
type of knowledge would not be able to justify as knowledge the proposition that
iron will rust in water, since matters of fact are contingent and cannot be taken as
universal laws, even based on this relation of cause and effect. This is because Hume
would argue that we could conceive of iron that does not rust in water and so it does
not gain the necessity that gives the certainty that is a requirement of knowledge.

For Hume the question remains, where has this dogmatic belief in the principle of
causality come from? For Hume causality is a reflective impression, viz., that it is a
purely mental comparison of already established ideas, as opposed to one given
directly by sensory impression. Hume declaring directly that this is contrary to the
belief that causal connections come directly from experience (EHU 4.1). How this is
formulated is that in multiple instances we will have had sensory impressions giving
us the ideas of X and Y in conjunction, therefore in reflection we place that this
conjunction is necessary and X is cause of Y or vice versa, creating a causal
connection. The actual establishing of any causal connection is thus not experienced
and merely of the reflective nature, as a mental process, going beyond that of our
senses (T 1.3.2).

However, such a connection is not made out of necessity and it cannot be considered
as knowledge. Hume stating;

“From the mere repetition of any past impression, even to infinity, there never
will arise any new original ideas, such as that of a necessary connexion; and
the number of impressions has in this case no more effect than if we confin’d ourselves to one only.” (T 1.3.6)

Thus, what Hume leaves us with is a scathing critique of causality as the basis of any knowledge, removing much of what could be considered knowledge; particularly in the sciences, where experimentation is founded on establishing causal principles to produce universal laws such as that of iron rusting in water.

III. The Critique of Inductive Reasoning

However, this critique goes further than to just causality, for it causes issues for inferential knowledge of all kinds and opens Hume’s critique to include that of inductive reasoning as a whole. Importantly it is Hume’s establishment of issues of necessity that holds bearing over inductive reasoning. As Robert Fogelin (1993, 94) states in asking the question, “How does the experience of events being consistently conjoined in the past license an inference to the claims that they will continue to be conjoined in the future?”, Hume’s critique is able to reach inductive reasoning as a whole.

Acceptance of past experience having weight over future is based on the principle “that those instances, of which we have had no experience, resemble those, of which we have had experience” (italics in original, T 1.3.6). However, Hume declares that following the reasoning used in his critique of causality we would see the issue with the aforementioned principle, viz., that there is really no argument that can afford us this assumption (Fogelin 1993, 95). Hume asks us, if we cannot be afforded this
assumption, then how can we establish the ground of inductive reasoning? This being one of the questions Kant would later pick up from Hume.

The issue with inductive reasoning is that all arguments for inductive reasoning are based on circular reasoning. This is that to argue for inductive reasoning we must assume that it is probable that the nature of the world doesn’t change, however we only make this assumption based on inductive reasoning itself, which of course already requires this assumption (Fogelin 1993, 95). Hume explicates this in his Abstract (1938, 651), stating; “All probable arguments are built on the supposition, that there is this conformity betwixt the future and the past, and therefore can never prove it.”

Thus what we find, if we cannot demonstratively or through probability prove this assumption, that inductive reasoning cannot lead us to knowledge. This is because it cannot provide us with certainty, which of course is required for knowledge under the Humean theory. Thus all knowledge of matters of fact must remain contingent, as nothing can provide us with justifiable universal laws regarding such.

Chapter 2: Kant’s Copernican Revolution

I. Kant’s Response to Hume

Immanuel Kant stated in the preface to his Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics that; “no event has occurred that could have been more decisive for the fate of this science [metaphysics] than the attack made on it by David Hume” (1783, 7). Kant
went as far as to defend Hume’s skepticism against the common-sense rebuttal, even crediting Hume with opening his eyes to the dogmatic holding of the principle of causality, which in turn led to his critical project (De Pierris and Friedman 2008). However, though it may seem Kant held in high regard many of the points Hume made, his critical project, particularly his *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781-1787), sought to defend the a priori foundation of the laws of understanding, which Kant felt Hume had rejected, and to find grounds to defend scientific knowledge, for which many issues had been established via Hume’s critique of causality and inductive reasoning.

For Kant, Hume’s critique of causality goes much further than to just causality and inductive reasoning. Kant explaining in his *Prolegomena*;

“I thus first tried whether Hume's objection might not be represented generally, and I soon found that the concept of the connection of cause and effect is far from being the only one by which the understanding thinks connections of things a priori; rather, metaphysics consists wholly and completely of them.” (Kant 1783,10)

Since it seems that Hume is critiquing the a priori nature of causality, it would seem that this could be taken further as a critique to other laws of understanding, which establish the foundation of any metaphysics.

The issue becomes, what are these connections, which exist a priori, in their universality. Crucially there is a distinction between judgements that Kant felt Hume missed, that of the distinction between analytic and synthetic judgements (B19). Analytic judgements are those judgements where the predicate belongs to the concept
as something contained within it, where as synthetic judgements are those judgements where the predicate is connected to the concept, yet still something outside of it (A6/B10). Where Hume discussed relations of ideas, these are always analytic concepts, say for example a triangle having three sides, since such a judgement is contained within the concept. Where as matters of fact are synthetic judgements, for example the causal connection between iron rusting and water is not contained within the concept of either water or iron itself, but is established through a connection.

What Kant is left with is that Hume’s issue was not particularly with cause and effect, but that of synthetic a priori judgements. However Kant argues, had Hume realised the scathing implications of such a critique he would have not held it, for Kant argues that both the natural sciences and mathematics are necessarily founded upon synthetic a priori judgements (B20). Thus in seeking to solve this issue Kant’s critical project began with the question how can synthetic a priori judgements even be possible.

II. The Foundation of the Revolution

In answering the question raised concerning synthetic a priori judgements Kant had to commit himself to a Copernican style revolution. Where Copernicus shifted the focus from the celestial bodies moving relative to the Earth, to the Earth moving relative to the celestial bodies, Kant shifts from the objective influence on knowledge for the subject, to the subject’s influence on any object of knowledge. Kant establishing a radical shift away from previous metaphysics, which Kant believed held that the understanding must conform to objects of knowledge, Kant instead looking to how objects of knowledge must conform to the processes of understanding.
Hume looked to the objects of knowledge for external validation of causality, and what Kant retrospectively labelled as all synthetic a priori judgements, Kant turned to look inwards at the subject for such validation in establishing any knowledge of causal principles.

So Kant’s questioning asks how anything knowable must firstly conform to our processes of understanding, which in turn makes it knowable for us to begin with, as Kant states; “For where might even experience get its certainty if all the rules by which it precedes were always in turn empirical and hence contingent so that they could hardly be considered first principles?” (B6). Here Kant strikes a blow against Hume’s empiricism, pointing out that it would seem that Hume had not realised that if there were no such first principles, that of synthetic a priori judgements, which govern the understanding, how then could we come to knowledge through experience with the certainty that was so crucial to Hume’s theory of knowledge. We would instead be in a state where we never could gain certainty of experience, since this certainty itself would have to come from experience, of which we do not yet have the certainty of a first principle that we require to gain knowledge of it.

What Kant established here is that in coming to any form of understanding both concepts and intuitions must be present, as he states “Thoughts without content are empty; intuitions without concepts are blind” (A51/B75). If everything were to be derived from intuitions then it would be unintelligible, as it would not have the concepts to make such understandable, it would thus be blind. In making anything knowable, an intuition must be brought to a concept, a manifold must be brought into the unity of consciousness and have a concept applied to it, yet concepts alone have
no content to give us knowledge, they act as the form of knowledge, thus both are
required. Therefore there must be some laws that go beyond the empirical, some pure,
viz., non-empirical, laws by which we can make understandable intuition at all. So
the question is, what laws of the understanding must exist that allow us to understand
anything in the first place?

III. On the Objective Validity of the Categories

These first laws of the understanding, which are pure synthetic a priori concepts, are
what Kant refers to as the categories. The categories are those laws that direct reason
in its relation towards intuitions, for as Kant states;

“…reason must indeed approach nature in order to be instructed by it; yet it
must do so not in the capacity of a pupil who lets the teacher tell him whatever
the teacher wants, but in the capacity of an appointed judge who compels the
witnesses to answer the questions that he puts to them.” (Bxiii)

It is that there must exist some form of categories that afford reason this questioning,
viz., that any object of knowledge must conform to our process of understanding, yet
our process of understanding also must be given content from the senses, as intuition,
for it to direct its questioning towards. However, the issue still remains as to how
Kant is to establish what these categories are at all.

In any act of the understanding an intuition is synthesized under a concept, to make it
understandable to the subject, this produces a judgement. In making judgements we
apply this process of understanding, we apply a concept, which holds for many,
directly to an object, e.g. the judgement that all bodies are divisible (A68/B93).
Therefore in any judgement there is a necessary synthesis, which makes the objects of
the judgement understandable to us, this synthesis is the process of the understanding.
Since this process of synthesis is purely of the understanding it is transcendent, as it
goes beyond that of any empiricism. But for Kant the question is what is it that allows
this synthesis, thus he is concerned with “…the dissection of the power of
understanding itself” (italics in original, A65/B90). That which makes up this
synthesis is the pure concepts of the understanding, the categories; that which allows
this synthesis (Young 1992, 105). However, since Kant has established such a
transcendent synthesis as necessary, thus the categories, as the laws of this synthesis,
are also shown to be objectively valid, since without them this necessary process of
synthesis could not be possible.

Hence, to establish what principles can be considered categories an analysis of
judgement is necessary, since when we look to that which is contained within
judgements, yet is also transcendent, we can gain access to the categories of the
understanding. Taking the above example of the judgement all bodies are divisible we
are able to establish, after removing the empirical content and concepts, certain
transcendent concepts, say for example of the mode of quantity, as the concepts of
unity and plurality in the process of division, that apply universally, yet are pure, in
that they contain no empirical content themselves. They thus become transcendent, as
they go beyond that of the empirical and are necessary a priori to make any
understanding of the world possible and allow us to establish them as necessary
categories of the understanding.
In relation to Hume’s critique of causality, Kant establishes that causality is a necessary transcendent a priori concept. It is that causality is one of the forms of relation that intuitions can have with one another and it is necessary as a law of the understanding. Where Hume had established that causality was developed a posteriori from the continual conjunction of certain experiences, Kant has instead established that causality is not developed at all, it is founded in its necessity as a pure a priori concept, that in itself is necessary to our process of understanding and making things knowable. The role of causality is as a synthesis of our understanding; it is thus necessary a priori as one of the categories which allow us the synthesis of relations of objects of knowledge. Therefore, Kant, through the establishing of the objective validity of the categories, has dealt with Hume’s critique of causality and furthermore the issue of a priori synthetic judgements, of which Kant was only able to establish through his Copernican revolution.

IV. Transcendental Idealism

There is however a further conclusion to be made from Kant’s analysis of the categories and the role of his Copernican revolution. In Kant’s reliance on establishing that objects of knowledge must conform to our process of understanding, and using this to establish the objective validity of the categories, it also presents the issue of whether we can know things beyond our process of understanding. This leads Kant to establish the doctrine of Transcendental Idealism; summarized by Gardner in his book *Kant and the Critique of Pure Reason* (1996, 95-96) as;

“Transcendental idealism may be defined then as the metaphysical thesis that objects of our knowledge are mere appearances they are empirically real but
transcendently ideal. Transcendental idealism means that objects do not have in themselves, independent of our mode of cognition, the constitution which we represent them as having; rather, our mode of cognition determines objects’ constitution. For Kant, all previous pre-Copernican metaphysical positions are the same in supposing that objects of our cognition are transcendentally real, that they have constitution which we represent them as having, independent of our mode of cognition, so that things can in principle be known as they are in themselves. Transcendental idealism thus expresses the Copernican thesis that objects should be (or must be) considered to necessarily conform to our mode of cognition; where transcendental realism is committed to the pre-Copernican view that our mode of cognition conforms to objects.”

Though Kant has established that our process of understanding and coming to knowledge is objectively valid, he has not yet established that our knowledge of objects is objectively valid. It would seem at this point that objects of knowledge are only subjectively known, this however is incorrect. Graham Bird (1982, 91) argues that Kant is not appealing to an individualised subjectivity, rather relativism within a system of belief. It is that all humans require these processes of understanding, based on the objectively valid categories, and thus knowledge must conform to this, as the essential process of understanding of human beings, rather than as an individualized subjectivity, it is merely that it must conform to human understanding.

Objects are only given to us through a process of a necessary synthesis on the part of the subject. When an object is given to us (as subject) in the manifold and is made to
be a presentation for us, this is the synthetic unity of apperception. It is only through
the process of a unifying synthesis within the subject itself that allows the object to
become an object for that subject. On this Kant states;

“The I think must be capable of accompanying all my presentations. For
otherwise something would be presented to me that could not be thought at all
– which is equivalent to saying the presentation either would be impossible, or
at least would be nothing to me.” (B132)

And as previously mentioned the only way a presentation can become ‘mine’ is
through this necessary synthetic unity of apperception and applying of the categories
to such.

Thus, the transcendental subject is merely that which can accompany all of the
thoughts and presentations that are mine and is that which makes them mine to begin
with. This is transcendental as it is necessary a priori for any knowledge; it is that
which makes the synthetic unity of apperception possible within the subject itself. Yet
it is also the act of apperception that makes the transcendental subject what it is in the
first place. Kant stating on this; “Hence only because I can combine a manifold of
given presentations in one consciousness, is it possible for me to present the identity
itself of the consciousness in these presentations” (italics in original B133).

However, this consciousness cannot come to know itself through itself, it is merely
through the senses. For nothing manifold is given in the transcendental subject, thus it
is not able to become knowable as an intuition applied to a concept, it is through the
presentations that become mine in the one presentation of the transcendental subject
that self-consciousness is achieved (B135).
Thus Kant also presents the concept of a transcendental object; which is that which unifies the manifold given to us in an intuition as a concept of that object (B139). This is the association of presentations together that allows us to view an object as an object rather than just raw sensory data, we are able to put together the manifold as a certain object, say piece together the legs, top, colour etc., of a table to allow us to call it a table in the first place. It is this concept of a transcendental object that must be a priori for us to even be able to establish an object as an object, however it only applies objectivity to the unity of consciousness. This is because in the process of apperception different people may take different meanings for different things, it is that direct apperception only gives us subjective representations of empirical objects, however we cannot challenge the meaning of the transcendental subject through the conceptual transcendental object, thus giving it, and solely it, objective validity at this point (B140).

What this leaves Kant with is that we can postulate the concept of objects independent of how our cognitive processes work, however, we cannot know how they are in this state independent of us, as they are in-themselves. Rescher (1981) interprets Kant as saying that since the concept of a transcendental object does not have content then it is required that there be the concept of something that appears, but is not the appearance, as the appearance requires the undergoing of sensibility, this being the *ding an-sich* (thing in-itself) or noumenon. This is a rather interesting concept in that it rejects a purely idealistic notion, postulating that there are things independent of cognitive processes, which we require as a concept for our cognitive structures, but that they themselves are not given directly to us as they are, in fact they are nothing for us, not a thing at all, merely that concept which allows us a concept of
appearances or phenomena, but which these concepts themselves require as a
grounding (Rescher 1981). Thus we also find that empiricism is rejected in a way, as
we cannot gain everything required for knowledge purely through the means of that
which appears, since we cannot know that which appears in the appearance at all; we
require those transcendental principles that make knowledge possible in the
application of sensibility. Instead what Kant leaves us with is a doctrine that tends to
bridge the gap between both idealism and empiricism as per the previous Gardner
quote.

Chapter 3: The Analogies of Experience

I. The First Analogy: Substance

So far we have established a brief grounding of Kant’s theory of knowledge in his
Copernican revolution and his movement away from the positions held by the
rationalists and empiricists before him with his doctrine of transcendental idealism,
however it seems there are still many questions to answer in regard to that of
objective empirical knowledge in light of Kant’s radical Copernican shift.
Particularly, Kant’s radical shift has been critiqued by scholars such as Pritchard
(1909, 118); who argues that that objects of knowledge exist independent of the
knowledge of them and that knowledge is an uncovering of this reality of said objects,
however within Kant’s new doctrine it becomes difficult to establish how we can
come to this kind of knowledge, since the reality we are able to apprehend and the
reality of mind-independent objects, or noumena, are separate. So Pritchard presents
the question of how Kant can confirm any form of knowledge within his new
philosophic doctrine of transcendental idealism?

Kant’s answers again lies in the basis of his Copernican revolution, it is that objects of
knowledge must conform to our structure of experience and in an analysis of this we
can come to understand how our knowledge of empirical objects is grounded. This
analysis is found in Kant’s three analogies, the focus of which is explicating those
principles that allow us experience of empirical objects in the first place. It is crucial
here to understand the distinction Kant makes between empirical objects and our
representations of them. By way of the senses, in presentations, we are only given
representations of empirical objects, we require more than presentations to be able to
come to knowledge regarding empirical objects in-themselves, the explication of
these principles of reason which allow us to move beyond our representations alone
and to come to knowledge of empirical objects being the goal of the analogies. The
principle of the analogies as a whole being; “Experience is possible only through the
presentation of a necessary connection of perceptions” (italics in original, A176/B218).

The first analogy Kant presents is in regards to substance, the principle of which is
that; “[i]n all variations by appearances substance is permanent, and its quantum in
nature is neither increased or decreased” (italics in original, A182/B224). Kant
begins his proof for this principle with the argument from time determination, stating
that objects determined in time can be in one of two relations, either simultaneous or
successive. Being relations of time they must remain related in the one time, thus this
one time must be permanent, for if not such relations could not be facilitated.
However, we cannot perceive time in-itself, since we apprehend everything in succession, therefore something permanent must remain in all experience. Thus Kant states, “therefore permanent in the appearances is the substratum of all time determination” (A183). Without such permanence there would be no ability for objective time determination.

Now it is crucial to state here that the analogies are interdependent and that the relations of succession and simultaneity are greater explained in the following analogies. However, to begin the reliance of the latter two relations of time are reliant upon this permanence that facilitates time determination to begin with. It is that this is that which is the condition for the possibility of experience and all existence within time itself, and as Kant states, “…all variation in time can only be regarded, by reference to this permanent, as a mode of the existence of what is enduring and permanent” (A183/B227). This principle of the permanence of substance is required a priori for us even to have experience, for without it we would not be able to establish the basis of any objective time determination.

That which varies in substance is its determinations, substance itself merely undergoes changes, it cannot come into or go out of existence. The example Kant uses to explain this is the law of conservation of matter; if we were to burn wood it would be taken that the ashes together with the smoke equate to that which was the wood prior, this is the appeal to the permanent substance that underlies this change of state (A185/B228). We can only know this change occurred because of the principle of permanent substance, for if we didn’t we would assume the ash and smoke came out of nothing, rather than from the wood itself, a new substance could have been created
and the old destroyed *ex nihilo*. This would cause the removal of the time
determination of the example, since both could have occurred simultaneously, thus
there would be no objective grounds for any time determination. Therefore the wood
could exist simultaneously with the ash and smoke, since they are not connected by
the permanence of substance, and without such a connection we wouldn’t have the
issue that is present with permanence of substance, that the substance cannot be both
in the state of wood and not in the state of wood at the same moment in time. Instead
we would just be able to assume that one substance went out of existence and another
came into existence *ex nihilo*, rather than a change in the one substance, giving us no
objective time determination of the succession since the succession would no longer
be necessary.

This example though is an appeal to the Newtonian physics which Kant was trying to
defend against the critiques of Hume, however it would seem in today’s current
understanding of physics this example is wrong, since we know that there is more that
occurs than the mere change of wood to smoke and ash. This however is not an issue
for Kant as explained by Guyer in his book *Kant and the Claims of Knowledge*
(1987). Guyer (1987, 233) explains that whilst Kant does appeal to the law of
conservation of matter, this is not the role of the principle, we must take into account
that Kant himself states that the principles of the analogies are regulative
(A179/B222) and thus they do not themselves give to us empirical knowledge, rather
they regulate, as opposed to constitute, our use of reason in regards to our experiences
in a way to allow us to establish empirical knowledge. Thus when scientific
advancement found that matter is not completely conserved, or to use Kant’s terms, it
is no longer permanent, that is that it can become energy instead, matter is no longer
considered to be that which is substance, since analytically for something to qualify as a substance it must be permanent. For it is that for Kant substance is that which is permanent, he did not seek to synthetically show that substance must be permanent, he showed that substance, as that which is permanent, must exist in all our appearances to allow us time determination. So instead we can establish new empirical knowledge based on our experiences, but the principle of permanent substance remains unchanged.

Kant leaves us with this principle of the permanence of substance as a necessary principle underlying our structure of experience, as per the principles of his Copernican revolution, allowing us to determine states of affairs with regards to their objective determination in time. For if we did not allow for such a principle we would not in the slightest be able to establish why one state of affairs cannot be both it and not it at the same moment in time; there would be no logical incompatibility if substances could come into or go out of existence ex nihilo. Thus, if we did not account for such a principle we would merely have the subjective determination based in our apprehension, which is always successive, since we cannot perceive time in itself, and we would not be able to come to any understanding that certain states of affairs can be successive or simultaneous in time, since they could at all times be in either time relation, rather than necessarily as one or the other. So what we must look to next in the analogies is those principles that determine succession or simultaneity of states of affairs in time.
II. The Second Analogy: Causality

In the example used in the first analogy regarding wood, smoke and ash, Kant was using states of affairs that are successive, it is that we find that both could not exist in the one moment since the permanence of substance means that the wood, in its totality, could not both be present whilst its changed state of ash and smoke is. However, the example and use of the principle of permanent substance does not determine the ordering of such states of affairs, it merely shows that they cannot both occur simultaneously. Thus we must now look to that principle that determines that one state necessarily succeeds the other in experience, Kant stating this principle as, “All changes occur according to the law of the connection of cause and effect” (italics in original, B232).

Where it was that in the first analogy that Kant showed through the permanence of substance we could not have a state of affairs that is X and not X at the same time, (since it causes a contradiction of logic) this is not enough to allow us the basis of why one must be former and one latter. It is that in succession there is an irreversibility regarding states of affairs and another rule is required to afford us experience of this time determination. We must first make the distinction clear between that of the subjective time relation of apprehension, which is always successive, and that which is an objective time relation of succession; if we are to view a ship going down stream we would first have to have the state of it being up stream and then the state of it being further down stream, this is what we would consider an objective time relation as it is necessary. However, if I am to view the ship itself and see from the bow to the stern as the succession of my apprehension, we
would determine it is not necessary that I am presented with it in this way, since I
could have viewed it in the opposite way, from stern to bow, thus this time relation is
merely subjective based only on the presentations in which the subject views the ship
in apprehension.

But the question still remains why is this so? What is it that determines that one event
can only be apprehended in a necessary ordering yet the other in any order? This is
where Kant invokes the principle of causality; it is that in the case of the ship moving
down stream a cause must be established to give the rule that we cannot view it
downstream before up in the example presented. However, there is no causal principle
that determines the objectivity of viewing bow before stern, rather the time
determination in the second is merely subjective based; merely upon that which the
subject views first in apprehension. Now the reason that it must be a causal principle
is that to give this determination a necessity to which state of affairs is placed first an
a priori law of the understanding must be invoked, as the a priori laws are that which
give necessity, and this law being particularly that of causality (B234). In our
example there must be a cause that is presented which leads to the state of the ship
being down stream, for example it may be the direction of wind blowing against the
sails at the position up stream which leads necessarily, through the principle of
causality, that the ship in a latter state of affairs must be down stream, its position
down stream being the effect of this cause. Thus, it could not be that in such a case
the ship was first down stream then up stream, because of the causal laws involved in
this particular example, hence we can ground an objective time determination in
regards to which state of affairs necessarily succeeds the other.
However, many commentators have taken that what Kant is presenting here is that in any preceding state of affairs the cause of the latter must be found. One of the most famous critiques from this interpretation comes from Schopenhauer who charged, “we think night follows day without being \textit{caused} by day” (italsics in original, Guyer 1987, 260). As Guyer explains in his book \textit{Kant and the Claims of Knowledge} (1987, 260) this is not really a problem for Kant. Kant’s conception of the principle of causality should not be taken to mean that the prior state is necessarily the cause of the successive state, rather that there must merely exist a causal rule from which the successive state must succeed the prior state. This could be taken to say that a third state of affairs is necessary to lead from the prior to the latter state. Take our previous example in the discussion of the first analogy regarding wood; the prior state of wood being present does not necessarily lead to the state of smoke and ash, rather a third state of affairs would be required to cause such, that of the burning of the wood. Though the previous state does not contain within it the cause of the latter, it requires an addition of cause and the formulation of a third state of affairs between the two to facilitate the succession allowing the objective time determination that one must succeed the other to be given.

From the interpretation that Guyer presents we can also find a defence against the problem of simultaneous cause and effect. Kant defended his principle of causality against this issue on the basis of a vanishingly brief time (A203/B248), however as Guyer (1987, 261) points out it seems Kant had missed that there was a much easier solution to the issue. If we take the interpretation that the cause does not necessarily have to exist in the prior state, rather that the addition of a cause is required to facilitate the latter state, even if this addition occurs at the same moment in time as the
effect, then we can deal with this issue. It is that the causal rule still holds here and allows an objective time determination regardless and gives us the ability to still hold to this principle even if the cause is not prior to the effect, because the cause is still required before the prior state is able to alter into the latter, allowing us to still hold an objective time determination of one state before the other.

However, we do not need to take Guyer’s interpretation here to deal with such issues, for Kant himself stated, “every change has a cause that manifests in the entire time wherein the change takes place” (A208/B253). This is to say that the prior state is merely the beginning of the change and the latter state the end, there is in turn a multitude (of which none are of the smallest magnitude) of stages that any change must go through and in this totality is where the causal rule must be found, not necessarily in any one preceding state. Thus we can still defend Kant against the charge that Schopenhauer presented, since no longer would we have to conceive Kant to be saying that day necessarily causes night, and furthermore we can defend the causal principle against the issue of simultaneity of cause and effect, since the cause can be established in the totality of the change rather than necessarily in the prior state. Taking this on board we can establish that to analyse Kant’s argument in the second analogy through two states of affairs, isolated from all others that are presented in the course of experience, would be incorrect, and it would seem this is the problem that has lead many commentators to make unfair critiques, such as Schopenhauer’s. Furthermore, taking on board this part of Kant’s argument allows us to establish empirical causal chains that allow for this causal rule within a change, allowing the establishment of objective time determinations over much longer periods than the examples given. For example we would be able to find causes that lead from
the birth of Plato to the birth of Kant, through the analysis of the totality of the change, rather than either particular state of affairs in-itself (which would seem quite problematic in this example) allowing for a total objective time determination of history as a whole. It is that experience should be taken and analysed as a totality, not as particular independently separated events.

Thus Kant has completed his refutation of Hume’s issue of causality. Where Hume had argued that we hold causality on dogmatic grounds, Kant has now shown that the principle of causality is necessary a priori for us to determine objective succession in time, since there must be a rule, that of causality, that necessarily leads us to determine that substance changes from one determination to another and that such change must occur in a necessary order. It is that where Hume had taken causality to be determined by our reflective ideas on our experience, Kant has shown that this is incorrect; for causality in itself is necessary to the possibility of experience. If we did not have such a rule then we would not be able to determine which determination of a substance must follow, we would merely have determinations which could be placed in any order allowing us no objective time determination that one must necessarily succeed the other, leaving us again with a merely subjective determination of empirical objects within time, based solely upon our apprehension of the manifold of presentation and thus leaving us no objective knowledge of our experience.

III. The Third Analogy: Community

Finally, we must look to that principle which allows us experience of objective time determinations of simultaneity. In the previous discussion of the causal principle,
which allows us experience of objective time determinations of succession, we encountered the example that we would accept that in regards to certain presentations we would be able to view them in a reversible order, say that of the ship’s stern and bow, and thus these presentations would not be considered objectively successive in time, merely subjectively successive in apprehension. This is to say that such empirical objects would appear to exist simultaneous with one another. Thus, we now turn to that principle which grounds our experience of objective time determinations of objects as simultaneous in time, this principle being that, “[a]ll substances, insofar as they can be perceived in space as simultaneous, are in thoroughgoing interaction” (italics in original, B256).

One might hold that we can establish the simultaneity of empirical objects since when we perceive one then another we can always go back to the former, thus we would infer a change in state has not occurred and thus both must be found within the same time. This however is not a valid argument for Kant, for we must remember that all that is given in perception is representations of empirical objects, and our representations are always fleeting and transitory, thus, no matter how qualitatively similar, we cannot have the same representation once an intermission has occurred (Guyer 1987, 271). None the less, an argument such as this would still be reliant upon our subjective representations and would give us no objective grounding for the time determination of simultaneity, thus we must require something else.

Furthermore, we may take that the lack of a causal law determining irreversibility may be that which grounds our time determination of simultaneity. However, for Kant this is not valid either, rather this is a symptom of the coexistence, it is not that which
necessitates it and gives it its objectivity. Kant stating in the opening paragraph of the second edition’s third analogy that;

“…the synthesis of the imagination in apprehension would indicate for each of these perceptions only that it is there in the subject when the other is not, and vice versa. But it would not indicate that the objects are simultaneous; i.e., that if the one is there then the other is also there in the same time, and that this simultaneity of the objects is necessary in order that the perceptions can succeed one another reciprocally.” (B257)

What such an argument would leave us with is a merely subjective time determination that that which is presented in the presentations is simultaneous through use of the imagination, not that the objects themselves remain existent in the moment of time when I am not apprehending them. Eventually this form of argument would lead us down a similar track as Berkley, towards a radical idealism, and is what Kant wished to avoid for fear of returning to pre-Copernican metaphysics.

Rather there must be something within the objects themselves that determine their positioning within the one time relative to one another. It is, as Kant puts it, “for things existing outside one another simultaneously we require a concept of the understanding of reciprocal succession of their determinations, in order to say that the reciprocal succession of the perceptions has its basis in the object and in order thus to present the simultaneity as objective” (B257). It is that one substance must be cause and effect of the other substances determination in space and vice versa (since, as with time, we cannot perceive space in itself) and this is what we call dynamic interaction or a community.
For if we did not have such a principle then we could be left with the situation in which substances are isolated from one another within the one time, meaning that they would be separated by empty space and empty space being that which perception can’t reach. But without the connection of space these substances could not come under any empirical synthesis of experience and we would have no way of determining whether they were simultaneously or successively determined within time. Thus if we are to have any experience of such we necessarily require this principle of community, where the interaction of substances determines a whole and allows us an objective basis from which we can determine that objects are simultaneous within the one time, which thus facilitates experience.

Chapter 4: Empirical Knowledge and Reason

I. The Analogies and Empirical Knowledge

Now that we have established the principles of the analogies and why they are necessary to the possibility of experience we can begin to look at the role they play in establishing knowledge. It is crucial to state here that these principles themselves allow us no empirical knowledge, but are merely that which gives us the possibility of such. They are as Guyer (italics in original, 1987, 246) states “necessary condition[s] for the justification, verification or confirmation of the judgements about empirical objects that we make on the basis of our representation of them.” Now since these are the principles that give us the formal conditions of experience everything given by sensation must also be subject to these principles, for if they were not then they would not be able to amount to experience. As Kant states “together the analogies say that
all appearances reside, and must reside, in one nature; for without this a priori unity no unity of experience, and hence also no determination of objects in experience, would be possible” (A216/B263). It is without such principles it would be impossible for us to have any experience, as we would have no time determination of objects, merely subjective determinations of apprehension, and thus nothing that allows us the ability to synthetically unify our presentations into a totality of experience. Rather all our presentations would become independent of one another in terms of any objectivity; instead, merely synthesized under the subjectivity of apprehension.

However, this does not show us how we can lead from these principles to empirical knowledge, rather this is found in the next section of the first critique entitled “The Postulates of Empirical thought as Such” (A218/B265). The three principles of which are:

“1. What agrees (in terms of intuitions and concepts) with the formal condition of experience is possible.

2. What coheres with the material conditions of experience (with sensation) is actual.

3. That whose coherence with the actual is determined according to universal conditions of experience is necessary (exists necessarily).”

(italics in original, A218/B265)

It is that the possibility of something, viz., that the concept of it coheres to the a priori principle of experience, does not necessarily lead us to the actual object, since we have no object to refer to. Rather we need the input of sensation through perception, as the material conditions of experience, to allow us to establish what is actual. But this still does not give us objective reality on its own as with perception alone we are
only given representations of objects. Given that which is actual and finding it to also be possible, through the application of intuition and concept, we are able to come to knowledge of the necessary existence of such as experience that is not only possible, but also objectively real. In this case reason’s use is regulative, as it cannot constitute in-itself any knowledge of empirical objects.

To come to this empirical knowledge we do require sensation as regulated by the principles of the analogies. In perception all we are given is representations, however through the regulative use of the principles of experience we are able to move beyond our representations and come to knowledge regarding the empirical. For example, I can only come to empirical knowledge of the existence of a ship as an empirical object, and not merely my representation of it, through the apprehension of the presentations which the ship presents to me regulated by way of the principles of community, allowing me to determine that all my different presentations of the parts of the ship, say the bow, stern, bridge etc., exist simultaneously through interaction, regardless of the successive order in which I apprehend all of these parts. I am thus able to establish its possibility through the empirical concept of the ship, yet also its actuality through the presentations. Thus, I am able to establish its existence as an empirical object for which any other person has the possibility to apprehend, since we are able to establish the possibility and actuality of such an object, thus giving it its necessary existence as a real empirical and knowable object.

Nevertheless, this is not a full explication of empirical knowledge or knowledge in general for Kant. For such we must look to one of the closing chapters of the first critique found within the Canon of Pure Reason, entitled “On Opinion, Knowledge
and Faith” (A820/B848). Now, of course, what we are concerned with is that concept of knowledge. Kant states that knowledge is a form of assent (as are also opinion and faith) that contains within it certainty. It must be both subjectively and objectively sufficient to allow us to call such assent knowledge, as opposed to just opinion or faith (A822/B850). Thus we find that in regards to empirical knowledge, our perceptions are that which give us a subjective sufficiency, as all that is given is a representation of empirical objects. However, through the application of the structure of experience we are able to also gain objective sufficiency of the judgement allowing for it to be established as a knowledge claim.

To further address this point we need to look to Kant’s concept of conviction as necessary to that of knowledge. Conviction is as Kant puts it “valid for everyone, provided [they] have reason, then its basis is sufficient objectively”, however if this is not so and we merely have a subjective basis then this is persuasion (A820/B248). Kant goes on to state that conviction cannot be distinguished subjectively from persuasion; instead we can test the basis in others. Conviction would necessarily cause the same effect on the reason of others as for us, for as Chingell (2007, 38) argues conviction is involuntary since its grounds are objective. This allows us to unfold that which is of subjective in our assent and determine what has sufficient objective grounds. Though, as Kant points out, such a test does not lead us directly to conviction, but instead allows us to “detect any merely private validity of judgement” (A821/B849).
Chingell (2007, 47) presents Kant’s assent of knowledge as;

“S’s assent that p counts as knowledge if

(i.) g is a sufficient objective grounds that S has,
(ii.) S’s assent is based on g,
(iii.) on reflection, S would cite g as a sufficient objective ground for his assent, and
(iv.) p is true”

Now when we apply this to Kant’s conception of empirical knowledge, I can know that my grounding for the judgement of the existence of the ship is objective via the principles of the analogies as applied regulative to my presentations of the ship’s parts, giving it an objective time determination and allowing us the experience of it as an empirical object. I can also have conviction of such a judgement because if another person were to have the presentations of the ship it would have the same effect upon their reason as mine. Thus assent to this judgement is based upon this objective validation, and I would be able to cite this as the objective grounds of assent. Therefore I can come to assent as knowledge (as opposed to mere opinion or faith) that this ship is existent as an empirical object.

II. Empirical Laws and the Systematic Unity of Reason

Just as the analogies alone did not allow us knowledge of empirical objects, they also do not allow us the establishing of empirical laws, which underlie the systematic unity of reason. Though in the second analogy we find the objective a priori basis of the principle of causality as a condition of possible experience, this in-itself is unable to allow us to come to any knowledge regarding that of empirical laws of causality. For
example, from this we would not be able to determine that iron rusts in water, something more must be applied here – and that is experience. This means that, as with any form of empirical knowledge, we require content to determine this; sensible content can be regulated by the use of reason to allow us to come to this.

The issue for Hume regarding this kind of judgement was that in our application of causal principles to our experience, we dogmatically held these principles, which for him could only be established through reflection upon experience itself. However, as Kant established in the analogies, the principle of causality is an a priori necessary condition for the possibility of experience, thus our application of such a principle is not dogmatic, nor is it merely determined by reflection on experience. Specific empirical causal laws are determined by experience, however the principle of causality in-itself is not, thus the issue Hume had presented is made redundant, since causality in-itself has a transcendental grounding as an a priori necessary principle of the possibility of experience.

How Kant deals with these laws is addressed further by Guyer and Walker in their paper “Kant’s Conception of Empirical Law” (1990). These empirical laws are in reference to the regulative use of reason, that is that we look to find causal laws in particular since it is a necessary requirement of experience. In this reason acts to create systematic unity, though as both Guyer and Walker point out, this does not necessitate that such unity can be found, however the regulative use of reason compels us to search for such unity none the less. As Walker (1990, 247) presents it, Kant’s theory requires that we follow the regulative principles of reason, for without such we would not be able to establish the laws that govern experience, thus giving us
no distinction between objective and subjective time determination, or even subjective
and objective in general. Therefore, this systematic unity of reason acts as the arbiter
of any objective truth.

Williams (2013) in his discussion of Walker and Guyer’s work explicated the
necessary unity of reason with an example; if I was to dream that I won the lotto,
upon waking I would be able to test this by checking the winning numbers with the
ticket and if this occurrence had been empirically true then I should find a match,
however as it was a dream I shall not. In this example what we are particularly
looking at is the causal connection between experiences, since we must take our
experience in the context of the necessary unity of reason, allowing us to find the
truth of the matter. We can see that the causal connection established by reason does
not exist in this circumstance, since appealing to causality would mean that if this
judgement were empirically true the winning numbers would match the ticket as
cause of the win, however they do not, and thus we are able to establish that the
judgement of winning the lottery holds no empirical truth as it does not fit into the
necessary unity of reason.

Williams’ example appeals to Kant’s statement in the *Critique of Pure Reason* that;
“Whether this or that putative experience is not mere imagination must be ascertained
according to its particular determinations and through its coherence with the criteria
of all actual experience” (B279). What this is saying is that in terms of basic
knowledge claims we can appeal to our collective reasoning regarding our totality of
experience to analyse our judgements and determine their truth-value. Furthermore
Kant states, “…the law of reason to seek unity is necessary, since without it we would
have no reason, and without that, no coherent use of the understanding, and, lacking that, no sufficient mark of empirical truth…” (A651/B679).

However it is important to take on board Kant’s conception of truth here, as stated by Walker (1990, 248);

“Truth in the world of appearances is not and never can be closed and complete… For our intuition, the intuition in which we order all the data we receive through the senses, is spatio-temporal, and space and time are infinite in extent... All we could ever have would be some finite set of data, and however large that finite set might be, universal generalisations based upon it-such as statements of causal law-are always open to refutation from further experience.”

Kant’s solution to this issue is that instead of looking for irrefutable laws to determine the basis of truth, we instead must establish where it would be rational to establish empirical laws, given that they cannot be irrefutable. We can use a previous example to explicate this point, where the law of conservation of matter was held within physics: we could have thus taken matter to be substance, since it was a rational law to hold based upon both reason and experience. However, with more experience physicists were able to refute this law, as it was no longer rational to hold, since it did not fit within the systematic unity of reason any more, and instead replaced it with the law of conservation of energy. The former law being rational to hold at the time, as through the use of the systematic unity of reason it remained coherent with experience, however, with further experience physicists have refuted the former principle and replaced it with the latter, since the former is no longer coherent. Truth thus can be seen as that which is within a coherent systematic unity of reason.
We can see here with this explication of Kant’s theory of empirical knowledge a general basis in his Copernican revolution. To have any experience at all it is necessary that certain rules determining the structure of experience be present within the subject of such experience, these being the categories that are objective, since they must exist for any form of knowledge to be possible. From this basis Kant is able to establish the objectivity of knowledge, since if we are to presuppose that experience is possible, then objects of such experience must conform to the principles of the analogies that allow us an objective determination of the empirical object’s placing within time. By doing this we are able to gain the structure of experience that affords us the ability to move beyond our merely subjective representations of empirical objects to an objective understanding of empirical objects. This being the basis of any knowledge as objective and from which we can begin to establish empirical laws, by applying the regulative use of reason to experience, and eventually we arrive at a system of nature, from which we can derive truth via the coherence with its overall systematic unity. In this we can see Kant’s move beyond both the rationalists and the empiricists with regards to his theory of knowledge.

Chapter 5: The Foundations of Husserl’s Epistemological Enquiry

I. The Problem Concerning Justification of Objectivity

Now I would like to discuss Husserl’s theory of knowledge in contrast to that of Kant’s. Claire Ortiz Hill (1906/1907, xiii), in her introduction to Husserl’s lectures on logic and theory of knowledge, references Husserl’s own personal notes where he
states that he would not be able to call himself a philosopher if he was unable to enact a critique of reason, similar to the project Kant engaged in. However, for Husserl he had to move beyond Kant’s work, establishing his critique based upon his phenomenological method, which he had established in the first volume of the Logical Investigations (1900). However, by the time Husserl was giving his lectures on logic and knowledge at the University of Göttingen he felt he had moved much further beyond the position he had originally presented in the Logical Investigations (1900), stating that;

“Unfortunately, I must time and again bewail the fact that my reflections on the meaning of phenomenology in the introduction to my Logical Investigations express so very inappropriately the true meaning of the investigations and their true method. My publication of the lecture courses on theory of knowledge given since 1902 will succeed in redressing the situation.” (Husserl 1902/1903, VIII)

Unlike Kant who was responding to the critique Hume had presented against inductive reason, and which Kant took to embrace synthetic a priori knowledge as a whole, Husserl was responding to the problems of knowledge he himself had established, but that he felt permeated throughout the history of philosophy. Husserl’s starting point for the problem of knowledge was what he felt was the issue of the justification of objectivity within the empirical sciences. This is not to say that Husserl saw science itself as problematic, the issue for Husserl was instead that in scientific enquiry reflection upon the justifications of empirical science as a whole are not made, for this is not the role empirical science plays, instead it is the role philosophy plays. Empirical scientists are bound to work within the justifications, not
outside of it, thus this reflection upon their own method as a whole is not a
requirement of their discipline, however for philosophers, this reflection is crucial.
Empirical scientists justify their method through observation, they come to scientific
laws through the analysis of what they observe, but the question remains how can we
justify observation as giving something objective when observation itself and it’s
application within the sciences are subjective acts? Something must be given in
observation that goes beyond the subjectivity of the act and justifies the observation
as the foundation of objectivity within the sciences. An exploration of these issues
however leads Husserl to the establishing of a new eidetic science of phenomenology.

But not merely in science is this so, for Husserl, rather what this explicates is that,
“subjective acts provide the reasons for everything” (italics in original, Husserl
1906/1907, 120). Knowing itself is a subjective act, thus the question that underlies
any theory of knowledge for Husserl is how the subjective can come to grasp the
objective in knowledge. What this leads us to is a similar question to Kant’s critical
project; how is knowledge possible in the first place (Zahavi 2003, 8). It would seem
an analysis of the role played by the subjective in knowledge would be important
here, similar to the basis of Kant’s Copernican revolution in the Critique of Pure
Reason. Husserl stating in a lecture given in celebration of Kant, that the Copernican
revolution was crucial in establishing the movement towards the analysis of the
subjective (Husserl 1924, 17).

However, Husserl states in his lectures at Göttingen that Kant’s first critique only
went as far as critiquing a priori and synthetic knowledge, not that of all knowledge
(Husserl 1906/1907, 133). Husserl argues that a comprehensive critique of knowledge
would have to bring into it the critique of empirical knowledge, that is, a critique of perception, memory, induction and so forth. Kant’s analogies, as the analysis of the conditions of experience, do not achieve this style of critique, they merely present the a priori necessary concepts that are required for experience under the assumption experience is possible, which Kant himself acknowledges. For Husserl, we must venture to the very core of any knowledge to achieve a comprehensive critique of knowledge, viz., that all knowledge must be able to be critiqued in a theory of knowledge. Husserl is looking for foundational knowledge as this grounding, that which is undoubtable as the beginning point of the investigation, which he felt Kant had missed when he did not reach to fundamental Cartesian truth as the ultimate source of knowledge in the analysis of the consciousness (Husserl 1924, 15). This leaves us with questions of even the possibility of this kind of knowledge as grounding or whether theory of knowledge is even possible itself.

II. The Problem of Psychologism

So for Husserl any critique of knowledge must bring with it a critique of every form of knowledge, including that of mental acts; perception, memory, believing, judging etc., however could this not be said to be a psychological endeavour? For Husserl to reduce it to this would be problematic, for psychology is still an empirical science and in an endeavour to come to a comprehensive critique of knowledge we must be able to go beyond this. The problem is that we must distinguish between the object and the act of knowing, which psychologism does not afford us.

Particularly, Husserl was responding to the influence of psychologism in regards to
logic during his period. Psychologism is the tendency by philosophers to place logic within the bounds of psychology, under arguments such as; logic is a discipline that studies a subset of the laws of thought, psychology is a discipline that studies all the laws of thought, thus, logic must be a form of psychology (Kusch 2011). Particularly Husserl was responding to philosophers like Mill who held that; “[i]ts [the Science of Logic's] theoretic grounds are wholly borrowed from Psychology, and include as much of that science as is required to justify the rules of the art” (Mill 1865, 359).

The major issue for Husserl lies in the conclusions we would be lead to if we hold to logical psychologism. If we take for example the law of non-contradiction, in a psychological sense, it would be held on the principle that no two contradictory judgements can be thought together by any human consciousness. Husserl takes the issue that this would lead to the limiting of the law of non-contradiction to one conscious being, that of a human consciousness (1906/1907, 144). However, what if the divine held contradictory views, which we could not experience and come to understand through the use of psychology as an empirical science, would the law of non-contradiction still hold? If we were to hold this position of psychologism we could become skeptical of logic as purely a law of human reason. We could really make no knowledge claims, since we lack certainty regarding the law of non-contradiction as objectively grounded and thus the affirmation of a proposition could not negate the negation of the proposition, both could be simultaneously true beyond that of human reasoning.

Of course, we don’t take that logic is about the divine however what the example indicates is that logic is about propositions and states of affairs, not merely
psychological states. The issue is the mixing of judgement and proposition within those who hold to psychologism. For Husserl, a judgement requires a judging subject, however a proposition does not. As Husserl states “The proposition is, however, what it is, whether it is thought or not” (italics in original, 1906/1907, 140), viz., that a proposition goes beyond a judgement and, as Bolzano held, is a ‘sentence in-itself’. Psychology, as an empirical science, deals with humans as they empirically are, thus if we were to take the position of psychologism logic could only apply to humans as they are empirically, biological change could change the rules of logic. Thus when we take proposition to be judgement we can see how we would establish logic to be within the bounds of psychology, however when we separate propositions, as ‘sentences in-themselves’, we see how logic moves beyond the bounds of psychology.

What we have really been lead to is Husserl’s distinction between act and meaning content. Zahavi (2008, 9) uses the example that when we make the judgement that ‘Copenhagen is the capital of Denmark’ we can refer both to the meaning content of the judgement or the act of the judging itself. The issue is of ideality and reality here; the meaning content is ideal in that it remains the same regardless of a change in act, however the act itself is the real in that it is temporally bound and fleeting. In psychologism the meaning is reduced into the act. This would mean the same ideal meaning content of a proposition in judgement could not ever occur more than once, since we can never have the same act twice due to the influence of the temporal, real, and subjective nature, and the unity of meaning between separate acts would be completely lost.
III. The Critical Skepticism of Epistemology

Here we can see the beginning of the development of Husserl’s skepticism at the heart of a critique of knowledge. In regards to his critique of knowledge we cannot come to take anything for given, everything must be open to the critique so that we may find the ultimate undoubtable knowledge from which we can base a theory of knowledge. However, critical skepticism, as employed by Husserl, is a very specific kind of skepticism. This skepticism is what allows Husserl to establish that epistemology will give us the justification for any basis of objectivity, since if we find ultimate undoubtable knowledge; these will have the foundation in-themselves to become the grounds for new acts of knowledge.

The skepticism that Husserl employs is not that of the traditional skepticism in say the usage of the Greeks or Hume. Traditional skepticism was that of dogmatic skepticism and in dogmatic skepticism we find inherent problems. In the skepticism of the ancient Greeks, who denied the possibility of objectively valid knowledge with extreme universality, we find absurdity. It would seem that whilst denying the possibility of any objectively valid knowledge, which the Greek skeptics had based on argument, they were making claims that in-themselves were objective claims to knowledge. This is however an extreme case of dogmatic skepticism, but Husserl still holds that all dogmatic skepticism, including modern skepticism of this kind, harbours absurdity; it is dogmatic skepticism’s “essential characteristic” (1906/1907, 180). The problem being that in regard to this kind of skepticism; “Reason enters into any genuine skepticism in conflict with itself” (Husserl 1906/1907, 180).
Hume himself accepted this of his own mitigated or “middle” skepticism. Where he had caused major issues for the grounding of scientific knowledge in matters of fact, he still held that those who would reject the direction of natural science on these grounds are deluded. This, for Husserl, shows that Hume’s skepticism, and modern skepticism as a whole, is in despair regarding epistemological justification of the sciences when we reflect upon such, not an attack on the justification of the sciences themselves (Husserl 1906/1907, 181). What instead we require is an appropriate skepticism regarding knowledge.

We must establish a critical skepticism, as opposed to the dogmatic skepticism historically found in philosophy. Critical skepticism does not deny knowledge due to doubt, nor affirms it, but refrains from any judgement on knowledge that is doubtable, this being the skepticism we require for a comprehensive theory of knowledge. For if we are to assume any knowledge, even a negation of knowledge, as the basis of a critique of knowledge it would seem we are committing to circular reasoning, basing our articulation of any knowledge on the assumption of knowledge to begin with. Of course this raises the issue of whether a theory of knowledge is even possible in the slightest, which was the problem Husserl felt Hume found himself faced with regarding his skepticism of inductive reasoning. To deal with this we must find the grounding knowledge, the ultimate knowledge, that which substantiates itself without any assumption of prior knowledge, and that from which we can begin to substantiate other forms of knowledge, if such is even possible.
Chapter 6: Phenomenology as the Foundation of Theory of Knowledge

I. The Phenomenological Reduction

Husserl’s method for enacting this form of critical skepticism is the phenomenological reduction or the epoché (ἐποχή), this word being borrowed from the skeptics of ancient Greece. In ancient Greece the term epoché meant the suspension of judgement, and this understanding of the term remains paramount in Husserl’s own usage. In enacting the epoché we are to suspend judgement of all knowledge that is doubtable, enacting a Cartesian form of skepticism. Firstly, we must suspend all judgement of existence. In doing this, the position of the epoché removes itself from the issue of establishing a metaphysical position regarding being as a grounding of knowledge. We are to bracket out anything that we could doubt the existence of; it is not that we take it as not existing, instead we are to suspend our judgement on its being or not being, avoiding the issue of being altogether. Thus, under the epoché we can no longer posit things as having reality, instead we suspend such judgements and must deal with the pure immanence of consciousness. We thus can only take things in terms of their claims to validity, not as either valid or invalid, but as what is immanent.

But if we are to bracket out everything we can doubt what are we left with? If we are to doubt everything then we are still doubting, as per the Cartesian position. Vernon (2005, 283) explains that Husserl explicates this further than the Cartesian position, it is that we must separate the act and content. When we are doubting, we can doubt that we are actually doubting, however we cannot doubt that the act of doubting is occurring in itself, the distinction is as Vernon puts it “We ‘see’ that we are doubting
and we ‘see’ that we ‘see’” (italics in original, 2005, 283). It is this insight, that we doubt as an intuitively given act, remains even when we doubt that we doubt as object, we cannot doubt the act of consciousness itself. From this position we can begin to establish what we are left with in the epoché; what is parenthesized remains within the parenthesis.

This leads us to an understanding of a pure consciousness, a transcendental ego, that ‘sees’ these acts as intentional acts, which themselves cannot be doubted. There is no emotion, no theories, no historical relationships to the world for this form of consciousness, everything questionable is bracketed out of this consciousness, all it is is that which is given as phenomena. In this it is the basis of all consciousness, the pure consciousness that deals only with immanence, regardless of whether it were to be consciousness in a human, animal or god. In this the ego is reduced from that of the empirical ego to a pure transcendental ego as the basis of consciousness (Smith 1979, 433). All things to this consciousness are phenomena things, not things as given with any existential value of being, but merely existing as phenomena. All things presented to this consciousness become phenomena-things, for example the colour red would be a red-phenomenon rather than an existential being of the colour red. The existence of the phenomena as more than just phenomena is something we suspend our judgement from in this position of the phenomenological reduction. As Schmitt (1959, 240) states, it is not that the content of the phenomenological world differs from that of the natural or naïve worldview, but rather the relation to the world is changed; the transcendental ego no longer establishes relations of being to things in the world.
This concept of phenomena, as used by Husserl, is similar to the concept used by Kant, but not exactly the same. Kant’s concept of phenomena was things as presented through the senses, as opposed to the noumena, which is the concept of things that have not been presented through the senses. Noumena are objects exclusively of the understanding; an object given to a subject but only by way of its intellect; it is a purely intelligible entity. Kant’s concept of phenomena is that of appearances, Husserl takes this in a similar way, since he purposefully used the Kantian term. However, Husserl does not afford phenomena the undergoing of the categories in the same way Kant does, for Husserl looks to the immanence of phenomena as that which establishes the grounds for any categories. For Husserl, within the epoché phenomena can only be described, since to explain it would be to assume knowledge and move beyond it as pure phenomena; phenomenology being a science of description, not explanation. Thus, phenomena for Husserl is distinct as that which is purely given to the consciousness in immanence, say the phenomenon of a pitch, the phenomenon of a touch, the phenomenon of a colour. These phenomena being that which can be given to any consciousness, not merely that of human consciousness, as Husserl felt Kant had constrained it in his analysis of reason, instead Husserl’s phenomena must be as they are for them to be that phenomena regardless of what conscious is perceiving them.

II. The Essences of Phenomena

Since phenomena are given in immanence at the basis of all consciousness and since we cannot deny consciousness, for to doubt consciousness the act of doubting still exists as a conscious act, phenomena can be seen to be that which is the undoubtable
from which we can base a theory of knowledge. For if I can doubt my perceptions and whether perception is able to give anything objective, I still cannot doubt that perception occurs, but just as phenomena, thus we “can make free use of the world of phenomena” (italics in original, Husserl 1906/1907, 195). However, all phenomena are fleeting, no two phenomena no matter how similar are the same, but the issue here is that if phenomena are all fleeting, then wouldn’t it also be that any knowledge given from phenomena is also fleeting?

What we need to separate here is phenomena itself from the meaning content of the phenomena. Phenomena, similarly to the way representations are for Kant, are fleeting because they have a duration, they come, they go, they are not constant and thus have a temporal basis for the consciousness as being given at a certain time for that consciousness. Thus, phenomena as given with a temporal position for the consciousness cannot be the same as even one with the same or similar content that is given at another time for that consciousness. However, since we can say they have the same or similar content it shows us there is some transcendent unity that permeates throughout phenomena with certain content that we see as similar or identical. This gives us transcendence-within-immanence, transcendence as grounded in immanence, transcendent concepts that do not contain the issue Husserl originally removed in bracketing the transcendent during the enacting of the epoché (Moran 2008, 268).

This is the ideal content of phenomena (similar to that ideal meaning content referred to earlier in the analysis of propositions vs. judgements), as that which is beyond that of the phenomena in-themselves, it is the transcendent-in-immanence. All phenomena are individualized and thus different, however in the ideal content that constitutes the
phenomena we find unity, the concept of a red-phenomena presents to us an ideal of red that we can unify as an ideal transcendent concept throughout multiple phenomena, the fact we can even say red-phenomena shows the positing of the essence that constitutes the determinate colour of the phenomena. This is what Husserl refers to as the essence of phenomena. It is that these essences are the non-temporal ideal concepts that we find throughout the world of phenomena. From this we are able to gain more knowledge by abstracting transcendence from that which is purely immanent within the position of the epoché. In our example of red-phenomena we can establish that in the constitution of phenomena we find colour as a higher-level essence, as an indeterminate determinate in regard to the red-phenomena. The concept red being the determination of the colour thus stating phenomena has colour itself is indeterminate in this way, however colour as a constituent of phenomena is determined and thus also a determinant on a further abstracted level (Dahlberg & Dahlberg 2003). This is what allows us to establish these transcendent ideal concepts that constitute the phenomena, as the phenomena that they are, according to these essences.

In his lectures at Göttingen Husserl used the example of sound to explicate how we can move from these abstractions to come to laws of essence. If we have the phenomena of sound A and sound B, which are at different pitches, we are intuitively given the relationship of say A higher and B deeper, a relationship of intensity. If we then find sound C to be deeper than sound B we are able to immanently intuit that C is deeper than A (Husserl 1906/1907, 224). What this affords us is the laws of ordering of sound quality, however with further abstraction we are able to establish the law of intensity that “any two different intensities belonging to the same quality
genus do not form a reversible relation” (Husserl 1906/1907, 224). Relations of intensity work under this law for all consciousness, regardless of any existential claim of being regarding the phenomena involved in the relation, and this is given through mere abstraction of the immanent within the phenomenological reduction (Husserl 1906/1907 25). Even when we merely imagine an intensity relationship, say sound, it must work with regard to the law of essence in regards to intensity, for otherwise it would not be a sound, since the law of intensity are necessary to the essence of sound. This goes for all laws of essence, they become a priori forms of knowledge founded on the transcendent-in-immanence found within the phenomenological world.

III. The a priori Grounds of Knowledge for Husserl

Thus we find the laws of essence and essences themselves to be a priori. Husserl’s use of a priori here differs from Kant’s usage of a priori in regard to that of his categories of understanding, however we can still see a correlation between the two theories with knowledge as grounded in the a priori. The difference lies predominately in the method employed by both (Jansen 2013); for Husserl the a priori must be grounded in pure essence, for universally valid knowledge must be grounded in the ultimate knowledge established from the grounds of immanence within the critical skepticism of the epoché. This being a point that he felt Kant had missed when he did not follow a phenomenological path in his first critique, but instead where Kant had followed a path of analysing reason itself to give the a priori as the conditions for the possibility of experience, and where Husserl felt Kant had missed the point that pure immanence, and ultimate giveness, can only be established through the epoché.
Both Kant and Husserl hold to the Copernican view that knowledge must be grounded in the a priori, for otherwise we would fall to the criticism that Kant had lain to Hume regarding the grounding of experience itself. Husserl’s questioning of the justification of observation showing a similar position in this regard. Kant however established the a priori categories in regard to human consciousness and reason (Jansen 2013), where as Husserl wanted to move beyond just that of human consciousness in establishing the a priori laws of essence, since connecting the basis of knowledge to human reason and thus bringing epistemology under the scope of psychology is problematic for Husserl as he argued in his critique of psychologism. To do such would lead us to the path he had presented in his critique of psychologism where we would have the issue of knowledge as having to be thought, and the distinction of judgement and proposition would be broken down. Thus for Husserl study of the essence of knowledge must be in the pure beholding (Husserl 1906/1907, 229). In establishing the laws of essence what Husserl is instead seeking to do is find that knowledge content that is regardless of whether it is thought or judged by a subject, thus it cannot deal with reason itself, it must be given within the phenomenological reduction, and this is for Husserl what makes it a priori. Husserl himself stated on the laws of essence; “the law itself says nothing about my existence and does not hinge on my existence” (italics in original, 1906/1907, 230). Husserl holding that to be an a priori law it must exist as a law in such regard, the law itself being independent, rather than Kant’s categories that are held as part of the laws of understanding.

Thus, we find that though the two agree on the a priori as the basis of knowledge, their respective methodologies for arriving at the a priori knowledge cause major differences within each of their epistemological theories and what actually constitutes
the a priori. Husserl sought to break away from psychologism and with this he held that a priori knowledge could not be argued through reasoning alone but only through the immanence of phenomena, since it must go beyond that of an existent ‘I’.

Something more than reason is required in Husserl’s view, that of the quality of givenness, or Evidenz, in the immanence of the reduced position of the epoché rather than Kant’s appeal to the laws of reason in establishing the a priori (Jansen 2013).

Chapter 7: From the Phenomenological Reduction to the Empirical

I. Evidenz as Grounded in the Phenomenological Reduction

From these laws of essence we can begin to come to further knowledge. Any knowledge claim that can be bought back to the immanence of the phenomenological position can then be justified through having Evidenz. The Evidenz lies in that it is possible to enact the epoché and show the steps from which the knowledge has developed from the a priori in pure giveness, which are founded as immanently given or as transcendence-in-immanence within the reduced position of the epoché. Husserl explains Evidenz as the quality of givenness, thus the problem of givenness and how an object can be said to be given to us is the question of Evidenz (Husserl 1906/1907, 152).

Vernon states that Evidenz “is the achievement of a conscious act reaching its object” (2005, 288). In this it is that which gives us truth; it is that which gives us the object, and this giveness is the essence of truth. So in regards to the act of doubt when we ‘see’ the act of doubt the act of doubt is the object and Evidenz gives this to us
directly in insight of the phenomenological immanence of the acts occurrence. Furthermore, when we deal with any phenomenon, its intentional components are directly given with Evidenz as a claim to validity, the conscious act reaches its object since one cannot doubt the phenomenon as a validity claim due to the phenomenological immanent insight. For this case the Evidenz, as the quality of givenness, is pure, since phenomena are given in the pure immanence of beholding.

Here we can see a contrast to that of Kant’s synthetic unity of apperception as that which gives us objects. For Kant objects are given to us under this synthetic unity of apperception that necessarily applies the concepts of the categories to that of the intuition allowing the establishing of an object of knowledge, but for Husserl the way we are given objects of knowledge is through the quality of givenness as Evidenz. The accessing of knowledge for consciousness for both thinkers is separated in such a way on the basis of the separation of their respective methodologies of how a priori knowledge is established and thus what constitutes a priori knowledge. The differentiation lies in that which gives the object, for Husserl it being in Evidenz, for Kant it being the application of the categories to an intuition.

Thus, for Husserl, when we are able to come to knowledge of essences and laws of essence within the epoché we are given pure Evidenz as such things are given as the transcendency-in-immanence, we have Evidenz for the method that gives us them. To come to know that of red-phenomena is to have Evidenz as it is given purely within the epoché. When we abstract in this position and come to find essences and the laws of essence this is also given to us with Evidenz, as it is that given by the transcendent-in-immanence within the reduced position of the epoché. These abstractions of laws
of essence are given with pure Evidenz in the phenomenological position, but as
universals apply universally, so their application goes beyond the phenomenological
world and applies to the relation within the natural/naïve attitude also.

II. Reason’s Grounding in the Phenomenological Reduction

All reasoning has its Evidenz in being grounded in the laws of essence, we have
Evidenz for the method that gives us reason from the position of pure immanence
through the transcendent-in-immanence. As Husserl (1906/1907, 233) states “All
reason in the a posteriori has its principles a priori”. The principles established
through the essences are that which govern all use of reasoning for Husserl, very
similar to Kant’s use of the categories. However, for Husserl his conception of the a
priori reduces the limits on what these principles can be and rather it is that of pure
giveness that gives us the ability to abstract the rules of reason, rather than the rules of
reason as a requisite to pure giveness.

It is not that we constantly, when reasoning, draw back to the position of the epoché,
but instead it is important that it is possible. This gives us the justification for the use
of reasoning in such a way. Husserl (1906/1907, 231) uses the example of the law of
non-contradiction; we must view a different way of justifying it if we are to believe it
to be genuinely a priori, in Husserl’s usage of a priori. We must find that in the pure
essence of the concept of truth and proposition that the law of non-contradiction is
established as a law of essence, viz., that the truth of one proposition must necessarily
lead to the falsity of the opposite of that proposition as a law of essence. Since we can
establish laws of essence in such a way and are thus able to apply them in reasoning,
all reasoning itself is founded in which we can be brought back to through enacting the epoché, and this is what gives reason its objective validity as established a priori and applicable as universals. Reason itself is grounded from the transcendent in the insight given by that, which is given with Evidenz, under the enactment of the epoché.

This is where Husserl’s answer to the issue of objectivity in the subjective act of observation lies, with regards to scientific justification. What any science is engaging in is a non-reflective use of the subjective act of observation to establish principles from the study of essences and laws of essences. Of course, we can find scientific theories to be wrong since they always have subjective elements, but the objective grounds gives the Evidenz for their justification. The Evidenz is founded in the method used to establish such principles of knowledge, and in justifying it that way we find an objective grounds, however this Evidenz is not the pure Evidenz of that given in the epoché and can be found to be frustrated with greater Evidenz.

We have a breakdown of the boundaries of subjective and objective in Husserl’s establishment of the essences of concepts in this regard, since the pure consciousness established in the epoché is able to give us the objective laws of essences and be given access to objects as phenomena in pure Evidenz. Thus, the subjective acts are able to grasp objects through the use of reason that is embedded in the laws of essence, themselves coming from abstraction of the pure insight given in the reduced position of the epoché. Evidenz becomes the middle ground, the connecting point, between the subjective and the objective.
III. Intention and Fulfilment

However, the issue still remains; how can we move from this position, in which we have Evidenz, to a position where we can establish Evidenz for that given beyond the phenomenological position, and furthermore how we could come to knowledge of the empirical? The position of the epoché explicates something more about the basis of all consciousness, that of intentionality and the fulfilment of intention. Where Evidenz connected the act of consciousness to the object of knowledge we find the explication of this foundation of all consciousness as the essence of consciousness itself, thus it applies to the natural/naïve position.

In all conscious acts the consciousness is directed towards an object that it intends in a certain way, this is the structure of intentionality; this being a law of the essence of consciousness itself. When we ‘see’, as Vernon put it, that we are doubting as an act, we intend the object as the act of doubting, instead of as the doubtful object itself, and this object is given with Evidenz in the immanence of the phenomenological position as the phenomena of the act of doubting. However, such applies to any act of consciousness, when we direct our consciousness towards a cube in perception, memory, imagining etc., we intend it in a certain way, as having the parts that constitute a cube. Now when we direct our consciousness towards the object of the act of doubting we find that it is given in pure Evidenz as we intend it as the phenomena of an act of doubting. This is the fulfilment of our intention as being found as we intended it through the giveness of pure Evidenz in intuitive immanence from the position of the epoché. This fulfilment of the intention as being given as how it is intended is what Willard (1995, 139) states constitutes knowledge for Husserl.
However, when we apply this to the cube as empirically viewed in perception we are not given it in the same way, we are unable to establish pure Evidenz as it is no longer intended as a cube-phenomenon but as an actually existing cube, bringing with it the issue of the object’s being. This brings us to the question of how such could become fulfilled. Fulfilment of such still requires a form of Evidenz as the quality of givenness, but the Evidenz for such a fulfilment differs from that of the Evidenz given in that of the world of phenomena and essences, since we cannot establish pure Evidenz for something that claims existential validity.

Instead the Evidenz, as quality of givenness, cannot be pure, as it cannot be given purely in the way that phenomena can. Such Evidenz thus leads to proximate fulfilment; it is that further Evidenz has the possibility to frustrate the prior fulfilment, as the object of the intention could be found to not be given as intended. For example we may intend the cube as a whole through appresentation and use the givenness of one perspective, say from the front, as the Evidenz for such an intentional fulfilment, since it conforms to the essence of a cube from that perspective, but upon further inspection from a secondary perspective, say moving the cube around, we find that it is not a cube but a regular rectangular prism, since we find four of the sides to be rectangular, not square, and thus contradicting the essence of a cube. Thus we find our original fulfilment to be frustrated and replaced with the new fulfilment with this greater Evidenz, however the identity of the intentional object remains throughout.

Here we can establish that fulfilment works in a series, continued fulfilment is found through lived-experience and may be found to frustrate prior fulfilments. Since we
have the ability to always look closer at the objects we are directed towards ultimate fulfilment for such is often unachievable. We instead gain new Evidenz establishing greater proximate fulfilments, unless frustrated and then a greater proximate fulfilment is achieved for the new intention towards the same intentional object. To come to ultimate knowledge of an object we would have to fulfil every intention towards the object, which in most cases is impossible, so we are left with a series of fulfilled and unfulfilled intentions in apprehending an object.

Taking fulfilment in such a way does not mean we cannot come to knowledge of an object; rather that we gain different levels of knowledge. With lower levels of proximate fulfilment we can come to abstracted knowledge. In the example of our cube at a distance we may be able to ascertain that there is a shape of some sort, this being an abstracted piece of knowledge, as we look at it closer we can come to realise it comes under the concept of a rectangular prism. If we then gain adequate fulfilment we are able to know the rectangular prism in itself, knowing any distinguishing features and such. This is that as greater fulfilment is achieved we are able to come to specific and individualized knowledge. At the lower levels of fulfilment we would not be able to separate this specific individual from others of the same species, since our knowledge of it is only in that of the higher level abstracted species, but as we come to greater fulfilment through the viewing of the object we are able to come to greater individuated knowledge which distinguishes it from the others in the species.

Of course, this conception of fulfilment relies heavily on subjectivity, but the importance is establishing how this subjective consciousness can come to knowledge for itself. Any concept of real existing objects as being implies the existence of the ‘I’
(which is reduced to the transcendental ego of pure consciousness in the position of
the epoché) and is in a relative existence to the being of the ‘I’ for which the existence
can be posited, this cannot be escaped. Hence, we cannot escape such subjectivity
since we have lived-experience and Husserl’s concept of fulfilment is reliant on this
principle, since we are continually establishing greater fulfilments or finding others to
be frustrated, but it is this subjectivity of lived-experience that finds its objective
grounding of knowledge in the concepts of essences and the laws of such that give to
it the ability, through Evidenz, to grasp the objects the consciousness directs itself
towards through the act of intention. It is that intentionality is a bringing together of
both subjective and objective elements via the mediation of the Evidenz of giveness.

IV. Reaching the Objects ‘in-themselves’

Unlike Kant, Husserl held that we can reach objects ‘in-themselves’ and he requires
no concept similar to Kant’s noumena to facilitate the objects of intention, for as
Willard (1995, 148) states the real object is the intentional object and vice versa, thus
if the real object does not exist, neither does the intentional. For Husserl it is that we
can have an intention that exists, but the intentional object may not. This we saw as
the grounding point of the epoché in that we could establish the intentional act of
doubting without positing any existential validity on the object of the doubt, namely
doubt itself.

Where we can come to grasp the object itself is through its parts. When we intend an
object in a way we can access the intentional content through its parts as independent
of the intentional constitution of the object. There are parts of experience that we do
not intend, for example the parts that make up a whole such as the colour, and we thus compare these parts of the object in-itself with our intentional content to see if they fit together. When we intend an object as a cube and find it to be regular rectangular prism we find that the parts that are given to us do not match the way we represent them in the intended cube, the parts however are given to us ‘as they are’. But we would not say that any change has occurred to the intentional object, its identity remains unchanged, the parts that make it the object it is remain, and it is instead that our intentional act towards the object has changed. To intend an object in a certain way does not change it, its parts that make up the whole remain the same. In gaining fulfilment of the object we look to the parts that are given of the object and whether they match the way we have intended it in unity, this is that we access the objective parts and this is what affords us the fulfilment or frustration of the intention. It is not that our intention can change the way in which these parts can be given to us, since they are that which confirms the intention and if this were not so Husserl would be appealing to an extreme form of idealism, which he is not.

Thus, knowledge can be taken for Husserl as a higher order act. It is not merely the act of fulfilment of an intention, rather, how Husserl himself states it;

“in fulfilment, the object is ‘given’ intuitively in the same way in which the mere meaning means it…. The ideally conceived element which thus coincides with the meaning is the fulfilling sense, and… through this coincidence, the merely significant intention (or expression) achieved relation to the intuitive object (expressed this and just this object).”

(italics in original, LI 743)
It is that when we come to knowledge of an object it is that we can connect a union of the conceptual meaning associated with the intuited object through perception. This here is what knowledge is as an act (Willard 1995, 152), as follows. In establishing knowledge as this act it shows that the object of knowledge itself is not changed in the act of knowing. Knowing itself, for Husserl, is as Willard (1995, 155) puts an external act. The object and the concept are unified in the act of knowing, but they are still separate and thus the relationship of the act of knowing the object and the object itself in this union can come into and go out of being, but the identity of the object remains regardless. Willard summarizes this point as;

“The property of being hit by bat $x$ at time $t$ does not produce or destroy the identity of the ball, but, in fact, presupposes that identity as determining what is and was hit. It is the same for the property of being known by person $x$ at time $t$. Both the relation of hitting and that of knowing are ‘external,’ and the properties which they impose on their relata are contingent, with a coming and going that can, in suitable cases, be observed.”

(italics in original, Willard 1995, 156)

This is a major difference from the Kantian position, which holds that for an object to be known it must necessarily conform to the concepts of the understanding which allow us the grasping of the object, in contrast to the concept of noumena which we cannot grasp as it does not conform to such. For Husserl, it is that the conceptual meaning we hold is formed into a relationship with the object, but the object as it is intuitively given remains in the in-itself, unchanged by the concept or the act of knowing. Ricoeur (1966) comes to the conclusion in his paper entitled “Kant and Husserl” that this really is a difference in the objectifying for each philosopher.
Husserl rejected the Kantian conception of the thing in-itself as noumena, since Husserl instead held that a thing in-itself is merely the parts unified in the concept, the conceptual unified meaning being applied by the subject, however these parts can be given ‘as they are’. Kant however held that there are two forms of objectifying, the appearance which is not our representation of it, which becomes the empirical object, this being similar to the level Husserl takes it, but then the further level that of the *ding an-sich*, the thing in-itself, as inaccessible to consciousness, but as that which constitutes phenomena.

However, this difference seems to hold from the way they deal with the a priori. Kant basing his a priori argument on finding these concepts at the base of understanding, where Husserl held that we needed to go back to that which is given with pure Evidenz under the epoché. Any object of knowledge for Kant is thus held on the basis that it must necessarily conform to these laws of the understanding, however for Husserl objects of knowledge exist outside of the act of knowing, as that which is given intuitively in immanence. The object of knowledge as a thing in-itself, which given with Evidenz, is thus required for knowledge to be possible, since it is that which allows the fulfilment of an intention and the act of knowing, without an object as in-itself this form of fulfilment would not be possible and neither would knowledge itself, since the object as itself is an essential part of the act of knowing, but the act of knowing is not an essential part of the object.
Conclusion:

Originally in deciding the topic for this thesis I sought to show the common usage of the method presented by the Copernican revolution. However, as I studied further and further into this topic I found that in analysing the two philosophers respective theories of knowledge it became apparent that the major difference in methodology regarding the discovering of the a priori grounds of knowledge permeated throughout, leading to the divergence in their respective theories of the accessibility of \textit{das ding an-sich} or the thing in-itself. I found that my thesis direction changed to attempt to explicate the grounds of this difference in the different methods in which each sought to answer similar questions regarding the possibility of knowledge.

Kant’s process stems from his analysis of synthetic a priori concepts as the laws of understanding. What Kant sought was to find if there are any valid claims of synthetic a priori knowledge, since he felt this question was the consequence of Hume’s critique of inductive reasoning. The issue he raised against Hume was how do we come to a valid claim that knowledge is even possible if we do not have the knowledge that experience can give us any knowledge prior. Thus, Kant turned his position to look at what would allow the possibility for such, this leading to his Copernican revolution.

However, Husserl tried to distance himself from grounding knowledge in reasoning, in the way Kant had, as he wished to distance himself from any form of psychologism, which he saw as problematic. Husserl particularly wanted to establish objective validity for all kinds of knowledge, and not restrict it to that of a human
As Bachyrycz argues; “the phenomenology of the *Logical Investigations* is meant to provide transcendental philosophy with a surer epistemological footing than Kant is able to provide” (2009, 47).

This leads Husserl to distinguish his method of establishing what constitutes a priori knowledge from that of Kant’s. For Husserl, truly a priori knowledge can only be constituted as independent and thus must be derived from immanence or the transcendent-in-immanence as given in the phenomenological reduction. This leads Husserl to find some similarities to Kant within his a priori knowledge, however his ability to come to them differs and allows for a greater amount of a priori knowledge than Kant’s analysis of the laws of reason does. This divergence in their respective methodologies is what constitutes their differences regarding the accessibility of *das ding an-sich* or the thing in-itself.

**Bibliography**

I. Primary Sources


*note in text reference uses LI page number notation.

*note in text reference uses A/B page number notation, A refers to the first edition (1781) and B refers to the second edition (1787) of the original text.


II. Secondary Sources


