

11

The Difference Between Original, Metaphysical and Geometrical Representations of Space

Clinton Tolley

11.1 Introduction: Separating the Metaphysical From the “Original” (Intuitive) and the Geometrical

Despite substantial strides in recent research into a number of different dimensions of Kant’s views on space,¹ we are still in need of a more adequate taxonomy than has been previously provided of the distinctions at work in Kant’s Critical account of space. Having such a taxonomy ready to hand would help head off the not uncommon assumptions that Kant thinks there is only *one* object that merits the name “space”—the space of outer appearances—and only *one* possible kind of representation of

¹ See Carson (1997), Heis (2014b), Messina (2015), Onof and Schulting (2015), Patton (2011), Shabel (2004), Sutherland (2005b), and especially Friedman (2000, 2012, 2015).

C. Tolley (✉)

Department of Philosophy, University of California San Diego,
San Diego, CA, USA
e-mail: ctolley@ucsd.edu

that space—the intuition of space. A closer look at the *Critique of Pure Reason* and other Critical-period writings reveals that Kant holds there to be both a *plurality* of kinds or species of space—and so a variety of *objects* besides the immediate object of pure intuition of space, which merit the name “space”—and a *plurality* of the kinds (species) of *representation* of these spaces, besides the pure intuition of the space of outer appearances.

One of the most important and most often-neglected distinctions that Kant works with concerning *objects* which each merit the name “space” is that between (a) the space which is “given” a priori in a pure “original” *intuition*, which is under discussion in the Transcendental Aesthetic (TAe), and in which *sensations* are ordered to yield an outer appearance, a space which might be called “*appearance* space”, and (b) the space which is given only a posteriori in *experience*, which is under discussion in the Analytic’s treatment of the “dynamical” principles and then again in the *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*, and in which *substances* are ordered to yield nature, which might be called “*physical* space” (cf. MAN, 4:481). In future work, I hope to be able to clarify better the nature of this distinction between spaces, and in particular its significance for a proper understanding of the related distinction Kant introduces in the Analytic between the *mathematical* and *dynamical* categories and principles (cf. B110–11; B199–200; B220–1; B557–8).² Getting clear on this pair of distinctions is, in turn, absolutely crucial for understanding the scope and consequence of Kant’s transcendental idealism, insofar as it is first and foremost a thesis about the metaphysical standing of *appearances* and their form, and not a

² *Mathematical* categories and principles are distinguished precisely as applying directly and “constitutively” to “objects of intuition (pure as well as empirical)” (B110), i.e. to appearance space as well as to the relations of sensations (*appearances*) within this space, whereas *dynamical* categories and principles “do *not* concern appearances” (B220; emphasis added) but rather “the *existence*” that is related to appearances (B110; emphasis added; cf. A160/B199, A178/B221)—i.e. the really existent *substances* which are responsible for bringing about appearances—and the relations (of causality, community) among these existents.

thesis about the ideality of the *existence* (substance) which appears through these appearances (cf. Prol, 4:292–3; A92/B125).³

Yet even if we restrict our focus—as I shall in what follows—to (a) the space of appearances, as the object given a priori in pure original intuition,⁴ careful attention to Kant’s texts will show that he is working with a further, equally important and equally often-overlooked, distinction between a variety of kinds of a priori *representation* we possess of this space. Laying out and clarifying the nature of these distinctions among representations of the space of appearances will be the main focus of the present chapter. More specifically, I shall argue that, throughout the Critical period, Kant is working with a threefold distinction among kinds of representation of the space of appearances: (i) the primitive “original” pure *intuition* of this space, (ii) the philosophical or “metaphysical” representation of this space by way of a (pure) *concept*, and (iii) the mathematical or specifically “geometrical” representation of this space, by way of the *construction* of a concept of a delimited part within the original intuition of this space (the representation of “*a* space” within space). My analysis will focus first on how this threefold distinction can be seen in Kant’s account of representations of space in TAe (Sect. 11.2), before showing its presence in the discussion of representations of space in his 1790s’ remarks on the work of Abraham Kästner (Sect. 11.3), and then demonstrating its manifestation at key points in the Analytic as well (Sect. 11.4).

I then turn (in Sect. 11.5) to the second main goal of the chapter, namely, that of showing how more careful attention to this threefold distinction opens up a fairly straightforward way to avoid a recent revisionary line of interpretation of certain remarks Kant makes about representations of space in the Transcendental Deduction (TD).

³I explore these distinctions, and their role in Kant’s idealism, at length in Tolley (MS a), and more briefly in Tolley (MS c).

⁴Here and throughout, unless otherwise noted, I use the term “object” in the very broad sense of a subject of true predication in judgement, such that even e.g. that which is non-existent, or non-substantial—i.e. that which is (in some sense) *nothing*—counts as an object, since it can be the subject of true predications. At the end of the Amphiboly, Kant himself uses the term “object in general” (*Gegenstand überhaupt*) to range over both that which is “something” (*Etwas*) and that which is “nothing” (*Nichts*) (B346), and explicitly to comprise both noumena and also pure space as the form of intuition (which are also, incidentally, both classified as forms of *ens* rather than *nihil*).

This interpretation argues that, although in TAe Kant might have seemed to accord to intuitions an independence from concepts and acts of synthesis by the understanding, both as to the occurrence of intuitions and their content, by the time of the *Analytic*, and especially by the end of TD, Kant indicates that this independence was a mere semblance, since intuition in general, and the pure original intuition of space in particular, does depend both for its occurrence (as an act) and for its content upon the understanding.⁵ I shall argue, to the contrary, that the relevant remarks have a perfectly nonconceptualist, non-intellectualist interpretation available—one, therefore, which integrates quite naturally with the traditional, and *prima facie* quite plausible, reading of Kant's account of the intuition of space in TAe. Once we have the threefold distinction between kinds of representation of space in view, we shall be more alert to contextual cues Kant gives as to which of these representations is under discussion, and also more sensitive to the fact that a claim about the dependence that *one* of these representation of appearance space bears on concepts, acts of synthesis or the understanding in no way implies such dependence for *all* of these representations of space.

In this I am in sympathy with several recent, helpful, nonconceptualist discussions of TD in light of the remarks on Kästner,⁶ over and against the very fruitful, though broadly conceptualist, or at least “intellectualist”, readings recently offered by Longuenesse and Friedman.⁷ My analysis here will go further than previous nonconceptualist/non-intellectualist accounts, however, in more sharply drawing apart the *metaphysical-conceptual* representation of space from both the original intuition of space as well as the geometrical construction of concepts of spaces in intuition. I also show

⁵For the stronger “conceptualist” interpretation of intuition, according to which the original intuition of space requires the involvement of concepts (categories), see McDowell (2009). For the weaker, merely “intellectualist” interpretation, according to which only an act of understanding is necessary for the original intuition of space, though no concept or specifically conceptual synthesis (instead: something “pre-discursive”), see Friedman (2012, 2015), Longuenesse (1998b), Messina (2014) and Grüne, Chap. 4, in this volume. (I am borrowing the “conceptualist”/“intellectualist” contrast from McLear 2015.)

⁶Compare especially Fichant (1998) and Onof and Schulting (2014, 2015). For broadly sympathetic nonconceptualist and non-intellectualist interpretations of the original representation of space on grounds besides the Kästner remarks, see Allais (2009) and McLear (2015).

⁷See Friedman (2000, 2012, 2015) and Longuenesse (1998a, b).

how the metaphysical/geometrical distinction closely tracks the philosophical/mathematical distinction that Kant draws later in the Doctrine of Method (among other places), insofar as the metaphysical representation of space (and its features) takes place through *concepts alone*, whereas the geometrical representation of space (and its parts) occurs only through the “construction” of concepts *in pure intuition* (cf. B741–2).

11.2 Intuitive, Metaphysical and Geometrical Representations of Space in the Transcendental Aesthetic

One of the best-known *results* of TAE is that we possess a pure a priori *intuition* of space. Yet to establish this result, Kant *begins* his analysis, not with this intuition of this object, but instead with a *concept* that we possess of an object we call “space”. More specifically, Kant begins with what he calls the “exposition” of a concept we have of a specific aspect of our “outer sense”, as comes out in the following introductory sentences:

By means of outer sense (a property of our mind) we represent to ourselves objects as outside us, and all as *in space*. *In this*, their shape [*Gestalt*], magnitude [*Größe*], and relation to one another is determined [*bestimmt*], or determinable [*bestimmbar*]. (A22/B37; emphasis added)

Now, Kant thinks that the “exposition” of the concept of this space will show that it has certain distinctive things that “belong to” it (B38), namely, that its content represents space as possessing certain features. Most importantly, Kant thinks that the exposition of the concept of space shows (1) that we conceive (think) of space as something whose representation “must ... ground [*zum Grunde liegen*]” the possibility of representing *sensations* as being not just different but as “in different places” (A23/B38); (2) that we thereby think of space as something whose representation “grounds”, and serves as a “condition of the possibility” of, all *appearances* in outer sense (A24/B39), where these are understood as composites of a “matter” (provided by the manifold of different sensations) ordered in

a “form”, and also of outer *empirical intuitions* (A24/B38), that is, those intuitions which are “related to ... object[s] through sensations” and which have these appearances as their (“undetermined”) objects (A20/B34); (3) that we think of space as having a compositional structure that prohibits it from being had by the mind first as the content of a “discursive or ... general *concept*”, but must rather be first had in an intuition, albeit (in light of the previous thesis) a non-empirical, pure a priori one (A25/B39; emphasis added); and finally (4) that it is a part of the concept of space that we think of space as “an infinite *given* magnitude”, in the sense of space itself being “thought” in this concept “as if it contained an infinite set of representations *within itself*”, since “all the parts of space, even to infinity, are simultaneous” (B39–40; emphasis added). From the results of this exposition of how the concept we have of space represents space as being, Kant takes it to follow that the “*original* representation” of space itself must not be a discursive or universal concept *at all* (whether pure or empirical), but rather *an intuition* we have a priori and which is “pure” of all sensation (B40; emphasis added).⁸

Now, because this exposition successfully “exhibits” the fact that it also “belongs to a concept” (i.e. the concept of space) that it can be “*given a priori*”—since this concept (along with empirical intuitions and appearances) has been shown to be “grounded” in an a priori intuition—Kant calls this exposition “metaphysical” (B38). It is “metaphysical” in much the same way that the later metaphysical deduction of the pure concepts (categories) of understanding is “metaphysical”, insofar as this exposition, too, shows how we can trace back the concept of space to an a priori “birthplace” (A66/B90) or “origin” (B159). What is of more interest for our analysis, however, is an even simpler and more straightforward corollary of Kant’s proceedings here: the Metaphysical Exposition gives clear indication that Kant holds us to possess at least *two* distinct representations of the space of outer appearances—namely, the initial *concept* of space, now known to be pure and of a priori origin itself,⁹ and then the pure a priori *intuition* which serves as the ground of both this concept

⁸ For further discussion of Kant’s argument in this exposition, see Messina (2015) and Shabel (2010).

⁹ For other references to the *concept* of space at issue in TAE in terms of its purity and apriority, compare B118–21, B195 and B207 (see also the discussion below in Section 11.4).

and all other outer intuitions, and also is ultimately that representation through which “outer *experience* is itself first possible” (A23/B38).

While this twofold distinction among a priori representations of space has not gone unnoticed, what has been less emphasised is the fact that TAE’s multiplication of representations of this object (the space of outer appearances) does not end here. For we see Kant making use of a *third* sort of representation of this same space already implicitly in the Metaphysical Exposition itself, but even more explicitly in the very next section, which he distinguishes as the specifically “*transcendental* exposition” of the concept of space (B40). For in addition to (i) the “original representation” (B40) of space in a priori *intuition*, and (ii) the a priori *concept* of space which has just been metaphysically expounded and whose possession is shown to be grounded on this original intuition, in the third part of the Metaphysical Exposition Kant also refers to (iii) representations of the “limitation” of this space, representations which he suggests can occur simply by *thinking* such limitations “*in*” the space originally intuited (B39; emphasis added). Kant argues that these acts of thinking limitations in space are what lead us to acquire the representation of a “manifold” *in* space, which is then what enables us to form “the general concept of *spaces*” (B39; emphasis added)—rather than being stuck only with the initial intuition of space per se, or with the very abstract concept of the indeterminate as-of-yet undelimited object of this intuition. But then, while the pure intuition of space is that “from [*aus*; i.e. *out of*] which” such further delimitative representations are “derived”, and that which “grounds” these representations (B39), these further representations cannot themselves be identical to the original intuition itself. Rather, “the general concept of *spaces* in general” and the more specific “concepts” of kinds of delimited space (e.g. line, triangle) both “rest ... on” not just the original intuition of space but also on these further acts of delimitation in thought (B39; emphasis added).

Yet it is equally crucial to note that, though these “derivative” geometrical concepts depend on acts of thinking and yield conceptual representations of space and its parts and their interrelations, they cannot be identical to the aforementioned a priori *concept* of space that is metaphysically expounded in TAE. Nor can geometrical concepts (and basic propositions [*Grundsätze*]) be derived from the mere analysis of this a

priori concept of space alone—say, by thinking more clearly about what is contained “in” this concept. This is because they contain the further conceptual addition of delimitation in its various species, and hence arise only through thinking delimitations “in” the original *intuition* of space, and in this way “deriving” geometrical representations (propositions, concepts) specifically “from the intuition” (B39).

The distinctness of (iii) geometrical representations of space from both (i) the original intuition and (ii) the metaphysical concept of space is confirmed in the subsequent *transcendental* exposition of the concept of space (B40–1). Here Kant’s stated topic is to identify certain representations which “*flow from* the given concept” (B40; emphasis added), that is, from (ii) the concept of space given a priori, the concept now known to be possessed on the basis of (i) the original intuition of space. As with the previous talk of “derivative”, the language of “flowing from” further suggests that Kant means to be referring to a separate sort of representation, one which cannot be identical to either the a priori concept of space (since it “flows from” it) or the original intuition which grounds this concept.¹⁰

As in the Metaphysical Exposition, here too the main examples Kant gives of representations that we can see “flow from” this concept of space a priori are specifically *geometrical* representations. Geometry itself is characterised as the “science that determines the properties of space ... *a priori*” (B40). Yet Kant quickly makes it clear that the particular “determination” involved in geometrical representations must involve *more* than the mere concept of space, and more than any analysis or exposition of the content already “thought *in it*” (B39; cf. A7/B11). Geometrical determination is said here to “*go beyond* the concept” of space (B41; emphasis added), and so engage in a determination of space itself by way of a “synthetic” addition or amplification to the given concept of space (B40). Yet while it is clear that Kant means to imply that this “addition” to the a priori concept of space happens by way of intuition, it is equally clear that merely *having* the original intuition of space will not be sufficient. As we have already seen, further acts of thinking (delimiting, determining)

¹⁰In fact, it should follow from the Metaphysical Exposition that this “original” intuition, if it is truly original, cannot itself “flow from” *any* concept, or any other representation.

what is given in this intuition are required. Crucially, then, geometrical representation involves acts which therefore “go beyond” *both* the original intuition of space *and* the metaphysical-conceptual representation of space.

Now, if we had our eyes on charting out a more complete taxonomy of spatial representations, we would need to look more closely at the three *empirical* (sensation-involving) representations involving outer appearances (and hence the space of outer appearances) that Kant also describes in TAe as being “grounded on” the original pure a priori intuition of space, namely, outer empirical *intuition*, *perception* (*Wahrnehmung*) and outer *experience*.¹¹ For now, however, it is enough that we have uncovered a threefold differentiation in the kinds of representation of the space of outer appearances in TAe:

- (i) The original a priori *intuition* of this space;
- (ii) An a priori *concept* of this space per se, which is shown through *metaphysical* exposition (analysis) to be grounded on the original intuition;

and finally,

- (iii) Further (a priori) representations of “determinations” of space through *delimitation* of spaces (as its parts), which are “derived” (“flow”) from the previous two representations, by way of a *synthetic* determination of certain properties of space through “thinking” delimitations “in” the intuition of space, and which belong to the science of *geometry*.

¹¹I provide a brief sketch of the account of the difference between these mental acts (intuiting, perceiving, experiencing) in Tolley (2013), and more fully in Tolley (MS a). I also argue there that keeping track of these distinctions is of utmost importance for understanding Kant’s account of “cognition” (*Erkenntnis*). In Tolley (MS c), I take up the further and difficult question of how the space of the objects of outer intuition (outer *appearances*) relates to the space of the objects of outer experience (corporeal *substances*), drawing on Sellars’s (1968) analysis of counterpart-relations.

11.3 Intuitive, Metaphysical and Geometrical Representations of Space in the Kästner Remarks

Before moving on to the key passages about the representations of space from the Analytic and especially TD, I want to further solidify a broadened sense of the conceptual background in play in these passages, by looking first at some of Kant's remarks from 1790, written for Johann Friedrich Schultz, concerning the views on mathematics presented in Kästner's treatises.¹² Towards the end of these remarks, Kant takes up the question of the differences in "the use of the concept of the infinite" in the sciences of geometry and metaphysics, respectively (OKT, 20:418), and in the course of addressing this question he also takes up the topic of how the two sciences treat space and its representations (OKT, 20:419–20). What I want to bring out in this section is the extent to which these remarks also make use of the same threefold differentiation among representations of the space of outer appearances: original-intuitive, metaphysical-conceptual and geometrical-delimitative.

Here Kant claims that metaphysics has the task of "show[ing] how one can *have* the representation of space" in the first place (OKT, 20:419). In particular, in metaphysics "space is considered in the way it is *given, before* all determination of it in conformity with a certain concept of object" (OKT, 20:419; emphasis added). Metaphysics therefore considers the space that is "*original*" (*ursprünglich*), and aims to uncover "the basic representation" (*Grundvorstellung*) of space which makes possible whatever other spatial representations might be made (OKT, 20:419). As in TAE's Metaphysical Exposition, Kant again claims that this "basic representation" of space is an "a priori *intuition*" (OKT, 20:421; emphasis added).

Geometry, by contrast, is the science which treats this space, not as to its original representation per se, but rather as to what can be *further* represented "in" it: geometry "teaches how one can *describe* [*beschreiben*]

¹²For more background context-setting about the occasion for writing, see Friedman (2000) and Onof and Schulting (2014). I have also consulted the recent translation of these remarks by Onof and Schulting (in Kant 2014) in the course of providing translations for the quotations below. However, I have departed from their renderings without comment where it seemed appropriate.

a space, viz., exhibit [*darstellen*] it in the representation *a priori*" (OKT, 20:419). In geometry "a space is *made* [*gemacht*]", in the sense that "(many) spaces" can be "*derived*" from "the basic representation of space" by being "thought [*gedacht*] as parts of the unitary original space" (OKT, 20:419; emphasis added). Kant then characterises this process of "thinking" parts "in" space, which TAe had referred to as "delimitation", by a term mentioned in TAe (cf. B39, A48/B65) but not actually explained until much later in the *Critique*, namely, "construction". As Kant defines it in the *Critique*, to construct is "to give ... an object ... *a priori*" (A223/B271); more specifically, it is "to display [*darzulegen*] the object that corresponds to [a concept] in intuition" (A240/B299), to "exhibit [*darstellen*] *a priori* the intuition corresponding to [a concept]" (A713/B741).

By providing that initial, infinite, not yet determined or delimited object "in" which the relevant geometrical description (determination) is to be "given", the original *a priori* intuition of space thus also "contains the *ground* of the *construction* of all possible geometrical concepts" (OKT, 20:420; emphasis added). Nevertheless, here again Kant indicates that neither the original intuition itself, nor the metaphysical representation of its content or its standing, is sufficient for the construction of a space in space. Rather, a further act of thinking, of description or partition, is required. To "give" a space to the mind through a *a priori* construction is thus to have an intuition of space itself in which certain delimitations are "added" in thought.

Even so, Kant continues to claim that both metaphysical and geometrical treatments of space "derive" from one and the same "basic representation" (pure *a priori* intuition) of space. What is more, he also here emphasises perhaps more directly that, despite further differences that emerge as to how they go on to represent this space, both metaphysics and geometry begin not only by representing the same object (space) first given in original intuition, but also by representing it as to several of the same properties, including its infinity and givenness: "The geometer, as well as the metaphysician, represents the original space as infinite, in fact as infinitely given" (OKT, 20:419).

But despite representing this same object and some of its same basic properties, Kant here perhaps even more sharply distinguishes the *way* in which metaphysics and geometry each represent this space, especially as to its infinity. The geometer's "task" is ultimately that of describing "a space"

out of space, and is therefore one that is understood to go on “to infinity”, since, given the infinity of space itself, it is possible for the geometer to “increase” the description of space beyond any already described part of it (OKT, 20:420). This *possibility* of the increase of geometrical descriptions “to infinity”, however, is itself something that is grounded on the *actual* infinity of the space in which all such descriptions will occur, that is, the actual infinity of the space already given in pure intuition: “The geometer grounds the possibility of his task of increasing *a space* (of which there are many) to infinity on the original representation of a unitary, infinite, *subjectively given space*” (OKT, 20:420; emphasis added). Hence, while “the *mathematician* is always only concerned with an *infinito potentiali*” in relation to his construction projects, an “*actu infinitum*” nevertheless already “*is given ... on the side of the thinker*” (OKT, 20:421; emphasis added), as that wherein any such construction will occur. The *actual* infinity that is *already* in “what is metaphysically-given [*das Metaphysisch gegebene*]” is therefore what “grounds [*zum Grunde liegt*] the infinitely progressing constructions of geometrical concepts” (OKT, 20:421), even as to their *possibility* (OKT, 20:420).

However, what must be emphasised at this point—and has not yet been sufficiently appreciated, but which the review of TAe has put us in a position to notice more clearly—is that this implies that Kant here also is assuming there to be a distinct *metaphysical* representation of this space, which *itself* represents this space “as infinite” (OKT, 20:419). This is the representation that factors into the *science* of metaphysics and is possessed by “the metaphysician”: “The geometer, *as well as the metaphysician*, represents the original space as infinite, in fact as infinitely given” (OKT, 20:419; emphasis added). This metaphysical representation represents space, however, neither by itself being an *intuition* of this space, nor by engaging in a geometrical *description* or construction in intuition of some part of this space. Rather, it does so by representing this space *conceptually*, that is, through a *concept* that discursively characterises its object as something “unitary” (*einig*), “infinite”, “given” and a “magnitude” (OKT, 20:420). Which is to say: “the metaphysician” therefore makes use of the very concept which was itself being (metaphysically) expounded in TAe as also characterising space as possessing just these same features (“unitary”, B39; “infinite *given* magnitude”, B39–40).

Hence, in the remarks on Kästner, too, we find Kant again making use of the threefold division among representations of intuitive space:

- (i) The original a priori *intuition* of infinite space;
- (ii) The representation of this space and some of its properties through a concept by “the *metaphysician*”;

and

- (iii) the *geometrical* representation of this space as to its determinations (delimitations, parts) through the “description” or “construction” of “a space” (or spaces/figures, e.g. lines, triangles) in this space.

What is more, we now have further evidence that all three represent some of the same features of this space (infinite, given, unitary, magnitude), albeit in different ways: (i) by simply *giving* them, (ii) by representing them in *thought* through a concept, and (iii) by (progressively) *constructing* concepts pertaining to these features “in” intuition.

Now, it is true that Kant here goes on to say that “the geometrically and objectively given space is always *finite*”, on account of “its being given only because it is *made*”, whereas “the metaphysically, i.e. originally, nonetheless merely subjectively given space” is “*infinite*” (OKT, 20:420). Taken out of context, Kant might here seem to be differentiating the two spaces.¹³ Yet once we recall that each “geometrically given” space in question is “a space in space”, and is given by being “made” out of a “determination” or “description” of the “originally metaphysically given” space, then we can see that the geometrical “giving” of a space in construction is ultimately a “giving” of *one and the same space*, albeit now with further determination, through partition, “thought” into it.¹⁴

¹³ For interpretations which can seem to slide from noting distinctions among representations of space into talking as if there were distinctions in kinds of space (“metaphysical space” over against “geometrical space”, with geometrical space seemingly identified only with a “subset” of metaphysical space), see Friedman (2000, 2012, 2015) and Patton (2011).

¹⁴ Here I mean to emphasise the fact that the original intuition of infinite space is itself not only presupposed by, but actually contained in, every act of construction (description, delimitation),

Before moving on to the remarks on space in the *Analytic*, we should bring to the fore one further point of clarification that Kant gives in the Kästner remarks, one which also helps to bring out further the systematic significance of these terminological distinctions. As was touched upon above, Kant here makes the striking claim that the space which is “originally given” in the “basic representation” of space is first given only “*subjectively*” (OKT, 20:419–20). What the immediate context suggests he would seem to mean by this is that, in the original *intuition* of space, considered all on its own, space is merely *had* in mind, prior to being thought¹⁵ of in any way, under any *concept*, as to *its* being an object in its own right, or as to any of the *properties* it bears or any of the potential *parts* that might later be delimited within it. In Kant’s words, space is merely “subjectively” given in the original intuition because it is given prior to “all determination of it in conformity with a certain *concept of object*” (OKT, 20:419; emphasis added).¹⁶

This way of taking the classification is further supported by how Kant characterises the transition to representations in which space is instead “*objectively* given” (OKT, 20:420). This transition occurs by representing this *same* space, which is initially *merely* given (present “in” the mind, in “the subject”), now in thought, by way of concepts *of objects* (parts, determinate quantities, figures, etc.)—that is, first representing (thinking of) space itself *as an object*, and then representing its features (*as* a unity, given, infinite) and its parts (spaces) also *as objects*. These further forms

such that every geometrical representation of space not only depends (abstractly) on the presence of the original intuition of space but actually takes place “in” this intuition, as its infinite backdrop. A space delimited “in” space is always finite relative to the space in which it is delimited—i.e. the infinite space of original intuition—and so it is right to say that there is something finite “given” in each construction. At the same time, however, there is *also* an infinity “given” in each construction as well—and *also* (for that matter) an infinity given in each empirical intuition (as its form). The co-givenness of infinite space in geometrical construction and empirical intuition is obscured in Friedman’s insistence, for example, on the finitude of every visual or perceptual field (cf. Friedman 2000), to try to help account for the difference he recognises Kant is marking between metaphysical and geometrical representations of space.

¹⁵ Compare: “That representation that can be given prior to all thinking is called *intuition*” (B132).

¹⁶ This in no way implies that Kant means to deny that the space given in original intuition *is* an object, or that it *can* be represented under the concept of an object, or that it *has* properties which can be represented conceptually. As we have seen, Kant is quite clear throughout that the space of original intuition *is* the object of the metaphysically expounded concept of space, and that this space is already infinite, unitary, a magnitude and given in intuition.

of “givenness” to mind (to thought, in conscious relation to concepts) contrast with merely “having” something in mind which does in fact represent space and its features per se, though not yet *as* anything.¹⁷

The main example Kant gives here of space as “objectively given” is how space is represented in *geometry*, referring to “the geometrically and objectively given space” that is only “given” if and when it is actually “made” (OKT, 20:420), in the sense of being the outcome of a description in thought of some part of space, such that “a” space is constructed or delimited within space itself. It would seem, however, that the *metaphysician*, too, represents space “objectively”, in the sense of representing space explicitly as an object of a concept, in order to represent it in thought “as infinite”, “as infinitely given” (OKT, 20:419), and indeed as “*subjectively given*” (OKT, 20:420). The original intuition merely gives space to the mind (“in the subject”). Both the metaphysician and the geometer take up this space (as it is given in its original representation) objectively, as an object of concepts and thought.¹⁸

¹⁷ Compare Allais (2009) for further discussion of the importance of the contrast between space simply being given (in mere intuition) and space being given “as” something (even: as an object).

¹⁸ Although this distinction is not front and centre in TAe, it does contain several terminological markers that suggest a parallel understanding of the subjective/objective contrast. Kant there claims that the originary “outer intuition” must “inhabit [*beiwohnen*] the mind” in a way that “precedes the *objects* themselves”, and therefore “has its seat merely *in the subject* [*im Subjecte*], as its formal constitution for being affected by objects and thereby acquiring *immediate representation*, i.e., *intuition*, of them” (B41; emphasis added). This kind of “subjective” givenness is also touched upon in the *Prolegomena*, §9: “There is therefore only one way possible for my intuition to precede the actuality of the object and occur as an *a priori* cognition, *namely if it contains* [*enthält*] *nothing else except the form of sensibility, which in me as subject precedes all actual impressions through which I am affected by objects*” (Prol, 4:282; my underlining). To be sure, here Kant’s concern is primarily to emphasise that space is given prior to external affection—that is, prior to further objects being given to the mind through the sensations they produce, and in fact given prior to even the sensations themselves being given—rather than its priority to thinking (whether conceptualisation or construction). In TAe, however, this point about space already being given and present “in the subject” is made precisely at the end of the Transcendental Exposition that aims to show a priori (as we can now emphasise), not just that certain *representations* “flow from” the concept of space, but rather that certain *cognitions* (*Erkenntnisse*)—i.e. certain representations “with consciousness” of *objects* (A320/B376–7)—can “flow from” this concept (combined with the original intuition). And the cognitions of objects that are shown to “flow from” the concept (plus intuition) in this way are none other than geometrical cognitions. In any case, this also should allay any concern that Kant’s differentiation here between subjective and objective forms of givenness could require a corresponding differentiation in whatever *objects* are given in these manners. This would be so only if

11.4 Metaphysical (Transcendental, Philosophical) vs Geometrical (Mathematical) Representations of Space in the Analytic (and Beyond)

With this context in mind, we are now finally ready to turn to the Analytic and TD in particular. In this section, I present the case for thinking that in the Analytic, too, Kant makes use of this same threefold distinction of intuitive, metaphysical and geometrical representations of the space of outer appearances. I also show how these distinctions are at work in the concluding Doctrine of Method, by looking at its discussion of the difference between philosophical and mathematical cognition. This recognition will allow us, in the next section (Sect. 11.5), to formulate a fairly straightforward nonconceptualist, non-intellectualist alternative to recent conceptualist interpretations of some of Kant's remarks in the Analytic, and especially TD, about the dependence of certain representations of space upon the understanding.

Already in the Introduction to the Logic, Kant distinguishes *space* itself (or as the context suggests, its original representation via *intuition*), on the one hand, from both the a priori *geometrical* determinations of it, and also what he there calls the “*transcendental* representation” of space, on the other (A56/B80–1). The specifically “transcendental” representation of space refers to “the *cognition*” that these other representations—i.e. the intuition and the geometrical determinations of space—“are not of empirical origin at all, and the possibility that they can nevertheless be related *a priori* to objects of experience” (A56/B81; emphasis added). Now, because it is a “cognition” of something *about* the intuition and geometrical representations of space, rather than the mere intuition or the geometrical representations themselves, this transcendental representation of space cannot be identical to either one of them. Moreover, the specific features cognised in this transcendental representation about these other representations are, first, that they are of “pure” origin (and so

one and the same thing were not able to be first given in one manner and then in the other. But not only is this not in any way conceptually prohibited, it is exactly what Kant seems to have in mind in this particular case. Space is first given “in” the subject in pure intuition, and then given “objectively” in consciousness to thought, as the correlate of a concept.

able to be given a priori), and second, that they relate to objects a priori. This sounds quite close to the cognition of the concept of space gained in TAe's metaphysical and transcendental expositions, respectively.

What is more, in the lead-up to TD, Kant explicitly refers to the *concept* of space as something that “relate[s] to objects completely *a priori*” (A85/B118), and also as itself “a priori” (A89/B121), and does so in contradistinction to both the “pure *intuition*” of space itself (A89/B121–2; emphasis added) and the equally a priori cognitions of space in *geometry*, which are said to arise in part from “its basic concept” (*Grundbegriff*) and in part to be “grounded on intuition *a priori*” (A87/B120; trans. amended).

In the introductory sections of the Principles (*Grundsätze*, basic propositions), Kant continues to fill out this distinction, noting that there are two different kinds of pure basic propositions a priori, one set which goes “*from concepts* to intuition”, and another that goes “*from the intuition* to concepts” (A160/B199). The latter are the basic propositions of mathematics, whereas the former actually function as “a principle” (*Principium*) for the mathematical propositions, a principle “on which is grounded a priori the possibility and objective validity” of mathematical propositions (A160/B199; trans. amended). So, while *mathematical* basic propositions are “derived from ... pure *intuitions* (although by means of the understanding)”, the mathematics-grounding a priori basic propositions are instead “derived from pure *concepts*” (A159–60/B198–9; emphasis added). What is more, it is *only* the latter, mathematics-grounding propositions, *rather than* the specifically mathematical ones, which Kant says here are to be included in the Transcendental Analytic's “systematic representation” (A159/B197) of the basic propositions of pure understanding. Here again, then, Kant is distinguishing between what sort of representation of space pertains to geometry (mathematics) and what pertains to (transcendental) philosophy, and also again ordering the latter as the ground or principle of the former—all the while, however, presupposing TAe's account of the ultimate origin of the concept of space used in philosophy in original intuition.

This distinction is revisited and further clarified in the important discussion of the difference between philosophical and mathematical cognition in the Doctrine of Method. Here Kant makes two points that are

especially relevant for our purposes. First, he claims that while mathematical cognition is a priori cognition “from the *construction* of concepts”, philosophical cognition, by contrast, is simply cognition “from *concepts*” (A713/B741). More specifically, Kant claims that philosophical cognition “confines itself ... to general *concepts*”, whereas mathematical cognition “cannot do anything with the mere concepts but hurries immediately to *intuition*” (A715/B743; emphasis added). The philosopher can only “*reflect on*” concepts, can “analyze” them and “make” them “distinct”, whereas the mathematician, that is, the geometer, can “*construct*” concepts a priori (A716/B744; emphasis added), by using “imagination” to “exhibit *a priori* the intuition corresponding to [the concept]” (A713/B741).

In fact, the closest the philosopher gets to intuition is with *concepts* of kinds of *synthesis* of intuitions, which Kant explicitly distinguishes from any intuitions themselves (cf. A722/B750). “Pure philosophy”, Kant writes, “fumbles around in nature with discursive *a priori* concepts without being able to make their reality intuitive *a priori* and by that means confirm it”, whereas mathematicians can “determine an intuition a priori in space (shape)” (A725/B753). Crucially, this situation obtains even with respect to the synthetic a priori basic propositions (principles) of the Analytic, insofar as, for example, the Second Analogy does not actually contain, or refer to, any intuition, but merely judges about “time-conditions in general”: here the philosopher “proceed[s] [therefore] merely in accordance with concepts, and cannot proceed through construction of concepts” (A722/B750n.). The same is true, Kant insists, of all the other basic propositions (cf. A724/B752), even the ones entitled “Axioms of Intuition”: each of these, too, is a basic proposition “*from concepts*” (A733/B761; emphasis added). It is a short step from here to conclude that even in TAe, Kant really means for the philosopher (“the metaphysician”; OKT, 20:419) to be dealing directly only with the *concept* of space, and providing an argument based on the exposition (analysis) of its content, rather than directly engaging with (let alone constructing concepts in) any intuition, even the original intuition itself.

Second, Kant here again claims that this difference in cognition ultimately consists in a difference in the “form” of the cognition of the relevant object (e.g. space), not a difference in the “matter” or in the “objects”

of the cognition (A714/B742). In particular, Kant claims that “philosophy as well as mathematics does deal with magnitudes, e.g. with totality, infinity, etc.” (A715/B743). This nicely complements the point made in the Kästner remarks (cf. Sect. 11.3 above), namely, that the metaphysician and the geometer both represent space, and also both represent it “as infinite” (OKT, 20:419), although, as Kant noted there, they represent this infinity in two different ways: by giving something actually infinite (space) to the mind, in contrast to giving something only potentially infinite (an increase in space) to the mind.¹⁹

11.5 Using the Threefold Distinction to Clarify TD’s Remarks about the Relation between the Understanding and Certain Representations of Space

In the foregoing, we have seen Kant consistently identify the most original representation of the space of outer appearances with a pure a priori *intuition* that is “given” or “had” in the mind. This intuition is both contrasted with, but also placed at the “ground” of, two other a priori representations of the space of appearances (as the “condition” of their possibility): the metaphysical concept of space and the geometrical construction of concepts of spaces in the intuition of space. While these latter concept-involving representations are said to be “derived” from the original intuition of space, the original intuition of space itself, as “an originally acquired representation” of “the form of outer objects in general”, is something whose presence in the mind “long precedes the determinate *concepts* of things that are in accordance with this form” (ÜE, 8:222).

¹⁹In the Dialectic, Kant notes a further difference even in relation to the *progressus* that has otherwise been the focus of the foregoing remarks on the mathematical representation of infinity: whereas mathematicians are happy to speak of this *progressus* going *in infinitum*, philosophers restrict themselves to speaking of a *progressus in indefinitum* (A510–11/B538–9)—which is in further accord with the general distinction above, between the metaphysical though indeterminate representation of space as infinite and given, and the geometrical “determination” of space as to its parts “to infinity”.

What I want to show in this section is that, contrary to recent interpretive trends, this consistently stated, widely repeated priority and independence of the original intuition of space, over and against not just these (and all other) *conceptual* representations of space (and spaces), but also over and against any activity of the *understanding*, is something which Kant in fact maintains throughout TD. In other words, I argue against those who hold that certain passages from TD require ascribing to Kant either a conceptualist or an intellectualist view of the original intuition of space, according to which this intuition ultimately requires the involvement of an act of understanding (synthesis) for its occurrence, or even involves concepts in its content.²⁰

The remarks that have seemed to suggest either the conceptualist or intellectualist account of the intuition of space occur in a small handful of dense passages in TD, including several footnotes, with the most often-discussed passage being the footnote at B160–1.²¹ Despite such determined efforts in this direction, I shall now show why the traditional interpretation of the original intuition of space remains open, why the relevant passages about the representation of space from TD give us no clear or decisive reason to believe that Kant ever meant to give up on the priority and independence of intuition itself, in relation to both concepts and acts of understanding, and, finally, why we can maintain, to the contrary, that Kant consistently rejects the idea that the understanding, its acts or its representations (concepts) in any way stand as a condition for intuitions (whether pure or empirical) to be what they are.

The priority of sensibility (and the “a priori representations” that it “contains” and thereby “gives” to the mind) over and against the understanding (and its representations) is itself announced fairly clearly already in the Introduction of the First *Critique*:

The transcendental doctrine of the senses will have to belong to the *first* part of the science of elements, since the conditions under which alone the

²⁰ See note 5 for references to conceptualist and intellectualist interpreters.

²¹ For an overview of the variety of interpretations of this footnote, see Onof and Schulting (2015). For a survey of some of the key passages in TD and elsewhere for the broader debate about the nonconceptuality of the content of intuitions, see Allais (2015), Schulting (2015b) and Tolley (2013). See also Allais, Chap. 1, in this volume.

objects of human cognition are *given* precede those under which those objects are *thought*. (A15–16/B30; emphasis added)

The same sort of priority of sensibility to understanding is repeated at the outset of the Logic itself, early in the Analytic. There, Kant reminds us, first, that TAE has established that “only by means of such pure forms of *sensibility*” can “an object ... *appear* to us ... i.e., be an object of *empirical intuition*”, which implies that space itself (along with time) is a pure intuition “that contain[s] *a priori* the conditions of the possibility of objects as *appearances*” (B121–2; emphasis added). This is then immediately contrasted with how things stand with the *understanding*, the *a priori* representations that *it* contains (i.e. the “pure *concepts*” or “categories” of understanding), and the forms (“functions”) of *thinking* which make these concepts (categories) themselves possible:

The categories of the understanding, on the contrary, *do not* represent to us the conditions under which objects are given in intuition *at all*, hence objects can indeed appear to us without necessarily having to be related to functions of the understanding, and therefore without the understanding containing their *a priori* conditions. ... Intuition by no means requires the functions of thinking. (B122–3; emphasis added)

Hence, not only is the pure intuition of space *reaffirmed* at the outset of TD as an autonomous condition on outer appearances and outer intuitions (and all of the further representations that these make possible: perception, experience), the understanding is itself clearly *rejected* as a condition of the same sort: neither the pure concepts of understanding nor the forms of its activity add any further conditions to appearances and intuitions.²²

The attention to the foregoing threefold distinction in representations of space can now allow us to appreciate better that Kant continues to accord the same autonomy to sensibility in general, and to the originary pure intuition of space in particular, throughout TD.

²² Indeed, as Kant says just a bit later in the Analytic: “That representation that can be given prior to [*vor*] *all* thinking is called intuition” (B132; emphasis added). For more discussion of these and similar passages, see Allais (2009).

In the A-Deduction, for example, Kant begins by highlighting a fact already established in TAe, namely, that “sense” *by itself* is responsible for a certain a priori ordering of the “manifold” given in sensation, an ordering that he here calls the “*synopsis*” of sense (A94/B127). Synopsis of the manifold is something he “ascribe[s] to sense” alone, although he means to show that there are syntheses by the imagination and understanding which can and do “correspond” to this synopsis (A97). Indeed, *before* he introduces the first act of synthesis in the A-Deduction, Kant emphasises both that “every intuition contains a *manifold* in itself” and that “*as contained in an instant*, each representation can *be* nothing other than an absolute *unity*” (A99; trans. amended and emphasis added). Presumably, this unity is something achieved by the synopsis of sense before any synthesis of understanding; synopsis therefore appears to be that which is responsible for bringing about an empirical intuition by ordering sensations into spatial form.

To be sure, Kant admits that an intuition “would not be *represented as*” containing a manifold “if the mind did not *distinguish* the time in the succession of impressions on another” (A99; emphasis added). Note, however, that this further act of distinguishing by the mind is only required for the *further representation* of the unity of the manifold which the intuition itself already possesses “absolutely” on its own, in the moment—and not for this (absolute) unity of the intuition itself. For the *representation* of the unity that an intuition already *has*—and so *not* for the intuition to “have” the unity in the first place—Kant thinks that “first the running-through [*das Durchlaufen*] of the manifold is necessary, and then a taking-together [*Zusammennehmung*]” (A99; trans. amended); it is *this* act which is “aimed directly at the intuition” (and *not constitutive of* the intuition in the first place) that he calls “the synthesis of apprehension” (A99). The result of this act of running-through, distinguishing and taking-together is thus a *representation* of the unity of the manifold contained in an intuition, rather than the intuition itself.

Now, to be fair, if read either out of the immediate context, or even just without a sense of the broader context following TAe, there are sentences in this same passage which might suggest that Kant means to be making a stronger claim, that the intuition itself first *comes to have* its unity *only* after the synthesis of apprehension has been directed at it. Kant

writes, for example, that this synthesis is necessary “for *unity* of intuition to come out of this manifold” (A99; trans. amended). Even more strikingly, Kant goes on to remark that, without synthesis, we also “could have *a priori* neither the representations of space nor of time, since these can be generated [*erzeugt*] *only* through the synthesis of the manifold that sensibility in its original receptivity provides” (A99–100; emphasis added). Again, out of context, this can seem to contradict directly what Kant has been claiming about sensibility and the original intuition of space (and time) in the previous hundred or so pages.²³

Once recontextualised, however, we can see that this sort of “synthesis-dependent” reading of original intuition is not at all forced on us by this passage. For one thing, as we have just seen, Kant’s target of explanation at this step in TD is not how *intuition* per se comes about in the first place, but rather what is required for the *representation* of intuition via an act of mind which is “directed” at it. This itself fits well with the broader context of the Analytic of our capacity for *understanding*, insofar as the Analytic has already identified the fundamental act of understanding with combining or synthesising representations in *judgement* (A69), and has already characterised judging itself as “the representation of *a representation* of [an object]” (A68/B93; emphasis added).

Our understanding therefore has an essentially “reflective” relation to the representations given in sensibility, as is suggested by the *Prolegomena*: “All our intuition happens only by means of the senses; the understanding intuits nothing, but only *reflects*” (Prol, 4:288), that is, reflects on the intuitions afforded by the senses.²⁴ As the part of the *Prolegomena* corresponding to TD further clarifies, this reflection first takes the form of a *judgement of perception*, which expresses the reflective “consciousness of my state” (Prol, 4:300). It then continues on to a *judgement of experience*, which “express[es] not *merely* a relation of a perception to a subject”, that is, the initial reflection in perception upon what is given and

²³ Cf. Grüne, Chap. 4, in this volume.

²⁴ For a very instructive analysis of the more general role of reflection in Kant’s conception of understanding and concepts, compare Longuenesse (1998a), although she at times seems to wish to downplay the “subjective” standing that Kant accords to the initial targets of reflection in perception (sensations, “my state”; Prol, 4:300) and too quickly wishes to identify these items with the ultimate “objective” objects of judgements of experience.

present in my mind in intuition, but rather “a property *of an object*”, that is, something “objective” and distinct from what is contained in my own intuition (Prol, 4:298; emphasis added).

What I want to suggest is that just this shift of perspective—from intuition as representation, to the reflected, conscious *representation of intuition*—is at work in the aforementioned remarks from the A-Deduction about “the representation of space” as well (cf. A99–100). What is at issue here, and what is being “generated” through the synthesis, is not (i) the *original* representation of space, that is, the pure *intuition* of space (metaphysically) given prior to all acts of thinking and so on, but rather those other a priori *representations of this intuition* that were mentioned both in TAe and in the Kästner remarks—that is, (ii) the a priori *concept* of this space (i.e. the concept which represents this space) which is *metaphysically* expounded in TAe, along with (iii) the a priori *concepts* of spaces (objects) formed (“constructed”) through *geometrical* “description”.

This focus on the a priori *concepts* by means of which we represent space—that is, by means of which we *represent* the original intuition in which space is first given—rather than on the a priori *intuition* per se, is further confirmed just a few pages later. There, Kant claims that “the purest and first basic representations of space and time” (A102; trans. amended) enjoy a strict dependence upon the synthesis of understanding (in apprehension as well as association and reproduction). In isolation, this passage itself should surely suggest that what Kant means to assert is the dependence of original pure *intuition* of space on such synthesis, since we have seen him using just this phrase (“basic representation”) in TAe to pick out the original intuition. Nevertheless, once we read on, we find that Kant ends up classifying the basic representations at issue *here* as certain “previously mentioned *thoughts*” (A102; emphasis added). Indeed, by A107, he makes it quite explicit that what he really means to be talking about, first and foremost, are “the *a priori concepts* (space and time)” (emphasis added), claiming only that *these concepts*—rather than space itself, or its original intuition—require a relation to our understanding (synthesis, apperception) in order to be possible. Hence, although it is possible to read Kant as claiming in these passages that, without a certain act of understanding responsible for “apprehension”,

we could not even *have a priori* “the representation of space” (A99), it would seem equally possible, and much more charitable, to read him as really referring to the conditions for the a priori *concept* of space, given as well how this particular representation was already in focus in the lead-up to TD itself (cf. A84–9).

We can also see the very same shift of perspective, from intuition *per se*, to the conceptual *representation of* intuition, in the B-Deduction. This can be easily missed, since, as in the A-Deduction, Kant at times compresses his expression in a way that, when read out of context, might not always wear this shift on its sleeves. Nevertheless, he does eventually give indications which show that his main focus is on those acts of understanding which are conditions for our *representing* (becoming conscious of) certain representations (intuitions)—first, their being perceived (in “empirical *consciousness*” of them; B160; emphasis added), and then, their contributing to experience (empirical “*cognition*” of objects “through connected perceptions”; B161). Similarly, the “representation of space” which is claimed only to be possible under such acts is once again the *concept* of space, not the original intuition.

At the outset of the B-Deduction, Kant again reminds us of key findings from TAe: that “the *manifold* of representations can be *given* in one intuition that is merely sensible, i.e., is nothing but receptivity”, and also that “the *form* of this intuition”—that is, that in which the manifold that the (empirical) intuition contains is ordered through the synopsis of sense—“can *lie a priori* in our faculty of representation” (B129; emphasis added). What the senses are not able to contribute on their own, Kant then claims, is the *representation of* combination in the object: “We can *represent* nothing *as combined* in the object without having previously combined it ourselves”, by means of a “*synthesis*” which is “an action of the understanding” (B130; emphasis added). Once again, if taken out of context, this (and nearby sentences) might make it sound like Kant thinks there could not *be* any unity of a plurality present anywhere, if an act of the understanding did not first make it so unified. Nevertheless, once contextualised, we can see that things need not be read in this manner, since we have already seen Kant in general shifting his target from what is constitutive of a *representation* (intuition) *per se* to what is required for the *representation of* (certain features of) *a representation*.

A similar point should be made about Kant's claim in §20 of the B-Deduction that the "manifold that is given in a sensible intuition necessarily belongs under the original synthetic unity of apperception, since through this alone is the *unity of the intuition* possible (§17)" (B143; emphasis added). As the reference back to §17 indicates, the "*unity of the intuition*" that is under discussion is not the unity primitively had by a single intuition (or the absolute unity conferred on the manifold by being *given* "in a moment"; A99), but rather the unity the intuition must possess if it is to be "capable of being *combined in one consciousness*" (B136–7; emphasis added), that is, the unity that would pertain to the consciousness (representation) *of* the intuition, rather than the intuition per se. As he himself emphasises in this section, Kant is concerned with the conditions "under which every intuition must stand *in order to become an object for me*" (B138)—that is, for the intuition itself to be represented by me in a consciousness of an object—and not the conditions under which every intuition must stand in order to simply *be* an intuition "in" me in the first place.

The same sort of shift, finally, can also be tracked in what is surely now the most well-known footnote in the entire B-Deduction, and what would seem to be the most important single text for conceptualist and intellectualist interpreters of Kant's views on the intuition of space. This passage is even more compressed than the previous ones, and perhaps for this reason there are many different directions that this text has been taken. Here I shall limit myself to simply charting out a reading which is consistent with the text but which does not in any way require any conceptualist or intellectualist revisions to the doctrine of the autonomy, independence and priority of the original intuition of space as it has been articulated above.²⁵

What has suggested such a revision to some of Kant's readers is, once again, a claim Kant makes here about a certain "unity" in relation to the intuition of space, to the effect that, while in TAe he "had ascribed this unity merely to sensibility", he now admits that it "presupposes a synthesis, which does not belong to the senses" (B160–1n.). However, being on

²⁵ For a careful and much more thorough analysis of this footnote that is broadly in line with the nonconceptualist reading I am defending here, see Onof and Schulting (2015).

guard, as we now are, about a variety of unities which might be in question, and the variety of *representations* of space which might have such unities, we must try to discern which unity and which representation he means to be referring to. Tellingly, Kant begins by talking, not about the originary *intuition* of space and its unity, but rather about “space, *represented as object* (as is really required in *geometry*)” (B160n.; emphasis added), and the unity of *this* representation of space. This representation, we are told, “contains more than the mere form of intuition, namely the *comprehension* [*Zusammenfassung*; i.e. a grasping-together] of the manifold, given in accordance with the form of sensibility, into an *intuitive representation* [*anschauliche Vorstellung*]” (B160n.; trans. amended and my underlining). It is *this* “intuitive representation” of space, then—the intuition-involving representation of space as it occurs “in geometry”, and not the original intuition of space—which is said to “contain” a “grasping-together” and whose unity is therefore said to “presuppose a synthesis, which does not belong to the senses”. (As Kant says later, synthesis is necessary for any *apprehension* whatsoever; B206.) But then, the claim here pertains only to the *representations of intuitions* “*as intuitions*”: synthesis is here claimed to be necessary only for the intuitions themselves to be first “*given as intuitions*” (B161n.; my underlining), as objects of concepts (of consciousness).

All of these added features of the description of the particular representation of space in question, then, allow this footnote to be read as claiming merely that a synthesis by the understanding is “presupposed” by *some* representation of space that was discussed in TAE. As we have seen, however, this is in no way sufficient to entail that it is specifically the originary *intuition* of space from the Metaphysical Exposition which “presupposes” such synthesis, since Kant could very well be talking instead about one of the two other *conceptual* representations of space which are “derivative” of this representation: the a priori metaphysical concept of space or, more likely, the geometrical concepts of kinds of delimited space (figures) in space. The latter is more likely, given Kant’s explicit mention here of the involvement of an “intuitive representation”, since (as we saw above) the metaphysical (philosophical) representation of space proceeds according to concepts (and conceptual analysis) *alone*,

whereas the geometrical (mathematical) representation of space involves the construction of concepts “in” intuition.²⁶

Sure enough, a review of TAe confirms that Kant did not take the opportunity in either the Metaphysical or the Transcendental Expositions to place any explicit emphasis on the role of the *understanding* in the acts of delimitation “in thought”, construction, and so on, as a further condition for the possibility of distinctively geometrical representation. Indeed, *this* dependency only becomes highlighted in TD itself, and is more fully articulated only much later in the Analytic (cf. A160/B199). Note, however, that even after highlighting *this* dependence, Kant continues to reaffirm both the nonconceptuality of the content of intuitions and the independence of intuition and appearances from acts of understanding.²⁷

11.6 Conclusion

I have argued, first, that in the Critical period, Kant is working with a threefold distinction between a priori representations of the space of outer appearances: (i) the originary intuition of this space; (ii) the conceptual

²⁶ Friedman rejects the idea that Kant is here discussing explicitly geometrical representations (representations constructed in the science of geometry), because he thinks Kant must be talking about a more primitive representation presupposed by all geometrical representation (cf. Friedman 2015). This may be so, since Kant does say here that it “precedes all concepts”—presumably, all concepts of spaces (cf. Longuenesse 1998b). Yet as we have seen above in the discussion of the Kästner remarks, there are still further representations of space intermediate (as it were) between the original intuition and its geometrical representation, all of which are still “derivative” of the “originary” intuition—most notably, the a priori concept of space which is “expounded” in transcendental philosophy. Furthermore, Friedman has not made the case that the metaphysically “given” *concept* of space itself will need to incorporate the specifically “kinematic” activity (or kinematic unification of perspectives thanks to apperception) into its content that Friedman’s reading of the representation at issue in B160n. presupposes (cf. Friedman 2012 and 2015). This itself leaves open the possibility that *both* the original intuition of space *and* the metaphysical concept of space lack consciousness of the kinematic perspective-structure that Friedman sees as a condition for the possibility of the *geometrical* representation of space, and that this content is only represented distinctly subsequent to geometry itself, rather than in the original intuition or metaphysical concept of space.

²⁷ At the outset of the Schematism, for example, Kant writes that “no one would say that the *category*, e.g., causality, could also be intuited through the senses and is contained in the appearance” (A137–8/B176–7; emphasis added). And again, at the beginning of the Dialectic, Kant claims that “a representation of sense ... contains no *judgment* at all” (A294/B350; emphasis added). And in the chapter on Phenomena and Noumena, Kant describes the situation that obtains “if I take all *thinking* (through *categories*) away from an empirical cognition” as leaving in place “mere [*bloÙe*] intuition” (A253/B309; emphasis added).

metaphysical representation of this space as object, and as to some of its features; and (iii) the at once conceptual and “intuitive” representation of this space in geometrical construction. I have then argued, secondly, that attention to this threefold distinction allows us to retain a traditional nonconceptualist, non-intellectualist interpretation of Kant’s position on the original intuition of space throughout the *Critique*, according to which, even in the course of (and after) TD, Kant upholds the autonomy of this intuition over and against the understanding and its acts. To be sure, bringing to light the more complete consistency of the traditional reading does not itself suffice to refute the revisionary readings. Nevertheless, I hope the foregoing has at least helped open up a path for the traditionalist to follow through some of the more notoriously dense thickets of the *Analytic of Concepts*, as well as brought to light further nuances in Kant’s Critical account of space.²⁸

²⁸ I would like to thank Lucy Allais, Karl Ameriks, Rosalind Chaplin, Dennis Schulting, the UCSD German Philosophy Research Group, an anonymous referee and especially Eric Watkins for helpful discussion and feedback on earlier drafts of this material.