
Perception, extension and space: Fichte's final brush strokes on Kant's canvas

Percepción, extensión y espacio: la pincelada final de Fichte sobre el lienzo kantiano

M. JORGE DE CARVALHO

Universidade Nova de Lisboa
Departamento de Filosofia
1069-061 Lisboa (Portugal)
mjcarv@gmail.com

Abstract: This paper considers the 1810-11 version of the *Thatsachen des Bewusstseins* as Fichte's final brush strokes on Kant's canvas. It takes a closer look at Kant's claim that there is no such thing as a merely partial representation of space. The question is: what shape does this doctrine take in Fichte's *Thatsachen des Bewusstseins*? On the one hand, there is something very similar to Kant's view in Fichte's analysis of external perception (*äußere Wahrnehmung*) and its essential components. On the other hand, this superficial resemblance disguises a deeper dissimilarity: almost everything Fichte says on this subject entails a significant shift away from Kant.

Keywords: Kant; Fichte; space; extension; external perception; form of representation; *totum analyticum / syntheticum; compositum ideale / reale / formale*.

Resumen: Este artículo examina la versión de 1810-1811 de *Thatsachen des Bewusstseins* y el modo como este texto presenta la pincelada final de Fichte sobre el lienzo de Kant. Examina la tesis kantiana de que no hay ninguna representación meramente parcial del espacio. La cuestión es: ¿qué forma adopta esta doctrina en las *Thatsachen des Bewusstseins* de Fichte? Por una parte, en el análisis de Fichte de la percepción externa (*äußere Wahrnehmung*) y de sus componentes esenciales hay algo muy semejante a la tesis de Kant. Por otra parte, esta semejanza superficial esconde una profunda disimilitud: casi todo lo que Fichte afirma sobre esta materia representa un significativo alejamiento de Kant.

Palabras clave: Kant; Fichte; espacio; extensión; percepción externa; forma de la representación; *totum analyticum / syntheticum; compositum ideale / reale / formale*.

RECIBIDO: NOVIEMBRE DE 2015 / ACEPTADO: OCTUBRE DE 2016

DOI: 10.15581/009.52.1.43-85

This article takes a look at Fichte's final brush strokes on Kant's canvas. The final brush strokes we are talking about are to be found in Fichte's *Thatsachen des Bewusstseins*, especially in the two lectures given by him during the Winter Semesters of 1810-11 and 1811-12.¹ These two lectures have a great deal in common, and there is much to gain from a combined analysis of them. But time does not permit us to embark on such an endeavour here. We therefore limit ourselves to a closer look at the 1810-11 version of the *Thatsachen des Bewusstseins* and at how it presents Fichte's final brush strokes on Kant's canvas.

There is a twofold reason why we can say that Fichte is painting, as it were, on Kant's canvas. On the one hand, in terms of approach and framework, Fichte's analysis of what he terms 'facts of consciousness' is the version of his later thought that differs the least from Kant's 'transcendental doctrine of elements'. And the point is that Fichte went on trying to improve his account of the 'facts of consciousness' almost literally until the end of his life. The 1810-11 lectures are a sample of these 'final brush strokes'. On the other hand, there is a striking similarity between the content of these lectures and Kant's thought. Many of the *basic concepts* and many of the *fundamental claims* seem to be the same—and indeed so much so that, at least at first sight, Fichte's *Thatsachen des Bewusstseins* can give the impression of following the blueprint of Kantian philosophy: of presenting a compromise version, as it were (a 'Kantian Fichte' or a *potpourri* of Fichtean and Kantian thoughts).

However, closer inspection shows something surprising. Almost everything Fichte says in his *Facts of Consciousness* entails a significant shift away from Kant. As the Stranger warns us in Plato's *Sophist*, anyone not wanting to fall flat on his or her face must be especially on guard concerning resemblances, for resemblance is "an extremely slippery kind of thing" (ὅλισθηρότατον γὰρ τὸ γένος).²

1. J. G. FICHTE, *GA* II/12, 21-77. The 1813 *Thatsachen des Bewusstseins* (*GA* II/15, 35-128 and *GA* IV/6, 157-265) take a very different route. In their case Fichte is no longer painting on Kant's canvas, but rather on his own.
2. PLATO, *Sophist* 231a: "τὸν δὲ ἀσφαλῆ δεῖ πάντων μάλιστα περὶ τὰς ὄμοιότητας ἀεὶ ποιεῖσθαι τὴν φυλακῆν· ὅλισθηρότατον γάρ τὸ γένος."

And the fact is that in this case, too, *superficial resemblance* provides a cloak for nothing short of *utter dissimilarity*. To be sure, Fichte is painting on Kant's canvas. But the fact is that his brush strokes change *the painting into something else* (into the image of *something else*). This is intriguing, and all the more reason to study Fichte's *Facts of Consciousness* in this light, not least because studying like this forces us to sharpen our eyes, and because the 'contrast' between Kant's 'canvas' and Fichte's 'brush strokes' can help us grasp the specificity of Fichte's thought.

But this is where the so-called *Realitätsprinzip* steps in and reminds us that the task we are talking about goes far beyond the scope of a 30-page article—and that there is no point in trying to tie it to such a *Procrustean bed*. We must therefore lower our aim and content ourselves with analysing a small part of the canvas (viz. a small part of Fichte's brush strokes on Kant's canvas). The part we choose to consider has to do with one of the cornerstones of Kant's *Transcendental Aesthetic*, namely Kant's claim that there is no such thing as a *merely partial representation of space* (or as *separated representations of parts of space*): that "one can only represent a single space, and if one speaks of many spaces, one understands by that only parts of one and the same unique space", for "these parts cannot, as it were, precede the single all-encompassing space as its components (from which its composition would be possible), but rather are only represented in it"³ (i.e. in the framework of the representation of "one and the same unique space").

Kant's point is that on closer inspection it emerges that the representation of any restricted amount of space (any representation

3. I. KANT, *KrV* B 39, A 25: "Denn erstlich kann man sich nur einen einigen Raum vorstellen, und wenn man von vielen Räumen redet, so versteht man darunter nur Theile eines und desselben alleinigen Raumes. Diese Theile können auch nicht vor dem einigen, allbefassenden Raume gleichsam als dessen Bestandtheile (daraus seine Zusammensetzung möglich sei) vorhergehen, sondern nur in ihm gedacht werden. Er ist wesentlich einig, das Mannigfaltige in ihm, mithin auch der allgemeine Begriff von Räumen überhaupt beruht lediglich auf Einschränkungen." Translation borrowed from I. KANT, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Translated and edited by P. Guyer and A. W. Wood (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998) 175.

that seems to represent *just a limited piece of space*) entails more than just the representation of the limited piece of space in question: for it is not possible *without some representation of the surrounding space*, and the latter, in turn, is not possible without some representation of the space surrounding it, *and so on and so forth*—in such a manner that this ‘and so on and so forth’ is part and parcel of (and a condition *sine qua non* for) the representation of the restricted amount of space in question. In other words, according to Kant, a *point* can only be represented in the framework of the representation of a *line* (as a *limitation* of a line); a *line* can only be represented in the framework of the representation of a *surface* (as a *limitation* of a surface); a *surface* can only be represented in the framework of the representation of a *three-dimensional space* (as a *limitation* of a three-dimensional space); and any limited three-dimensional space can only be represented in the framework of the representation of a *wider three-dimensional space* (i.e., as a *limitation* of a wider space). As Kant puts it in one of his *Reflexionen*: “Man kan sich keinen Raum, e.g. Cubicfuß, denken, ohne einen äusseren Raum, der ihn umgibt, und also keinen Raum ohne in dem Ganzen enthalten. Imgleichen keine zwei Räume ohne eine bestimte Entfernung und Lage gegen einander”.⁴ And the same idea is expressed in the 1770 Inaugural *Dissertation*: “Conceptus spatii est singularis repraesentatio omnia *in se* comprehendens (...). Quae enim dicis *spatia plura*, non sunt nisi eiusdem immensi spatii partes, certo positu se invicem respicientes, neque pedem cubicum concipere tibi potes, nisi ambienti spatio quaquaversum conterminum.”⁵

Kant’s point is that the *absolute minimum* required for there to be *any* representation of space is nothing less than some kind of representation of *it all*. No part of the manifold in question (no ‘spatial content’) is possible without the representation of *all the others*. It is therefore a question of *either all or nothing*—*tertium non datur*. This means that the representation of space has the nature of what Kant terms a *totum analyticum*⁶, as opposed to a *totum syntheticum*.⁷ Or, as

4. I. KANT, *Refl.* 4071, *AA* XVII, 404.

5. I. KANT, *De mundi sensibilis atque intelligibilis forma et principiis*, §15, B, *AA* II, 402.

6. I. KANT, *Refl.* 3789, *AA* XVII, 293.

7. I. KANT, *Refl.* 3789, *AA* XVII, 293.

he also puts it, space is a *compositum ideale*⁸, not a *compositum reale*;⁹ it is a *compositum originarie tale*, not a *compositum derivative tale*.¹⁰ Kant varies his terminology, so that he also speaks of a *compositum formale*,¹¹ of a *quantum originarium*¹² or *ursprüngliches Quantum*,¹³ of a *quantum analyticum*,¹⁴ of *quantum sed non compositum*¹⁵ or simply of a *totum*.¹⁶

This is not the place to examine all these concepts and the many passages in which they are to be found. Let it suffice to highlight some main points.

In *Reflexion* 4425 Kant writes the following:

Spatium est quantum, sed non compositum. Weil der Raum nicht entspringt, indem die Theile gesetzt werden, sondern die Theile nur möglich sind durch den Raum; ebenso die Zeit. Die Theile lassen sich wohl besonders *abstrahendo a caeteris*, aber *nicht removendo caetera* gedenken. Und sie lassen sich also discernieren, aber nicht separieren, und die *divisio non est realis, sed logica*.¹⁷

The very same idea is expressed in the so-called *Metaphysik L₂*:

-
- 8. I. KANT, *Refl.* 5299, 5305, 5306, 5307, 5316, 5869, 5885, *AA* XVIII, 147, 149, 151, 372 and 376, *Metaphysik L₂*, *AA* XXVIII, 565, *Metaphysik Dohna*, *AA* XXVIII, 641, and *Metaphysik Mrongovius*, *AA* XXIX, 825ff.
 - 9. I. KANT, *KrV*, B262, 466, *Refl.* 4943, 5299, 5842, 5869, *AA* XVIII, 36, 147f., 367, and 372, *Metaphysik Herder* *AA* XXVIII, 31, *Metaphysik Volckmann*, *AA* XXVIII, 435ff., *Metaphysik von Schön*, *AA* XXVIII, 516-517, *Metaphysik L₂*, *AA* XXVIII, 565, *Metaphysik Dohna*, *AA* XXVIII, 641, *Nachträge Herder*, *AA* XXVIII, 847ff., and *Metaphysik Mrongovius*, *AA* XXIX, 825f.
 - 10. I. KANT, *Refl.* 5882, *AA* XVIII, 375f.
 - 11. I. KANT, *Metaphysik L₂*, *AA* XXVIII, 566.
 - 12. I. KANT, *Refl.* 5593, *AA* XVIII, 243.
 - 13. I. KANT, *KrV A* 411/B438.
 - 14. I. KANT, *Refl.* 4424, *AA* XVII, 540f.
 - 15. I. KANT, *Refl.* 4425, *AA* XVII, 541.
 - 16. I. KANT, *KrV*, A 438/B466.
 - 17. I. KANT, *Refl.* 4425, *AA* XVII, 541. On the contrast between *divisio realis* and *divisio logica*, see notably *Refl.* 5889, *AA* XVII, 376, *Refl.* 3021, 3029, and 3030, *AA* XVI, 619-20 and 622-623, *Refl.* 3890, *AA* XVII, 328-329, *Opus Postumum*, *AA* XXII, 307, *Logik Jäsche*, *AA* IX, 146f.

Der Begriff eines compositi setzt Theile voraus. Wenn die Theile eines compositi vor der Composition gegeben werden können, so ist es ein compositum reale. Können sie aber nicht vor der Composition gegeben werden, so ists ein compositum ideale. Es scheint zwar, als wenn die Theile vor der Composition immer gedacht werden könnten, und es also keine composita idealia gäbe; es gibt aber wirklich solche, als Raum und Zeit. Im Raum kann man sich keine Theile denken, ohne zuerst das Ganze zu denken.¹⁸

And one page further on he remarks:

Ein compositum formale ist, dessen Theile nicht anders vor gestellt werden können, als in der Zusammensetzung; sie lassen sich abgesondert nichth denken. Ich kann mir wohl Theile vom Raum vorstellen: aber die Idee des Ganzen liegt dabei immer zum Grunde. Es ist nur ein einiger Raum.¹⁹

Two other “Reflexionen” can help us better understand Kant’s point. *Refl.* 3789 reads as follows:

Ein *totum syntheticum* ist, dessen Zusammensetzung sich der möglichkeit nach auf die Theile gründet, die auch ohne [diese] alle zusammensetzung sich dencken lassen. Ein *totum analyticum* ist, dessen Theile ihrer Möglichkeit nach schon die Zusammensetzung im ganzen voraussetzen. *Spatium und tempus sind tota analytica, die cörper synthetica. Compositum ex substantiis est totum syntheticum. Totum analyticum nec est compositum ex substantiis nec ex accidentibus, sed totum possibilium relationum.*²⁰

And finally, in *Refl.* 5882 Latin’s characteristic conciseness enables Kant to sum up his view in a very clear and compelling manner:

18. I. KANT, *AA* XXVIII, 565.

19. I. KANT, *AA* XXVIII, 566.

20. I. KANT, *AA* XVII, 293.

“Compositum vel originarie vel derivative tale. Prius, cuius compositione omni sublata nihil remanet, cuius divisio antecedit compositionem; cuius autem compositio antecedit omnem divisionem est derivativum.”²¹

To sum up, in Kant's view the manifold space is all about is characterized by the fact a) that it has no simple elements, for b) everything in it is intrinsically related to other components of the manifold in question, so that if you take away the relation between them,²² *nothing remains* (i.e. there is no spatial content left),²³ and, what is more, c) not only is every component of space intrinsically related to a manifold of other components (so that it cannot take place without them), but the point is that every component of space is intrinsically related (and defined by its relation) to *all the others*: to the *whole* infinite manifold of space, so that d) this particular kind of content—space—*cannot* be represented by successive *instalments*: the whole thing must be represented *uno tenore*, ‘*all of a piece*’ (‘in one fell swoop’, as it were).²⁴

21. I. KANT, *AA* XVIII, 375f. A passage from the 1770 *Dissertation* has a very similar wording: “Continuum enim est quantum, quod non constat simplicibus. Quia autem per tempus non cogitantur nisi relationes absque datis ullis entibus erga se invicem relatis, in tempore, ceu quanto, est compositio, quae, si tota sublata concipiatur, nihil plane reliqui facit. Cuius autem compositi, sublata omni compositione, nihil omnino remanet, illud non constat partibus simplicibus.” *De mundi sensibili atque intelligibili forma et principiis*, § 14.2, *AA* II, 399.

22. I.e., if you take away the manifold.

23. “(...) compositione omni sublata nihil remanet (...”).

24. We can also express this by saying that the *absolute minimum* required for there to be *any* representation of space is nothing less than the *compraesentia omnium* viz. the *omnipraesentia phaenomenon* Kant refers to in his 1770 *Inaugural Dissertation* (§22, scholion, *AA* II, 410). See also Ref. 4215, *AA* XVII, 460 (“dato spatio datur possibilis compraesentiae plurimum, ast non possibilis est plurimum compraesentia nisi posito existente principio communi; ergo dato spatio concludi potest ad ens aliquod primum. sed est unicum spatium; ergo concluditur ad causam primam unicam. itidem est necessarium, quatenus est mera possibilis; ergo concluditur ad necessariam”) and *Opus Postumum*, *AA* XXII, 526: “Die Gegenwart (praesentia) Eines Gegenstandes im Raum ist im Begriffe vom Raum zugleich Allgegenwart (*omnipraesentia*) d.i. durchgängig bestimmt und es ist nur Ein Raum und Eine Zeit”. It goes without saying that what we are dealing with here is a very particular kind of *omnipraesentia* or *omnipresence*. It is *entirely phenomenal* and therefore has nothing to do with an attribute of God. In his *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft*, *AA* VI, 138, Kant translates *omnipraesentia phaenomenon* as *Allgegenwart in der Erscheinung*, i. e., *omnipresence in appearance* or “phenomenal omnipresence” (the “phenomenal version of omnipresence”, so to speak). This is

Let me put the gist of it in ‘pidgin Latin’: what characterizes space is, as it were, a *compositio originalis* (the elements of the manifold in question *do not precede it*: they are only possible *in it*);²⁵ this *compositio originalis* is at the same time a *compositio abundans* viz. *superfluens*: it is intrinsically *overflowing*: no part of this manifold can be represented without representing *more than just the part in question*; and, as a result the *compositio originalis* we are talking about is by its very nature a *compositio totalis*: the representation of space is possible only as the representation of an *infinite totality*, i. e., as an *infinite representation*.

But this is not all. For on the other hand, this view is complemented and strengthened by Kant’s claim that space (viz. space-representation) is a *continuum*. But what does this mean? Kant points out that there is *no contiguity in space*: any two components of the spatial manifold, no matter how close to each other, are connected by nothing less than *an infinitely complex net of relations*. Or, as he puts it in *RefL. 5382*²⁶:

Der Satz der continuitaet will nur sagen: *alle diversa sind remota*, d. i. sie sind nicht anders in Verknüpfung als *per intermedia*, wozwischen der Unterschied noch kleiner ist. D. i. kein Unterschied ist der kleinste, weil kein Uebergang elementar ist und der kleineste ist, also immer eine Größe hat.²⁷

Any two non-identical moments of space are ‘remota’: they are *distant* from each other—and indeed *infinitely distant* from each other; and the transition from one to the other takes an infinite number of steps. In other words, every part of space—i.e. even the smallest part

not the place to dwell on this topic in any detail. Let it suffice to recall that the key point is the *essential connection between all partial representations of different spaces*. In other words, the key is Kant’s claim that none of them is possible without *all* the others. As a result, they must all be *co-present in each other* (and *to each other*), and the whole space is present in each of its parts (i.e. the representation of the *whole* is present in the representation of each of its parts).

25. That is, there is *nothing prior to compositio* (to *synthesis*).

26. In his typical mix of German and Latin.

27. I. KANT, *AA XVIII*, 167.

of space—is still itself space (that is, an infinite network of relations). And there is *no ultimate or atomic spatial content*. Everything in space is *infinitely far from being an ultimate or atomic spatial content*.²⁸

Now, this changes the picture and adds a further dimension to the essential complexity of space-representation. Continuity multiplies—exponentially—what we have termed the *overflowing* character of all space-representation. It is not just that the representation of any restricted amount of space must be embedded in the representation of a *surrounding* space (and indeed of a space *surrounding the surrounding space*, and so on and so forth *into infinity*). The point is that the representation of any restricted amount of space is of such a nature that it includes *in itself* (i.e., *inside its own frame*) an implicit manifold of more and more *space within space* (of more and more *spatial relations within spatial relations*). And this means that any representation of a given part of space is, as it were, *sandwiched* between two immense networks of underlying representations (or is the tip of two representational ‘icebergs’), namely: a) the underlying representation of more and more *surrounding* space, and b) the underlying representation of more and more *surrounded* space. In short, the representation of space is intrinsically infinite not just because it always spreads into the *infinitely large* but because at the same time it always spreads into the *infinitely small*. And this is why Kant speaks of space and time as “For men, ins unendliche zu vergrößern oder zu verkleinern” (as “forms of making larger and smaller ad infinitum”): “Wären Raum und Zeit [als unendlich] etwas an sich gegebenes, so müßten sie als unendliche Größen betrachtet werden. Nun sind sie nichts als Formen, ins unendliche zu vergrößern oder zu verkleinern”.²⁹

28. Cf. notably I. KANT, Refl. 5845 (*AA* XVII, 368)—[*Spatium, cuius partes omnes possibilis sunt qvanta, est continuum. ergo quod non constat simplicibus. Ergo in quo, qvot sint partes, per se est indeterminatum. Ergo qvodlibet phaenomenon.*]—and Refl. 5846: “Das *quantum*, worin alle qvantitaet allein bestimt werden kan, ist in ansehung der Menge der Theile unbestimt und *continuum*. Raum und Zeit.” The upshot is that in the network of relations space is all about there is *nothing ‘simple’, nothing ‘non-relational’*. In other words, space stands, as it were, for an “absolute relation”. Cf. Refl. 5885 (*AA* XVIII, 376): “Raum und Zeit sind *composita idealia*, weder von substantzen noch accidentien, sondern von relationen, die vor Dingen vorhergehen.”

29. I. KANT, Refl. 6420, *AA* XXVIII, 711.

This being said, it must be added that none of this means that the representation of space provides a clear and distinct overview of all its components viz. of the *infinite* (of the “infinitely infinite”) *quantity* it is always about. In fact, it is quite the reverse. Kant’s point is that the “infinitely large” and the “infinitely small”—the two infinite ‘representational icebergs’—he is talking about have to do with *confused representations*, including far, far more than what they are able to distinguish separately. In other words, the point is that the two infinite ‘representational icebergs’ in question are intrinsically *confused*,³⁰ and that every representation of space comprises both a *distinctly represented amount* of space and the two said ‘plethora’ of confused representations (viz. the two said infinite ‘representational icebergs’). We can also express this by saying that, in Kant’s view, any representation of space whatsoever *cuts out*, as it were, a restricted amount of space—N. B. a) a restricted amount of *distinctly represented* space and b) a *variable* restricted amount of space—from the *invariable* substructure of the two said ‘plethora’ of *confused* representations (viz. of the two said infinite ‘representational icebergs’). For Kant, it is as important to stress that every representation of a restricted amount of space entails (and is embedded in) the two said infinite ‘representational icebergs’ (so that it is not possible without them) as it is important to stress that the two infinite ‘representational icebergs’ in question always play the role of the ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ periphery of a *centred perspective*—namely of a representation that has its centre in some restricted (that is, in some *distinctly represented*) amount of space.³¹

30. I. e., *repraesentationes confusae* in the traditional philosophical sense of the term.

31. Kant’s doctrine on space and time as *tota analytica* has not been given due prominence, although it is without doubt one of the centrepieces—and indeed the centrepiece—of his “Transcendental Aesthetic”. This is not the place to discuss this topic in any detail. But it should be noted that all the main claims in the first part of the so-called “transcendental doctrine of elements” (and therefore some of Kant’s main claims on the whole transcendental framework) stand and fall with his views on the *totum analyticum* (and on space and time as *tota analytica*). Let us consider just one topic. A careful examination of the “metaphysical exposition” (*metaphysische Erörterung*) both of space and time (A 22f., A 31f./B 37f., B 46 f.) shows: 1) that a) the first *three* (in the second edition, the first *two*) points of the “metaphysical exposition” of space and b) the first *three* points of the “metaphysical

exposition” of time offer sufficient evidence that both space and time have features inconsistent with sensation (with space or time being sensations, sets of sensations or anything of the kind), but 2) that this evidence is not enough to exclude the possibility that the features in question (that is, what makes space and time something completely different from sensations, sets of sensations and the like) might turn out to be the result of a *two-step* representation, based on some *empirical* contact with parts of space or time, that are then transformed by means of what Hellenistic philosophers termed a μετάβασις κατὰ τὸ ὄμοιον or τοῦ ὄμοιον μετάβασις (a “transition to the similar”, i. e. a *generalisation*—in this case an extraordinary generalisation reflecting the empirical *ubiquity* of space and time). In other words, the first three (viz. the first two) points of the “metaphysical expositions” we are talking about are not enough to exclude the possibility that space and time might turn out to be something utterly different from *pure and full-fledged a priori representations*. Now, this means that the real *nervus probandi* of the two “metaphysical expositions” in question lies in their 4th and 5th (viz. 3rd and 4th) points, where Kant tries to prove a) that there can be no such thing as a merely partial representation of space or time (or as separated representations of parts of space or time), and b) that any representation of space or time is a *continuum*. For both the former and the latter imply that, in the case of space and time, the “less” can only be represented in the framework of the “more”, and there can be no such thing as a *two-step* representation: everything must take place *uno tenore* (“all in one go”). In short, Kant’s pivotal claim that space and time are *a priori* representations stands and falls with his claim that they are *tota analytica*. This latter claim is, as it were, the ποῦ στῶ or Archimedean point of “Transcendental Aesthetic”. Put another way: in Refl. 4189 (*AA XVII*, 450) Kant writes: “Weil wir nicht blos den Raum des obiects, was unsre sinne röhrt, sondern den Gantzen Raum anschauend erkennen, so muß der Raum nicht blos aus der wirklichen rührung der Sinne entspringen, sondern vor ihr vorhergehen”; but, in the final analysis, this pivotal argument is based entirely on the *totum analyticum* claim. Although, as pointed out above, this central topic has not been given due prominence, it has not escaped the notice of some scholars. See notably A. J. DIETRICH, *Kants Begriff des Ganzen in seiner Raum-Zeitlehre* und das Verhältnis zu Leibniz (Niemeyer, Halle (Saale), 1916, repr. Olms, Hildesheim/Zürich/N.Y., 1977), H. VAIHINGER, *Kommentar zu Kants Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, ed. by R. Schmidt (Union Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft, Stuttgart/Berlin/Leipzig, 1922², repr. Scientia, Stuttgart, 1970) vol. II, 217ff., 223ff., 226f., P. LACHIEZÉ-REY, *L'idéalisme kantien* (Alcan, Paris, 1931) 347f., U. RAMEIL, *Raum und Außenwelt. Interpretationen zu Kants kritischem Idealismus* (Hansen, Köln, 1977) 197, G. WOHLFAHRT, *Ist der Raum eine Idee? Bemerkungen zur transzendentalen Ästhetik Kants*, “Kant-Studien” 71 (1980), 137–154, R. HENRICH, *Kants Erfahrungsraum: metaphysischer Ursprung und kritische Entwicklung* (Alber, Freiburg/München, 1986), T. NENON, *Objektivität und endliche Erkenntnis bei Kant. Kants transzentalphilosophische Korrespondenztheorie der Wahrheit* (Alber, Freiburg/München, 1986), 151ff., 235, M. THOMPSON, *Unity, Plurality and Totality as Kantian Categories*, “The Monist” 72 (1989), 168–189, P. UNRUH, *Transzendentale Ästhetik des Raumes: zu Immanuel Kants Raumkonzeption* (Königshausen & Neumann, Würzburg, 2007) 199ff., and O. BOEHM, *Kant’s Critique of Spinoza* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2014) 88f. Some of these studies pay attention

*

Now, the question is: what becomes of this under Fichte's brush? Does Fichte accept this centrepiece of Kant's *Transcendental Aesthetic*? And if so, what shape does this doctrine take in his *Thatsachen des Bewusstseins* from 1810/11? The answer to the first question must be affirmative: there is something very similar to this view in the first chapter of the said lectures, namely in Fichte's analysis of external perception (*äußere Wahrnehmung*) and its essential components. The degree of similarity is such that at first sight it may seem that Fichte does no more than present an epigonic version of Kant's doctrine.

But let us take a closer look at Fichte's brush strokes. We must concentrate on some main aspects of his analysis, for even an outline of the whole would go far beyond the scope of this article.

Fichte points out that external perception (*äußere Wahrnehmung*) is made up of three different components, namely a) *affection* (*Affektion*) or *sensation* (*Empfindung*), b) *extension in space* (*Ausdehnung im Raume*), and c) *thinking* (*Denken*).

With regard to the first component, *affection* or *sensation*, he emphasizes three points. First, affection or sensation is a *material quality* (*materiale Qualität*).³² Secondly, this material quality is a “determined limitation” (*eine bestimmte Beschränkung*) of the external sense³³—i. e., it “is a limitation of the general sense to this particu-

to the more general aspects, but others (in particular Dietrich's and Henrich's books) explore the very intricate maze of Kant's scattered remarks on this subject. Incidentally, it should be *borne* in mind that, regardless of the fact that there is a remarkable divergence between Leibniz and Kant concerning space and extension, the idea of space viz. extension as a “totum analyticum” (viz. the idea that “in idealibus totum est prius parte”) is to be found, *avant la lettre*, in Leibniz's writings. See notably G. W. LEIBNIZ, *Die philosophischen Schriften*, ed. by I. C. Gerhard (Weidmann, Berlin 1875-1890, repr. Olms, Hildesheim, 1978) vol. II, 379, 622f., vol. IV, 491f., Nouveaux Essais II, 17.3, vol. V, 145, and vol. VII, 461, 467f., 523, 562.

32. *GA* II/12, 25. Translations borrowed from Adolph Ernst Kroeger, with changes. Cf. “The Journal of Speculative Philosophy” 5 (1871) 53-60, 130-143, 226-231, 338-349, 6 (1872) 42-52, 120-125, 332-340, 7 (1873) 36-42, 17 (1883) 130-141, 263-283, and 18 (1884) 47-71, 152-161.

33. *GA* II/12, 24, 39.

lar way of having the senses affected” (*eine Beschränkung des Sinnes überhaupt auf diese bestimmte Weise, des Empfangens durch den Sinn*); in other words, sensation or affection has to do with the ‘contraction’ or limitation of something *general* (namely *sense*, i.e. the *possibility of several contrasting affections* or of *several contrasting qualities*) into something *specific* (this or that determined affection or ‘material quality’). Thirdly, every sensation is but an *immanent* feature or component of *sense itself* (every *colour* is an *immanent* feature or component of *seeing*, etc.). Or, as he puts it, ‘that which intuits’ (*das Anschauende*) “can perceive such an affection or limitation only in and to itself” (*kann nur an und in sich selbst eine solche Anschauung wahrnehmen*),³⁴ so that an affection or sensation is nothing else than a “self-intuition of a determined limitation of the external sense” (*eine Selbstanschauung einer bestimmten Beschränkung des äußeren Sinnes*). In short, contrary to what may seem to be the case, every affection or sensation—and this also means: the ‘material quality’ it is all about—has the form “*Ich fühle mich selbst so und so beschränkt*”³⁵ (*feeling myself thus and thus limited*). Affection or sensation is nothing but a ‘representational state’ (*consciousness of one’s own condition*).³⁶

With regard to the *third* component of external perception, namely thinking (*Denken*), Fichte emphasizes two main points.

First, external perception must include an *externalising* factor. Any external perception *goes out and beyond itself* (i.e. it goes *beyond or out of intuition*). It is—or claims to be—more than mere self-intuition (more than a mere ‘representational state’, more than just the ‘consciousness of one’s own condition’). And this “*Herausgehen aus der unmittelbaren Anschauung*”³⁷ (or rather this “*Herausgehen aus der bloßen Selbstanschauung*”³⁸, this “*Herausgehen aus dem Umkreise des Anschauenden*”³⁹, this “*Herausgehen aus dem Selbstbewußtseyn*”⁴⁰) is

34. *GA* II/12, 24.

35. *Ibidem*.

36. Cf. *GA* II/ 12, 30: “(...) lediglich Wahrnehmung des eigenen Zustandes, der da eben ist”.

37. *Ibidem*.

38. *GA* II/12, 25.

39. *GA* II/12, 24.

40. *Ibidem*.

indeed what *external* sensation is all about. The point in *external* sensation is that the ‘material quality’ in question “exists outside of me and altogether independently of me” (*außer mir, und durchaus unabhängig von mir*).⁴¹ That is, in external sensation self-intuition (a mere ‘representational state’: consciousness of one’s own condition) “pretends to be an intuition of objects existing by themselves and altogether beyond the sphere of the intuiting” (*diese Selbstanschauung [gibt] sich für eine Anschauung außerhalb des Umkreises des Anschauenden liegender an sich vorhandener Objecte [aus]*).⁴² And this is what makes external perception *external*.⁴³ Its content is, as Fichte puts it in the Second Part, “*aus dem eigentlichen Innern des Ich herausgesetzt*”.⁴⁴

Secondly, Fichte contends that the ‘externalising factor’ owing to which external perception claims to be *external* is none other than *thinking*. On the one hand, the externalizing factor is always *the same* (an *invariable* operator, as it were, that changes the form of the per-

41. *Ibidem*.

42. *GA* II/12, 25.

43. Fichte insists on this point (*GA* II/12, 25.): “It is an immediate fact that such a going beyond is really involved in mere external perception. Since we do really assume something independent of us and existing outside of us, instead of the simple perception of our external sense, which is what we perceive” (*Daß es nun aber ein solches Herausgeben schon in der äußern Wahrnehmung in der That gebe, ist uns unmittelbare Thatsache, indem wirklich und in der That statt der in uns wahrgenommenen Beschränkung des äußern Sinnes ec. ein Etwas außer uns und unabhängig von uns existierendes angenommen wird.*)

44. *GA* II/12, 58: “Und so ist denn auch der äußere Sinn nicht wirklicher Sinn, sondern nur das Bild des einigen wahrhaften Sinnes, der uns übrig bleibt, des innern Sinnes. Dieses alles hätte man auch schon in bloßer Beobachtung daraus schließen können, daß der Raum sowohl als der äußere Sinn aus dem eigentlichen Innern des Ich herausgesetzt, der letztere sogar zu einem Sinnenwerkzeuge verkörpert wird.” (underlining added for emphasis). Kroeger’s translation reads as follows: “Thus, then, the external sense is not an actual sense, but merely the image of the only true sense which remains, of the internal sense. All this might, in fact, have been discovered in mere observation from the circumstance that space as well as the external sense generally is posited outside of the real internal essence of the Ego, the external sense being even embodied into a tool of the senses.” It is not easy to find a suitable translation for “*herausgesetzt*”. The point is that the content of *external* perception (and this means: its “*externality*” itself—the very thing that makes it *external*) is posited *from within*: *aus dem eigentlichen Innern heraus* (from within the “real internal essence of the Ego”). We can also express this by saying that in Fichte’s view *external* perception is formed, as it were, “*from the inside out*”.

ceived material qualities)⁴⁵—“for there is only one object, since the asserted existence of something external and independent of us, which constitutes the real character of an object, belongs to all objects in the same manner” (*denn es ist überall nur eins, und das behauptete Daseyn außer uns und unabhängig von uns, das den eigentlichen Charakter eines Objects ausmacht, kommt allen auf dieselbe Weise zu*).⁴⁶ On the other hand, this invariable form—the object—“is neither felt, nor intuited, but altogether and solely thought (*daß das Object (...) nicht etwa empfunden, auch nicht angeschaut, sondern durchaus nur gedacht werde*).⁴⁷ In other words, according to Fichte, external perception is intrinsically shaped by something entirely other than self-intuition (or any consciousness of *one's own condition*); and this other factor owing to which self-intuition—or something pertaining to it—“becomes something external, an object” (*das was eigentlich an ihm [namely: am Anschauenden] wäre, zu einem Etwas außer ihm, zu einem Objekte [wird]*)⁴⁸ has nothing to do with intuition or self-intuition. It is a new kind of knowledge (*ein neues Wissen*)⁴⁹ or representation—and indeed the kind of knowledge or representation the word ‘thinking’ (*Denken*) stands for.⁵⁰

Now, all this has an important bearing on the second component of external perception—namely *extension in space* (*Ausdehnung im Raume*). For it means that, contrary to what may seem to be the case, *extension in space* (viz. space representation)⁵¹ is not the factor

45. Cf. *Ibidem*: “Now what does this thinking really achieve in external perception? Simply that it furnishes the form, the form of objective existence. Hence in the object we must distinguish two chief components, arising from different sources; firstly, the objective form, which originates through thinking, and, secondly, that which the object is assumed to be in itself, and which originates from the self-intuition of the intuiting (...).” (...)*was nun eigentlich leistet dieses Denken in der äußern Wahrnehmung? durchaus nichts weiter, als daß es ihr die Form giebt, die Form des objektiven Daseyns. Wir müssen daher im Objecte unterscheiden zwei Hauptbestandtheile, die aus sehr verschiedenen Quellen entspringen: die objective Form, entspringend aus dem Denken, und das, was dieses Object selbst seyn soll, entspringend aus der Sichanschauung des Anschauenden (...)*”.

46. *GA* II/12, 24.

47. *Ibidem*.

48. *Ibidem*.

49. *Ibidem*.

50. Cf. *GA* II/12, 24f.

51. Or at any rate what Fichte terms extension in space (*Ausdehnung im Raume*).

responsible for what we have termed *externalisation* (namely the externalisation of perception). In other words, according to Fichte, it is not space that makes external perception *external*. But if it does not make external perception external, what is the role played by ‘extension in space’? And what is extension in space all about? This question brings us to Fichte’s specific account of this second component of external perception.

As Fichte points out, ‘extension in space’ “is by no means a sensation, but utterly different from it” (*durchaus keine Empfindung, sondern himmelweit von ihr unterschieden*).⁵² But what interests us here is the reason why this is so. A given colour-sensation—for example, red—is “spread out (...) over a large space, which is precisely so large and no larger, and upon which this red colour is perhaps closely limited by an adjoining other colour”.⁵³ What is the content of the specific representation owing to which the colour in question is *spread out over a certain extension*?

First, Fichte emphasizes that the specific representation we are talking about has to do with *Theilen* or *Theilung* (with *dividing* or *division*)—or to be more precise, with a *manifold of division*—both in the sense that the *manifold* in question *results from division* and in the sense that the specific ‘representational content’ in question results from *multiple divisions* (from dividing-and-dividing-and-dividing, etc.). But the implicit point is also that the *Theilen* or *Theilung* (the *dividing* or *division*) extension in space is all about has the nature of an *activity*—so that activity (a particular kind of activity) is the stuff the specific representation we are talking about is made of.

Secondly, Fichte emphasizes that the division (the *Theilung* or *Theilen*) extension is all about *has no limit*: it is of such a nature that it could be *continued indefinitely*. In other words, extension is essentially related to *infinite divisibility*. The latter is, as it were, the stuff extension is made of:

52. *GA* II/12, 22.

53. *Ibidem*.

I ask you, whether that body perceived by you is infinitely divisible (*theilbar ins Unendliche*), or whether such an attempted and continued divisibility would finally somewhere find a limit where it could not be pursued any further (*oder würde eine solche versuchte immerfort gehende Theilung irgendwo eine Gränze finden, wo sie nicht mehr fortgesetzt werden könnte*)? I foresee that you will not be able to reply otherwise than that the body is most truly infinitely divisible.⁵⁴

But thirdly Fichte also emphasizes the fact that the infinite divisibility he is referring to (the infinite divisibility which is the stuff extension viz. its representation is made of) is “*determined and completed*” (*bestimmt und vollendet*)⁵⁵—or, as he also puts it, forms a “*completed and determined infinity*” (*eine vollendete und bestimmte Unendlichkeit*).⁵⁶ “Does, then, this infinitely divisible object put itself forth as also determined and completed (...)? You cannot reply otherwise than: Yes.”⁵⁷ In other words: paradoxically enough, extension combines *two potentially conflicting features*: *infinity* and *totality* (*Unendlichkeit und Totalität*): “Hence you intuit and assert extension to involve a completed and determined infinity; that is, you unite in extension infinity and totality into a fused and concrete unity.” (*Also Sie schauen an, und behaupten an der Ausdehnung eine vollendete und bestimmte Unendlichkeit. (Sie verbinden in ihr Unendlichkeit und Totalität, zu einer verschmolzenen und konkreten Einheit.)*)⁵⁸ We can also express this by saying that extension—viz. its representation—is of such a nature that in it *infinity* (infinite divisibility) is seized in one glance, as it were.⁵⁹ An infinite manifold of divisions is there ‘at a stroke’—or, as Fichte puts it, “*zusammengepreßt*”: ‘all in one go’ (not one after another).

54. *Ibidem.*

55. *GA II/12, 23.*

56. *Ibidem.*

57. *Ibidem.*

58. *Ibidem.*

59. Or, as he puts it in Chapter III (*GA II/12, 35*): it is “pressed together”—or “compressed”—into a totality (*zusammengepreßt zur Totalität*).

But this is not all. Fichte fourthly points out that the infinite divisibility all extension is made of takes place, as it were, *in two opposite directions*. On the one hand, there is infinite divisibility *within the limits of any limited extension in space*. And, on the other hand, each and every limited extension is itself *included within another infinity* (a *surrounding infinity*, as it were, in which the former is embedded).⁶⁰ As a result, the “completed and determined infinity” (the *vollendete und bestimmte Unendlichkeit*) extension is all about turns out to be a “completed and determined” double-infinity: the infinity within the extension in question and the infinity in which the latter is embedded. Extension unites double-infinity and totality “into a fused and concrete unity”. It is double-infinity (a doubly infinite series of ‘Chinese boxes’, as it were) seized in one glance. In other words, a doubly infinite manifold of divisions—the whole doubly infinite series of ‘Chinese boxes’—is there ‘at a stroke’, or, as Fichte puts it, “zusammengepreßt”: ‘all in one go’ (not one after another).

Fichte tries to illustrate all this with the following example:

You draw a line from A to B. I ask you: Is not this line infinitely divisible? In going from A to B, did you not, therefore, actually complete an infinite path (*Ist drum nicht von A bis B ein unendlicher Weg wirklich vollendet worden?*)? Yes. Is it not necessary to assume that in going from any possible point which you may choose on the line A–B to any other possible point, you will meet the same infinity, so that you cannot absolutely go from one point to another without actually accomplishing that infinity (*so daß Sie durchaus von keinem Punkte zu dem anderen kommen können, ohne die Unendlichkeit in der That zu vollenden?*)? Hence you must acknowledge that that which seems to conception utterly impossible and con-

60. That is, the further continuation of divisibility—the *infinite* continuation of divisibility—outside the limits of the restricted extension in question. See *Ibidem*: “Steh denn nun doch dieses unendlich theilbare bestimmt und vollendet, und sogar wiederum innerhalb einer andern Unendlichkeit in seine Gränzen eingeschlossen da? Sie können nicht anders antworten, denn ja.” (underlining added for emphasis).

tradictory is actually accomplished in the intuition of space. (*Sie sehen drum in ihr das, was dem Begriffe als schlechthin unmöglich und widersprechend erscheint, in der Anschauung des Raumes wirklich vollzogen*).⁶¹

But this is not all: bear in mind that pretty much the same applies to the very *division* by means of which you “choose” the line A–B and are focused exclusively on it. Here, too, you meet “the same infinity” (or rather many times “the same infinity”)⁶²—and you simply cannot “choose” the line in question without “actually accomplishing that infinity” (*ohne die Unendlichkeit in der That zu vollenden*).

But all this has to be completed with something else. In Fichte’s view, it is equally important to realize that the infinite divisibility he is referring to—that is, the infinite divisibility extension is all about—has nothing to do with an infinite series of *actual* divisions. The point is that the infinite (viz. the doubly infinite divisibility) in question *surpasses by far* anything we have really *experienced* or anything we *can carry out*. In other words, this infinite divisibility is nothing we have ever experienced or can imagine experiencing.

How and where is the infinite divisibility (...)? Have you actually divided infinitely, and experienced the infinite divisibility through the success of your attempt? By no means! (*haben Sie denn wirklich ins unendliche getheilt, und durch den gelungenen Versuch die unendliche Theilbarkeit erfahren? Nimmermehr*). You assert merely that you could divide the body infinitely (*Sie behaupten nur, Sie könnten ihn ins unendliche theilen*); and thus your assertion, first of all, does not state anything concerning the body itself, but merely something concerning your own faculty (*und ihr Urtheil spricht zu allernächst nicht von dem Körper etwas aus, sondern es spricht von ihrem eigenen Vermögen etwas aus*); whilst, secondly, this assertion has by no means been corroborated by experience, but grounds itself, if it is true, altogether

61. *Ibidem*.

62. In this case, the infinity surrounding A–B.

upon the immediate self-intuition of that faculty or power in its inner essence, as an infinite faculty or power testifying of itself (*und zwar hat sich auch dieser Ausspruch keineswegs durch eine gemachte Erfahrung bestätigt, sondern er gründet sich, wenn er wahr ist, auf die unmittelbare von sich selbst zeugende Selbstanschauung des Vermögens in seinem innern Wesen, als eines Unendlichen*).⁶³

The passage just quoted includes four main claims. On the one hand, Fichte points out that our representation of infinite divisibility is a representation of *possibility*—and that, contrary to what may seem to be the case, *possibility* is what every representation of extension in space is all about. On the other hand, Fichte is also claiming that, contrary to what may seem to be the case, divisibility (and, all the more, infinite divisibility) is not an intrinsic property of the *body* or of the *material qualities* sensation is all about; neither is it an intrinsic property of an *object* as such (of the thing “existing outside of me and altogether independently of me” which is the primary correlate of thought). To be sure, divisibility viz. infinite divisibility can be—and usually is—attributed to the body, and to the material qualities sensation is all about viz. to the objects. But the point is that it does not originate in the representation of the body, of the said material qualities or of the object. In short, it does not originate in the representation of anything *exterior* or *foreign* to oneself. As pointed out above, it has to do with *activity*—or, to be more precise, it has to do with *one's own activity*—with the activity of the representing viz. intuiting ‘subject’ (or rather with the activity of the *dividing subject*). In other words, divisibility, too, is intrinsically related to some form of *self-intuition*: of *Selbstanschauung* or *Sichanschauung*. And this brings us to the third claim. This claim results from the conjunction of the other two (the one concerning *possibility* and the one concerning *activity* viz. the fact that divisibility is essentially *self-related* or ‘*subject-related*’). The third claim is that divisibility—and hence extension—is all about a *self-related* or ‘*subject-related*’ form of *possibility*: namely *Können* or *Vermögen* (*power*, i.e. *self-attributed power, faculty* and the like). It

63. *Ibidem.*

is the claim that the specific content of the representation of extension in space is none other than this *self-related or ‘subject-related’ form of possibility: Können or Vermögen*.

The fourth and last claim concerns not so much the *content* as the *source* and *fundament* of the specific representation in question (the representation of infinite divisibility viz. of extension). Fichte claims that this representation does not originate in (nor can it be corroborated by) experience and “grounds itself upon the immediate self-intuition of one’s own *Vermögen* (of one’s own power or faculty) in its inner essence”—or, as he also puts it, upon one’s own power or faculty “testifying of itself”.

This brief outline enables us to realize what Fichte has in mind when he speaks of extension as a “completed and determined infinity” (*eine vollendete und bestimmte Unendlichkeit*), that is, as something combining *infinity* and *totality* (*Unendlichkeit und Totalität*). According to him, extension is of such a nature that it presents one’s *self-attributed faculty or power*—namely one’s own infinite faculty or power to *divide—in one glance*. And the extension of material qualities is nothing but the combination of the latter with this self-intuition of one’s infinite power to divide *put, as it were, in a nutshell*.

And this is what Fichte highlights in the closing sentences of his account of the second component of external perception:

Now this infinite faculty is actually intuited, and is seized and encircled by our glance and placed before it, and hence the completion and totality of this infinity. (*Dieses unendliche Vermögen ist nun wirklich angeschaut, es ist als ein bestimmtes in dem Blicke befaßt, und mit demselben umfaßt, und vor ihn hingestellt, und daher die Vollendung und Totalität dieser Unendlichkeit*).⁶⁴

In order to clarify his approach, Fichte calls our attention to the two requirements that must be met if there is to be any *self-intuition* (any *Selbstanschauung* or *Sichanschauung*) of one’s own power to divide *ad infinitum* (*unendliches Vermögen zu theilen*). On the one hand, if

64. *Ibidem*.

the intuition in question is to be an intuition of the said *Vermögen*, it must be *infinite*. On the other hand, if it is to be an intuition at all, it must have some kind of *determinate and complete content*: it must present some kind of *totality*. Hence, such an intuition must combine and fuse together these two potentially conflicting features. In other words, it must be, as Fichte puts it, *eine Zusammenfassung der Unendlichkeit—a gathering together* (*a condensation, a synopsis, an overview or a summarized form*) of infinity:

[...] if the faculty is to be intuited as it is, it must be intuited as infinite, for it is infinite. If it is to be intuited, it must be fixed and gathered together, for it is the essence of intuition to fix. And thus, the self-intuition of the faculty must necessarily become a gathering together of infinity (soll das *Vermögen angeschaut werden, wie es ist, so muß es angeschaut werden als unendlich, denn es ist unendlich.* Soll es angeschaut werden, so muß es fixirt und zusammengefaßt werden, denn es ist das Wesen der Anschauung, daß sie fixiere. Und so muß denn die Selbstanschauung des *Vermögens* notwendig werden eine *Zusammenfassung der Unendlichkeit*).

⁶⁵

Or, as he also puts it, the self-intuition of my infinite power or faculty to divide must be such that I behold my infinite power or faculty in the same undivided contemplation (*indem ich in derselben ungetheilten Anschauung fasse mein unendliches *Vermögen**).

⁶⁶

Fichte's point is that there is a *striking match* between a) the essential features of a self-intuition of one's own infinite faculty to divide (*unendliches *Vermögen zu theilen**) and b) the above-mentioned distinctive features of the second component of external perception: the specific representation of extension in space. In other words, the point is that the latter fit like a glove with the former. The suggestion is, of course, that there is no need to search any further, for the two representations in question—the *specific representation of exten-*

65. *Ibidem* (underlining added for emphasis).

66. *GA II/12, 24.*

sion in space and self-intuition of one's own infinite faculty to divide—are not just two strikingly similar representations: in fact, they are *one and the same thing*.

And this is the distinctiveness of Fichte's account of extension—and this means the distinctiveness of his account a) of what Kant terms *totum analyticum* viz. *compositum ideale* and b) of how space-representation has the character of a *totum analyticum* or *compositum ideale*. Fichte emphasizes that extension or space-representation is intrinsically *infinite*, that it is intrinsically *activity-related*, that it is intrinsically *possibility-related*, and that it is intrinsically *self-related*. These four clues lead to the infinite *Vermögen zu theilen*, and are consistent with the possibility that the latter is the key to understanding both the distinctive features of space viz. of space representation and the distinctive features of what Kant terms *totum analyticum*, *compositum ideale*, etc. And this possibility is what Fichte's account of extension in space is all about. As he himself puts it, the result of his investigation of extension in space is the following: "Extension in space is nothing but the self-intuition of the intuiting itself as an infinite power or faculty." (*Die Ausdehnung im Raume ist nichts anderes, denn die Sichanschauung des Anschauenden in seinem Vermögen der Unendlichkeit*).⁶⁷

But this is not all. As we have seen, Fichte stresses the fact that all extension results from the self-intuition of the faculty to divide (*Sichanschauung des Vermögens zu theilen*). But at the end of the day, Fichte's point is also that each and every representation of *extension* in space is the representation of a *restricted* amount of extension, so that a given material quality is spread out over a certain extension, "which is precisely so large and no larger" (*die grade so groß ist, und nicht größer*).⁶⁸ This in no way conflicts with his claim that the repre-

67. *GA* II/12, 23.

68. *GA* II/12, 22. See also *GA* II/12, 31: "In external perception we had, secondly, an intuition of extension, and an intuition of the thing perceived which was confined precisely to this figure, this size, and this location in universal space". (*Ferner kommt in der Wahrnehmung vor die Anschauung der Ausdehnung, und zwar eine grade auf diese Figur, diese Größe, diesen Ort im allgemeinen Raume beschränkte Anschauung des Körpers.*).

sention of extension is always *infinite*—and that the reason for this is that extension is nothing else than the representation of *a faculty* or *Vermögen*, namely of one's power to divide *ad infinitum* (so that without the latter there is no room for the representation of extension). The point is that, in his view, what creates extension is not only a) the *Sichanschauung des Vermögens*, but rather b) its *limitation* (*Beschränkung*)—the fact that the actual division *goes only so far and not further within the possibility of being pursued further*: i.e., the fact that the division *stops* and is not pursued any further, *though it could go on ad infinitum*.⁶⁹ That is, on the one hand Fichte emphasizes that the division he is talking about is of such a nature that the possibility of it being *pursued further* is an essential component of (and a condition *sine qua non* for) it being *stopped*: i.e., the ‘further’ (the ‘and so on and so forth’) is an essential component of (and a condition *sine qua non* for) the ‘precisely so large and no larger’ (*grade so groß, und nicht größer*). Extension beyond any given *figure* is an essential component of (and a *condition sine qua non* for) the figure in question. Extension beyond any given *size* is an essential component of (and a *condition sine qua non* for) the size in question. Extension beyond any given *location* is an essential component of (and a *condition sine qua non* for) the location in question. We can also express this by saying that some kind of *Sichanschauung des Vermögens* is an essential component of (and a condition *sine qua non* for) its *limitation* or *Beschränkung*. But on the other hand, Fichte also emphasizes that the self-intuition of the faculty to divide (*die Sichanschauung des Vermögens zu theilen*) which is part and parcel of external perception⁷⁰ takes the shape of a *Beschränkung* viz. of a *Selbstbeschränkung*—that is, of a *self-limitation* of the said faculty. And this is the key point: the faculty to divide appears in the form of a *determinate self-limitation*.

In short, Fichte's account of the second component of external perception—namely *extension in space*—understands the latter as a limitation of the self-intuition of the faculty to divide (*eine Beschränkung der Selbstanschauung des Vermögens zu theilen*). And in his

69. And spread both into the infinitely large and into the infinitely small.

70. And this also means: the *original form* of self-intuition of the faculty to divide.

view, both aspects are equally important: both a) the fact that extension results from a *Beschränkung des Vermögens* (from a *limitation or self-limitation*) of the faculty to divide, and is therefore something *finite*, and b) the fact that extension results from a *Beschränkung der Selbstanschauung des Vermögens*, and presupposes some kind of self-intuition of the *faculty as such*—that is, an element of *infinity*. Hence, what appears as extension is the result of the *Beschränkung* (the result of *self-limitation*)—and not the underlying condition without which such a result is not possible, namely the self-intuition of one's own infinite faculty or power to divide (the *Sichanschauung des Vermögens* as such).⁷¹ Put another way, what appears as extension is the *finite*, not the *infinite* element *from which it results*. So that, although the result—extension—is nothing if not a particular kind of self-intuition of the whole infinite faculty to divide, the latter *remains in the background*, as it were, and *does not catch the eye*: what catches the eye is the *restricted amount of extension* (this or that concrete amount of space)⁷². Or even though *extension* is always, as Fichte puts it, a “completed and determined infinity” (*eine vollendete und bestimmte Unendlichkeit*), what catches the eye is the element of *totality* (of *completion and determination*), not the element of *infinity*.

All this enables us to perceive the resemblance and difference between Kant's and Fichte's understanding both a) of what Kant terms *totum analyticum* viz. *compositum ideale* and b) of how space-representation has the character of a *totum analyticum* or *compositum ideale*. To be sure, Fichte's 1810-11 account of extension in space contains no criticism of Kant. As a matter of fact, Fichte refers to Kant only once, saying that Kant's view on space viz. extension is “chiefly the correct answer to this question”—so that it was Kant's view on space or extension “which led philosophy along the right track”.⁷³ But the fact is that Fichte's own account of extension in

71. That is, the self-intuition of one's *whole* power viz. of one's power *as a whole*.

72. The ‘tip’ of the two above-mentioned ‘representational icebergs’.

73. *GA* II/12, 22: “Was also ist die Ausdehnung, da sie offenbar keine Empfindung ist? Es muß doch nicht gar leicht seyn, diese Frage zu beantworten, da sie, bis fast auf unser Zeitalter, auf die verschiedenartigsten Weisen unrichtig beantwortet worden, und hauptsächlich ihre richtige Beantwortung (durch Kant) der

space creates a clear contrast with Kant's views, and shows that his last brush strokes on Kant's canvas do far more than some slight retouching work.

On the one hand, Kant does not seem to highlight and take into account all the aspects that, as we have seen, play a major role in Fichte's understanding of extension in space and of the *totum analyticum*. It can be said that Kant, too, sees a connection between space (viz. the *totum analyticum*) and representational *activity*, and that for him, too, *possibility* (not actuality) plays a pivotal role in the constitution both of space and the *totum analyticum*. But the fact is that these components, though not entirely absent from Kant's account, somehow remain in the background, so that they do not play the key role they are attributed by Fichte. On the other hand, Kant does not seem to take Fichte's decisive step: claiming that extension in space and the *totum analyticum* are the result of a self-intuition (a *Sichanschauung* or *Selbstanschauung*) of one's own *Vermögen* (of one's own power or faculty) and that this is the key to understanding them. In short, Fichte a) pays much more attention to the pivotal role played both by *activity* and *possibility*, and b) connects the dots and comes to the conclusion that a *self-intuition of one's own power or faculty* is what space and the *totum analyticum* are all about—so that the reason why there can be no separated representation of a restricted extension or a restricted amount of space (the reason why space is a *totum analyticum*) is that 1) space or extension results from the *self-intuition of an infinite Vermögen*, and 2) the self-intuition of a *Vermögen* as such⁷⁴ is intrinsically prevented from having a partial and limited scope: it must take the form of what Fichte terms a *Zusammenfassung der Unendlichkeit*: a 'gathering together' (a 'condensation', a 'synopsis', an 'overview' or a 'summarized form') of nothing less than infinity.

This brings us to the other main factor why Fichte's perception of the phenomena in question is worlds away from Kant's view—namely the role played by what we have termed the essentially *self-related* nature of extension in space and the *totum analyticum*.

philosophischen Forschung auf den rechten Weg geholfen".

74. And *a fortiori* the self-intuition of an *infinite Vermögen*.

cum. As pointed out above, the essentially *self-related* nature of the latter lies at the heart of Fichte's account. As he puts it, external perception has three essential components (not only *sensation* and *extension in space*, but also *thinking*) because both sensation and extension in space are “altogether a matter of self-consciousness” (*die Empfindung sowohl, als die Ausdehnung im Raume sey lediglich Sache des Selbstbewußtseyns*)⁷⁵—so that without the third component, namely thinking, there is nothing *external* about the product of the other two. In other words, for Fichte extension in space *does not go beyond and out of mere self-consciousness*. It is just a particular kind of *Sichanschauung des Anschauenden* (or of *Selbstanschauung des Anschauenden*)—that is, a particular kind of *self-intuition of the intuiting* (taking the latter in the sense of an objective genitive). And this final result of Fichte's analysis of extension in space and the *totum analyticum* seems to be something altogether different from what Kant had in mind.⁷⁶

75. GA II/12, 24.

76. Fichte's views on space viz. extension as a *totum analyticum* are a recurrent theme in his philosophical work. His 1793/1794 *Eigne Meditationen zur ElementarPhilosophie* (GA II/3)—where his reception of Kant is influenced by Maimon's *Versuch über die Transzentalphilosophie* and the latter's views on space and time as *tota analytica*—contains a series of reflections on this topic. Fichte's very particular understanding of space as a *totum analyticum* plays a pivotal role in the *Wissenschaftslehre nova methodo* (GA IV/2 and IV/3). And pretty much the same holds true for the later 1810–1812 *Thatsachen des Bewusstseins*-lectures (GA II, 12, GA II/15, GA IV/4 and GA IV/6). And these are only three examples. To be sure, this is not the place to discuss a) all the different versions of Fichte's doctrine on *extension* viz. *space* and *totum analyticum* and b) how his views on this topic play a pivotal role in his rediscovery of *self-activity* and *liberty* as major components—and indeed a *sine qua non*—of all representation. But it is not difficult to grasp what Fichte is driving at: after all, the point of his analysis of extension viz. space is that the very form of *external* perception turns out to be intrinsically *self-related* (and indeed nothing less than a *Selbstanschauung* or *Sichanschauung*). Surprisingly enough, this central topic has received almost no attention either in studies on Fichte or in studies on Fichte and Kant. The present paper should be seen as a further contribution to filling this gap. See notably M. Jorge de CARVALHO, *Mallas que la autoconciencia teje—desde el actuar hasta el espacio y la materia* (*Recapitulación y §§ 9–10*), “Endoxa” 30 (2012) 175–255 and IDEM, *Ausdehnung und Freiheit*, “Fichte-Studien” 45 (2018) 61–91.

*

But this is not all. Everything we have seen up until now belongs to Fichte's account of external perception as the most elementary form of consciousness—an account he presents in the first chapter of his 1810-11 *Thatsachen des Bewusstseins*. But the fact is that in the other three chapters of the 1st Part Fichte presents other important components both of his account of space and of his reappraisal of what Kant terms the *totum analyticum* (the *compositum ideale*, etc.). These other components have to do with the fact that both space (viz. the representation of space) and the *totum analyticum* (the *compositum ideale*, etc.) take other forms than the one they have in external perception. Our next step will be to examine the main lines of Fichte's account of this *metamorphosis* of space—viz. of the *totum analyticum*.

First, unlike external perception—"in external perception consciousness says simply: the thing is", it 'bypasses' the image as such—the other space-related representations Fichte's *Thatsachen des Bewußtseyns* refer to have to do with a *Wissen vom Bilde als solchem*" viz. with *Wissen von Wissen* (that is, with *consciousness of image, knowledge of image* viz *knowledge of knowledge*): in reflection "the newly-arisen consciousness says: there is also an image, a representation of the thing" (*hier spricht das neu entstandene Bewußtseyn: es ist auch ein Bild, eine Vorstellung des Dinges*).⁷⁷ In the first case, what we are dealing with is "the altogether simple consciousness—which in no manner rises above itself, or reflects upon itself and the life whereof is therefore not in the least more developed than is necessary to constitute it consciousness" (*das durchaus einfache, noch auf keine Weise über sich selbst sich erhebende Bewußtseyn, dessen Leben nicht um das Mindeste weiter ausgebildet ist, als insoweit es gebildet seyn muss, um auch nur Bewusstseyn zu seyn*).⁷⁸ In the second case, consciousness

77. GA II/12, 29 -30: "In external perception consciousness said simply: the thing is. But in reflection the newly-arisen consciousness says: there is also an image, a representation of the thing." (*In der Wahrnehmung sagte das Bewußtseyn aus: das Ding ist, und damit gut. Hier spricht das neu entstandene Bewußtseyn: es ist auch ein Bild, eine Vorstellung des Dinges.*)

78. GA II/12, 29.

viz. knowledge does rise above itself and reflect upon itself—and indeed in such a manner that it becomes *consciousness of itself*.⁷⁹

Secondly, all the other extension-related representations Fichte refers to are *created by freedom*—they are the product of the free power of imaging viz. of a power of imagination (*freie Bildungskraft, Einbildungskraft*). And, what is more, in their cases images “are recognized as images created by freedom” (*für ein durch die Freiheit erschaffenes Bild anerkannt*).⁸⁰ And this, in turn, is closely associated with two further features. On the one hand, the representations we are talking about appear in consciousness as acts—and indeed as a result of some “gathering together and effort or exertion” (*ein sichzusammennehmen und anstrengen*).⁸¹ On the other hand, unlike external perception, they are *in our power* or *under our control*: “I can image or represent this content or not, as I choose” (*Ich kann die Sache bilden und vorstellen, oder auch nicht*).⁸²

These are the common features shared by all kinds of representation Fichte refers to in chapters 2–4 of his 1810–11 *Thatsachen des Bewusstseins*-lectures. As for their distinctive features, Fichte emphasizes the difference between *three levels*.⁸³

79. See notably GA II/12, 32: “Can this new consciousness be closer characterized?

It certainly has freed itself from a knowledge to which it at first was confined, a knowledge of the object; and through this freeing there has arisen for it a new knowledge, a knowledge of knowledge.” (*Läßt dieses neuentstandene Bewußtseyn sich näher charakterisiren? Zuvörderst es hat auch von einem Wissen sich frei gemacht, an das es vorher gebunden war, vom Wissen vom Objecte. Auch durch diese Befreiung entsteht ihm ein Wissen, nemlich ein Wissen vom Wissen.*)

80. GA II/12, 30.

81. *Ibidem*.

82. Cf. GA II/12, 30: “Moreover, since this consciousness is the realized freedom of imaging, knowledge in respect to itself says: I can image or represent that object or not, as I choose.” (*Da ferner dieses Bewußtseyn die realisierte Freiheit des Bildens ist, so spricht in Beziehung auf sich selbst das Wissen: ich kann jene Sache bilden und vorstellen, oder auch nicht.*)

83. It should be noted that in chapters 2–4 of his 1810–11 *Thatsachen des Bewusstseins*-lectures Fichte describes a multilayered metamorphosis of external perception (and this means: of all its basic components). In the remaining parts of this article we do not take into account all aspects. We limit ourselves to considering the metamorphosis of *extension-related* representations (viz. the three levels of *extension-related* representations) that take shape in Fichte’s analysis.

1) First he focuses on extension in the realm of *free attention* or “freie Hingabe”: free changes of the frame (size, figure and location) of the image available—that is, deliberate ‘roaming’ from image to image (from the *Beschränkung A* to the *Beschränkung B*, and so on and so forth). This kind of extension-related consciousness is characterized by the fact that it *has power over itself* and “makes itself a free principle in regard to the ‘self-acting’ (or ‘automatic’) external perception, which in the first stage devoured all its being” ([*macht*] *sich zum freien Prinzip (...) über die selbstthätige, vorher sein ganzes Seyn verschlingende äußere Wahrnehmung*).⁸⁴

Fichte describes this kind of consciousness in the following terms:

It can make itself be a consciousness which has causality through its mere being. Such a making or surrendering is well known to every person under the name of attention. The first being, which always remains but does not absorb the being of consciousness, has been joined by a second being which controls the first one. This second being can never be annihilated, but may well surrender itself voluntarily to the first one. (*Es kann sich machen zu dem, was durch sein bloßes Seyn Causalität ist. Ein Hingeben, welches unter der Benennung Attention jedwedem bekannt ist. Zu dem ersten Seyn, das dennoch immerfort bleibt, worin nur das Seyn des Bewußtseyns nicht aufgeht, ist ein zweites hinzugereten, welches das erstere in seiner Gewalt hat. Dieses zweite kann nie vernichtet werden, nachdem es einmal ist, aber es kann mit bleibender Freiheit sich dem ersten wieder hingeben*).⁸⁵

Fichte’s point is that once it has emerged, this kind of consciousness cannot be reversed or cancelled (nor can it be reduced to an archipelago of more or less episodic occurrences): it takes control of everything else and becomes, as it were, the centre and guiding principle of all consciousness:

84. *GA* II/12, 34.

85. *GA* II/12, 33.

One more remark on the distinction of free attention from that external perception which forces itself upon the mind. For the latter it is necessary that consciousness should have causality through its mere being. This causality it retains evermore, and it is not cancelled by any freedom. The flow of external perception continues to flow even for the free person, since he also keeps his senses open. It is only upon his consciousness that this causality has no immediate influence; the flow, however it flows, does not take hold of his consciousness necessarily. If it is to take hold of it he must voluntarily surrender himself to it; he must voluntarily put his consciousness into that state of having immediate causality. If you call external perception *x*, then in the condition of that perception, *x* is the centre beginning and end of that whole consciousness; it cannot not be. But in the condition of attention this *x* has been all through penetrated with freedom; its existence as well as its duration is a product of freedom. (*Jetzt noch folgende Erläuterung über den Unterschied der freien Attention von der sich aufdringenden äußeren Wahrnehmung!—Zum Behuf der letzteren hat das Bewußtseyn durch sein bloßes Seyn Causalität. Diese Causalität behält es immerfort, und dieselbe wird an sich durch keine Freiheit aufgehoben. Der Strom fließt fort auch für den Freien, auch ihm bleiben die Sinne offen. Jene Causalität hat nur auf sein Bewußtseyn keinen unmittelbaren Einfluß; der Strom, wie er auch fließe, faßt ihn nicht nothwendig. Soll er ihn fassen, so muß der Freie sich ihm hingeben, er muß sein Bewußtseyn mit Freiheit an jene Causalität setzen. Nenne die äußere Wahrnehmung *x*. Im ersten Zustande ist dieses *x* die Spitze, der Mittelsitz und das Ende des ganzen Bewußtseyns; es kann nicht nichtseyn: im Zustande der Attention ist dieses *x* durchaus mit Freiheit durchdrungen; sein Daseyn ist Product der Freiheit, sein Bleiben, so lange es bleibt, ist Product der Freiheit.*)⁸⁶

- 2) The second kind of extension consciousness Fichte refers to is *knowledge of a principle* and of the fact that the latter *transcends, as it*

86. GA II/12, 34-35.

were, all its manifestations⁸⁷ (*Wissen vom Wissen als Wissen vom Prinzip als hinweg seyend über alle seine Kausalität*).⁸⁸

At first sight, it may come as a surprise that Fichte describes this kind of knowledge as an *Anschauung des Vermögens* (i. e. as an *intuition of the faculty of knowledge*). For, as pointed out above, in Fichte's view *Anschauung des Vermögens* is what *extension as a basic component of external perception* is all about—and Fichte himself reminds us of this: “just as in external perception”(eben so wie in der äußeren Wahrnehmung die Ausdehnung, *Anschauung des Vermögens*).⁸⁹ But he then draws attention to the distinctive feature of this *knowledge of the knowledge-principle* he is now referring to (viz. to the difference between the two kinds of *Anschauung des Vermögens* he has in mind):

But there is this distinction, that whereas in external perception the infinite faculty realized itself actually' and had causality, that is, an actual infinity, which was pressed together to a totality only through the form of contemplation, here the principle generally, without any act or causality, is contemplated in its merely possible infinity. (*Nur mit dem Unterschiede, daß dort das unendliche Vermögen zu setzen sich wirklich vollzog, und Kausalität batte (eine wirkliche Unendlichkeit), lediglich durch die Form der Anschauung zusammengepreßt zur Totalität; während hier das Prinzip überhaupt ohne allen Akt und Kausalität in seiner bloß möglichen Unendlichkeit angeschaut wird*).⁹⁰

Unlike the deliberate roaming the first level is all about, this second level is not bound to any finite set of *Beschränkungen*: it is intrinsically related to the *Vermögen* as such and therefore to the whole infinite manifold of extension (or rather to the very *origin and source of all extension*): it spells out, as it were, its infinite character.

And for this very reason what we are dealing with here is no longer an intuition in the sense in which external perception and

87. And is irreducible to them.

88. *GA* II/12, 35.

89. *Ibidem*.

90. *Ibidem*.

perceptual extension are. Fichte draws our attention to the very particular nature of this knowledge of the principle viz. to the fact that, on the one hand, it is an *intuition*, but on the other hand, it *extends beyond all concrete images or phenomena*—which, as pointed out above, is a distinctive feature of *thinking* (*Denken*) as such:

Is this consciousness of a principle actually an intuition? If we look at its form we cannot but answer yes, since it is the immediate expression of freedom which lifts itself above causality by its mere being; but if we look at the content, we might fall into doubt. For a principle is an activity that extends beyond each of its possible causalities. Here, therefore, appears a going beyond all possible causalities (which are mere phenomena) as the true characteristic of thinking. We must, therefore, say that, in the intuition of a principle, the characteristics of intuition and thinking intimately penetrate each other. (*Ist denn nun dieses Bewußtseyn des Princips wirklich eine Anschauung? Sehen wir auf die Form, so müssen wir ohne Zweifel antworten, ja, denn sie ist der unmittelbare Ausdruck der Freiheit, welche über die Causalität durch bloßes Seyn sich emporhebt. Sehen wir auf den Inhalt, so möchten wir zweifelhaft werden. Ein Princip ist ein solches, das über jede seiner möglichen Causalitäten hinweg ist. Da zeigt sich ja ein Herausgehen aus den möglichen Causalitäten, die Phänomene sind, als der Charakter des Denkens. Wir müssen sonach sagen: in der Anschauung des Princips durchdringen sich innigst der Charakter der Anschauung und der des Denkens*).⁹¹

3) The third level Fichte refers to has to do with what might be termed *extension-related Reproduktion*. “Reproduktion” denotes the power of imagination to produce an image *through its own activity*—and indeed “to reproduce it exactly as it was in a previous perception” (*grade so wie e[s] in der einstigen wirklichen Wahrnehmung war*).⁹² Fichte also speaks

91. *GA* II/12, 35-36.

92. *GA* II/12, 40.

of a “freie Wiederhervorbringung”⁹³ and of the “power of imagination to reawaken perception in its determined parts” (*das Vermögen, die Wahrnehmung in ihren bestimmten Theilen wiederzuerwecken*).⁹⁴ But it should also be borne in mind that he characterizes *Reproduktion* as the power of imagination to “produce the *Vorbild der Wahrnehmung* (the ‘prototype’ of perception) through its own activity”⁹⁵—and, of course, this also means the power to produce the ‘prototype’ of extension as such. In other words, the point is that while the second level stands for knowledge that all extension results from one and the same principle or *Vermögen*, the third level is all about knowledge of the how—i. e. it is all about knowledge of the principle itself, of how it works and produces concrete perceptions viz. the various components of perception (and notably extension as such). In short, the third level *reenacts*, as it were, the *functioning* of the principle.

This enables us to understand two of Fichte’s main claims, namely a) that the third level he is talking about is not possible without rules (*Regeln*) and b) that it provides *Vorschriften für die Einbildungskraft* (namely for producing intuition).⁹⁶ Here too, as in the case of the second stage, both *thinking* and *intuition* play a pivotal role. What Fichte terms “Reproduktion” has a *hybrid* character and must entail *both*; for, on the one hand, it has to do with knowledge of possibility (and this necessarily means: with knowledge of the *Regel*—that is, *thinking*); but, on the other hand, it has to do with knowledge of the path from *possibility to actuality* (with knowledge of the *wirkliche Vollziehung nach dieser Regel*); and this, in turn, necessarily entails *intuition* or *Anschauung*:

This possibility is standing, immanent in life, ever-present. How, then, does actuality distinguish itself from this possibility, and how am I ever to be impelled—always having possibility within my grasp—to add actuality to it? I answer: that possibility can consist at the utmost in a rule which is altogether

93. *Ibidem*.

94. *Ibidem*.

95. *Ibidem*.

96. *GA* II/12, 39.

a matter of thinking, whereas an actual fact under this rule would produce an intuition. Hence possibility and actuality are here related to each other like free thinking and intuition. (*Diese Möglichkeit ist ein stehendes, im Leben immanentes, ewig gegenwärtiges. Wie unterscheidet nun von dieser Möglichkeit sich die Wirklichkeit, und wie soll ich dazu kommen, da ich ja die Möglichkeit immer habe, ihr auch noch die Wirklichkeit hinzuzufügen? Ich antworte: die Möglichkeit kann doch höchstens nur bestehen in einer Regel, die bloß im Denken liegt; dagegen die wirkliche Vollziehung nach dieser Regel eine Anschauung hervorbringen würde. Möglichkeit und Wirklichkeit verhalten sich demnach hier, wie bloßes freies Denken, und Anschauung*).⁹⁷

Contrary to the first two levels (of which the first has too limited a range and the second, even if it focuses on the universal principle of all perception, does not have any insight into its concrete *modus operandi*), this third level of extension-related representations is a *repetition* or a *re-enactment* of *what it takes to make external perception*. Or, to be more precise, it is a *conscious* re-enactment of all the *underlying* activity behind external perception. And in particular this third-level representation of extension (namely its *reproduction* in the Fichtean sense of the word) is a *repetition* or a *re-enactment* of the original *Sichanschauung des Vermögens* viz. of the original *limitation* (of the original *Beschränkung der Sichanschauung des Vermögens*) giving rise to extension.

Fichte stresses both the *similarity* and the *difference* between the *original* and the *reflective Sichanschauung des Vermögens* viz. between the *original* and the *reflective limitation* or *Beschränkung der Sichanschauung des Vermögens*. In other words, he draws our attention to their similarity, but the main emphasis is on the fact that the reflective re-enactment we are talking about is not just a *repetition*, in the proper meaning of the term, of the original *Beschränkung der Sichanschauung des Vermögens* but *something altogether different*:

97. *Ibidem*.

External perception was a determined limitation of the external sense and of spatial intuition. The rule must, therefore, be a direction of the power of imagination to produce by its own activity an image of just that very same limitation. In the first instance, the limitation comes by itself without freedom. In the present instance, the power of imagination extends itself over the whole domain of external sense and space, and is to give itself that determined limitation within this domain. (*Die äußere Wahrnehmung war eine bestimmte Beschränkung des äusseren Sinnes und der Raumanschauung. Die Regel müßte darum seyn eine Vorschrift für die Einbildungskraft, das Bild grade dieser Beschränkung selbstthätig hervorzubringen. Dort macht die Beschränkung sich selbst ohne alles Zuthun der Freiheit. Hier verbreitet ungebunden die Einbildungskraft sich über das ganze Gebiet des äußern Sinnes und des Raumes, und soll durch sich selbst innerhalb dieses Gebietes sich die bestimmte Beschränkung geben*).⁹⁸)

And he insists on this idea:

It is also clear now how immediate perception distinguishes itself from its mere image in reproduction. The latter is always accompanied by the consciousness of self-activity, and there arises in it not a single trait whereof the Ego would not be compelled to say, It is of my own making; whereas actual perception is always accompanied by the consciousness of compulsion and confinedness. (*Auch ist nun klar, wie die unmittelbare Wahrnehmung sich unterscheidet von ihrem Bilde in der Reproduktion. Das letztere wird immerfort von dem Bewußtseyn der Selbstthätigkeit begleitet, und es kommt kein Zug in ihm vor, von dem das Ich nicht würde sagen müssen: ich mache ihn; dagegen ist die wirkliche Wahrnehmung immerfort begleitet von dem Bewußtseyn der Nichtfreiheit und Gebundenheit*).⁹⁹)

98. *GA* II/12, 39-40.

99. *GA* II/12, 41.

But this is not all. The difference in question is not limited to the fact that in one case the *Sichanschauung des Vermögens* is accompanied by the *consciousness of self-activity*, while in the other it is accompanied by the *consciousness of compulsion and confinedness*—as if in every other respect they were alike. This is not what Fichte has in mind. In his view, the original *Sichanschauung des Vermögens* (viz. its original *Beschränkung* or *limitation*) is part and parcel of what he terms the “immediate outpouring of life” (*das unmittelbare Sichausströmen des Lebens*).¹⁰⁰ In other words, the original *Sichanschauung des Vermögens* belongs to “the altogether simple consciousness—which in no manner rises above itself, or reflects upon itself and the life whereof is therefore not in the least more developed than is necessary to constitute it as consciousness” (*das durchaus einfache, noch auf keine Weise über sich selbst sich erhebende Bewußtseyn, dessen Leben nicht um das Mindeste weiter ausgebildet ist, als insoweit es gebildet seyn muss, um auch nur Bewußtseyn zu seyn*).¹⁰¹ Whereas the reflective *Sichanschauung des Vermögens* (viz. the reflective limitation of this reflective intuition) is not *Wahrnehmung*, but rather an *image of Wahrnehmung*¹⁰²—that is, *knowledge of knowledge*, an *image of an image* or *knowledge of an image as such* (*Wissen von Wissen, Wissen vom Bilde als solchem*). In other words, here, too “the newly-arisen consciousness” comes into play and “says: there is also an image, a representation of the thing” (*bier spricht das neu entstandene Bewußtseyn: es ist auch ein Bild, eine Vorstellung des Dinges*).¹⁰³

But there is more to it than this. For what is at stake here is nothing less than the difference between *extension*, as such, and *space*, as such—viz. the fact that for Fichte they are far from being the same. Or, more precisely, what is at stake here is the fact a) that there is a significant difference of content between extension and space, and b) that there is a connection between this difference of content and Fichte’s multi-layered set of extension-related representations, so that extension is an essential component of per-

100. *GA* II/12, 32.

101. *GA* II/12, 29.

102. Cf. *GA* II/12, 41.

103. *GA* II/12, 30.

ception itself, while space is the correlate of what Fichte terms “Reproduktion” and plays absolutely no role in the realm of perception.

To be sure, there is no explicit mention of this question in the 1810-1811 *Thatsachen des Bewusstseins*. But, on the one hand, this question is discussed at length in the 1811-12 lectures. And on the other hand, even if the former do not speak of extension as opposed to space, they stress the difference between a) extension as a basic component of perception itself and b) extension-related “Reproduction”, so that they pave the way for Fichte’s 1811-12 remarks on the difference (and in particular on the difference *of content*) between space and extension.

So let us take a closer look at these remarks.

First, it should be borne in mind that, as pointed out above, the third level extension-related representation Fichte refers to (i. e. “Reproduktion”) is where *space* (N.B.: not just extension, but *space*—space as such, *empty space* and the like) makes its first appearance: “*Dies ist der leere Raum, das Bild der stehenden Ausgedehntheit überhaupt. Hier also tritt heraus das Sondernd der Ausgedehntheit von dem leeren Raum*”.¹⁰⁴

In this regard, Fichte makes two main claims. On the one hand, he stresses the *difference between extension and space*. On the other hand, he claims that the latter is *distilled* or *separated* from the former. According to him, space—empty space—is of such a nature that a) its content is “the image of standing extension in general” (*das Bild der stehenden Ausgedehntheit überhaupt*),¹⁰⁵ and b) it therefore presupposes “separating extension from empty space” (*das Sondernd der Ausgedehntheit v[on] dem leeren Raum*)¹⁰⁶—to make this formulation more precise, one could perhaps say: “separating extension from quality, whereby space i.e. empty space comes into being” (*das Sondernd der Ausgedehntheit von der Qualität, durch welches Raum (der leere Raum) Zustande kommt*).¹⁰⁷

104. *GA IV/4*, 156.

105. *Ibidem*.

106. *Ibidem*.

107. Fichte speaks of *Stehen* (*stehende Ausgedehntheit*, “standing extension ”). What

Hence, Fichte characterizes space (i.e. empty space) as “ein durch Abstraction gebildetes Schema von der Ausgedehntheit ohne darin Ausgedehntes; ein Bild vom Manigfachen das da zugleich ist, ohne daß ein bestimmtes Manigfache gesetzt ist”.¹⁰⁸ That is, he emphasizes: a) that space is a “Schema” of extension, b) that the “Schema” in question *stems from abstraction*, c) that it presents extension as such without any quality or content (void of any quality or content—that is, space presents *extension without anything extended in it*). He then adds: “In der Wahrnehmung ist das Manichfache eine bestimmte Qualität. Hier tritt die Freiheit hinzu, und um sich als solche zu behaupten, muß sie den Raum erst leer machen.”¹⁰⁹ The point is the essential connection between space, as such, and freedom viz. awareness of it—the *Reproduktionsanachauung* underlying space is accompanied by an intuition of freedom and is not possible without it: “Der Raum wird gesondert durch die Anschauung der Freiheit, die ihn <füllen> soll und ihn erst leer machen muß”.¹¹⁰

And this is why Fichte then makes the following remark:

Die Wahrnehmung ist [...] kein Raum. Wer da sagt keine Ausdehnung ohne Raum, der construirt die Ausdehnung, bildet sie mit Freiheit. Somit stehet er auf dem Standpunkt der Reproduction. In der wirklichen Ausdehnung in der Wahrnehmung ist [...] die Ausdehnung und die Ausgedehntheit der Qualität

he has in mind is clear from what he writes in *GA IV/4*, 156: “Alles Stehende ist weggefallen. Indeß ein Bestehendes muß es doch geben, woran das Ordnen haftet: welches ist denn der feste Grund für dieses Ordnen? Dieß ist der leere Raum, das Bild der stehenden Ausgedehntheit überhaupt. Hier also tritt heraus das *das Sondern der Ausgedehntheit v[on] dem leeren Raum*. Dem Ordnen eines mannigfachen Stoffes muß doch zum Grunde liegen eine allgemeine Anschauung des leeren Raums, ein durch Abstraction gebildetes Schema von der Ausgedehntheit ohne darin Ausgedehntes; ein Bild vom Manigfachen das da zugleich ist, ohne daß ein bestimmtes Manigfache gesetzt ist.“ On the one hand, Fichte seems to be referring to the *ineliminability* of space viz. to the fact that “extension” remains even if all quality has been removed (*weggefallen ist*). On the other hand, he seems to be alluding to the fact that space is, as it were, a *hypostatization* of the *Sichanschauung des Vermögens*.

108. *Ibidem*.

109. *GA IV/4*, 156-157.

110. *GA IV/4*, 156.

eins, im Acte des Schauens. Die Reproduction scheidet die wirkliche Ausdehnung der Wahrnehmung und die bloße schematische Form der Ausgedehntheit ohne ein Ausgedehntes. Das Schema setzt sie als leeren Raum, um sich selbst zu bilden[,] in ihn hineinsetzend das Ausgedehnte. Um die Synthesis als Produkt der Freiheit zu setzen muß sie erst zwei machen.¹¹¹

We have no time to discuss these remarks in full detail. But we cannot fail to highlight a) that Fichte polemicizes against those who claim that there is no extension without space (and therefore no perception without space) and b) that he contends that whoever takes this view is confusing two very different things and mistakenly taking space for extension and reproduction for perception: (...) *der construirt die Ausdehnung, bildet sie mit Freiheit. Somit steht er auf dem Standpunkt der Reproduction.* Now it is not certain who Fichte has in mind (it cannot be excluded that he is polemicizing against some “Nachkantianer”). But be that as it may, the fact remains that these remarks fit Kant’s doctrine like a glove—for Kant, too, sees *space* as a condition of possibility of *extension* viz. of *perception*, and he too fails to differentiate between space and extension and to realize that the former results from the “*Reproduction*” (and is therefore the product of a reflexive transformation) of the latter. In short, from a Fichtean perspective Kant, too, fails to realize that there is a world of difference between the original extension-related *totum analyticum* and the representation of space (of empty space and the like). To be sure, Kant is perfectly aware that the original extension-related *totum analyticum* undergoes a *series of reflective changes*—and a) that there is a long and complex path from what he terms *Form der Anschauung* to what he terms *formale Anschauung*, b) that imagination (*Einbildungskraft*) and thinking (*Denken*) play a key role in this process, and c) that we have no direct access to perception itself (i. e. to perception *prior to reflection*): we are unable to ‘catch it *in flagranti*’, and do not have any other choice but to *reconstruct* simple (pre-reflective) perception *from a reflective point of view*. But

111. *GA IV/4*, 158.

the point is that, in Fichte's view, Kant did not take due account of all this: at the end of the day, he failed to realize that the *totum analyticum* underlying external perception is not even remotely space, but something fundamentally different from it.

This puts a final touch to the picture—and enables us to realize to what extent the cloak of resemblance between Kant's and Fichte's depiction both of space and of the *totum analyticum* hides two very different approaches and indeed two utterly different perceptions both of space viz. extension-related representation and of how the original spatial (viz. extension-related) *totum analyticum* is to be understood.

REFERENCES

- O. BOEHM, *Kant's Critique of Spinoza* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2014).
- M. J. de CARVALHO, *Mallas que la autoconciencia tej—desde el actuar hasta el espacio y la materia (Recapitulación y §§ 9-10)*, “*Endoxa*” 30 (2012) 175-255.
- M. J. de CARVALHO, *Ausdehnung und Freiheit*, “*Fichte-Studien*” 45 (2018) 61-91.
- A. J. DIETRICH, *Kants Begriff des Ganzen in seiner Raum-Zeitlehre und das Verhältnis zu Leibniz* (Niemeyer, Halle, 1916, repr., Olms, Hildesheim/Zürich/N.Y., 1977).
- J. G. FICHTE, *Gesamtausgabe der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften:*
II/3: *Nachgelassene Schriften 1793-1795*, ed. by H. Jacob, R. Lauth (Frommann-Holzboog, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1971).
- II/12: *Nachgelassene Schriften 1810-1812*, ed. by E. Fuchs, R. Lauth, I. Radrizzani, P. K. Schneider, H. G. von Manz (Frommann-Holzboog, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1999).
- II/15: *Nachgelassene Schriften 1813*, ed. by E. Fuchs, H. G. von Manz, I. Radrizzani, P. K. Schneider, M. Siegel, G. Zöller, G. Meckenstock, E. Ruff (Frommann-Holzboog, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 2009).
- IV/2: *Kollegnachschriften 1796-1804*, ed. by H. Gliwitzky, R. Lauth,

- E. Fuchs, K. Hiller, J. Manzana, P. K. Schneider (Frommann-Holzboog, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1978).
- IV/3: *Kollegnachschriften 1794-1799*, ed. by E. Fuchs, R. Lauth, I. Radrizzani, P. K. Schneider, G. Zöller, H. Fautek, H. G. von Manz (Frommann-Holzboog, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 2000).
- IV/4: *Kollegnachschriften 1794-1799*, ed. by E. Fuchs, R. Lauth, H. G. von Manz, I. Radrizzani, P. K. Schneider, M. Siegel, G. Zöller, H. U. Kopp, A. M. Schurr-Lorusso (Frommann-Holzboog, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 2004).
- IV/6: Band IV,6: *Kollegnachschriften 1812-1814* ed. by E. Fuchs, H. G. von Manz, I. Radrizzani, P. K. Schneider, M. Siegel, G. Zöller, M. V. d'Alfonso, F. Fabbianelli, A. Magen, D. W. Wood (Frommann-Holzboog, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 2010).
- J. G. FICHTE, *Facts of Consciousness*, transl. by A. E. Kroeger, "The Journal of Speculative Philosophy" 5 (1871) 53-60, 130-143, 226-231, 338-349, 6 (1872) 42-52, 120-125, 332-340, 7 (1873) 36-42, 17 (1883) 130-141, 263-283, and 18 (1884) 47-71, 152-161.
- R., HENRICH, *Kants Erfahrungsraum: metaphysischer Ursprung und kritische Entwicklung* (Alber, Freiburg/München, 1986).
- I. KANT, *Kant's Gesammelte Schriften*, herausgegeben von der Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften und von der Deutschen Akademie der Wissenschaften:
- II: *Vorkritische Schriften II 1757-1777* (Reimer, Berlin, 1910).
- III: *Kritik der reinen Vernunft zweite Auflage 1787* (Reimer, Berlin, 1910, repr. 1973).
- IV: *Kritik der reinen Vernunft 1. Auflage. Prolegomena. Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten. Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Naturwissenschaft* (Reimer, Berlin, 1911).
- VI *Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft. Die Metaphysik der Sitten* (Reimer, Berlin, 1913).
- IX: *Logik. Physische Geographie. Pädagogik* (Reimer, Berlin, 1923, repr. 1972).
- XVII: *Handschriftlicher Nachlaß IV Metaphysik Erster Theil* (De Gruyter, Berlin/Leipzig, 1926).
- XVIII: *Handschriftlicher Nachlaß V Metaphysik Zweiter Theil* (De Gruyter, Berlin/Leipzig, 1928).

- XXII: *Handschriftlicher Nachlaß IX Opus Postumum Zweite Hälfte (Convolut VII bis XIII)* (De Gruyter, Berlin/Leipzig, 1938).
- XXVIII: *Vorlesungen V Vorlesungen über Metaphysik und Rationaltheologie Erste Hälfte* (De Gruyter, Berlin, 1968).
- XXVIII: *Vorlesungen V Vorlesungen über Metaphysik und Rationaltheologie Zweite Hälfte 1. Theil* (De Gruyter, Berlin, 1970).
- XXIX: *Vorlesungen VI Ergänzungen II Erste Hälfte, zweiter Teil* (De Gruyter, Berlin, 1983).
- I. KANT, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Translated and edited by P. Guyer and A. W. Wood (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1998).
- P. LACHIÈZE-REY, *L'idéalisme kantien* (Alcan, Paris, 1931).
- G. W. LEIBNIZ, *Die philosophischen Schriften*, ed. by I. C. Gerhard (Weidmann, Berlin, 1875-1890, repr., Olms, Hildesheim, 1978).
- T. NENON, *Objektivität und endliche Erkenntnis bei Kant. Kants transzentalphilosophische Korrespondenztheorie der Wahrheit* (Alber, Freiburg/München, 1986).
- PLATO, *The Sophistes and Politicus of Plato*, with a Revised Text and English Notes by L. Campbell (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1867, repr., Arno Press, New York, 1973).
- U. RAMEIL, *Raum und Außenwelt. Interpretationen zu Kants kritischem Idealismus* (Hansen, Köln, 1977).
- M. THOMPSON, *Unity, Plurality and Totality as Kantian Categories*, “The Monist” 72 (1989) 168-189.
- P. UNRUH, *Transzendentale Ästhetik des Raumes: zu Immanuel Kants Raumkonzeption* (Königshausen & Neumann, Würzburg, 2007).
- H. VAIHINGER, *Kommentar zu Kants Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, ed. by R. Schmidt (Union Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft, Stuttgart/Berlin/Leipzig, 1922², repr. Scientia, Stuttgart, 1970).
- G. WOHLFAHRT, *Ist der Raum eine Idee? Bemerkungen zur transzendentalen Ästhetik Kants*, “Kant-Studien” 71 (1980) 137-154.

