

Appendix *to the Transcendental Dialectic*

On the regulative use of the ideas of pure reason.¹¹⁵

The outcome of all dialectical attempts of pure reason not only confirms what we have already proved in the *Transcendental Analytic*, namely that all the inferences that would carry us out beyond the field of possible experience are deceptive and groundless, but it also simultaneously teaches us this particular lesson: that human reason has a natural propensity to overstep all these boundaries, and that transcendental ideas are just as natural to it as the categories are to the understanding, although with this difference, that just as the categories lead to truth, i.e., to the agreement of our concepts with their objects,^a the ideas effect a mere, but irresistible, illusion, deception by which one can hardly resist even through the most acute criticism.

A643/B671

Everything grounded in the nature of our powers must be purposive and consistent with their correct use, if only we can guard against a certain misunderstanding and find out their proper direction. Thus the transcendental ideas too will presumably have a good and consequently **immanent** use, even though, if their significance is misunderstood and they are taken for concepts of real things, they can be transcendent in their application and for that very reason deceptive. For in regard to the whole of possible experience, it is not the idea itself but only its use that can be either **extravagant** (transcendent) or **indigenous** (immanent), according to whether one directs them straightway to a supposed object corresponding to them, or only to the use of the understanding in general regarding the objects with which it has to do; and **all errors of subreption are always to be ascribed to a defect in judgment, never to understanding or to reason.**

Reason never relates directly to an object, but solely to the understanding and by means of it to reason's own empirical use, hence it does not **create** any concepts (of objects)^b but only **orders** them and gives

^a *Objecte*^b *Objecte*

them that unity which they can have in their greatest possible extension, i.e., in relation to the totality of series; the understanding does not look to this totality at all, but only to the connection **through which series** of conditions always **come about** according to concepts. Thus **reason** really has as object only the understanding and its purposive application, and just as the understanding unites the manifold into an object^a through concepts, so reason on its side unites the manifold of concepts through ideas by positing a certain collective unity as the goal of the understanding's actions, which are otherwise concerned only with distributive unity.

A644/B672

Accordingly, I assert: the transcendental ideas are never of constitutive use, so that the concepts of certain objects would thereby be given, and in case one so understands them, they are merely sophistical (dialectical) concepts. On the contrary, however, they have an excellent and indispensably necessary regulative use, namely that of directing the understanding to a certain goal respecting which the lines of direction of all its rules converge at one point, which, although it is only an idea (*focus imaginarius*) – i.e., a point from which the concepts of the understanding do not really proceed, since it lies entirely outside the bounds of possible experience – nonetheless still serves to obtain for these concepts the greatest unity alongside the greatest extension. Now of course it is from this that there arises the deception, as if these lines of direction were shot out^b from an object lying outside the field of possible empirical cognition (just as objects^c are seen behind the surface of a mirror); yet this illusion (which can be prevented from deceiving) is nevertheless indispensably necessary if besides the objects before our eyes we want to see those that lie far in the background, i.e., when, in our case, the understanding wants to go beyond every given experience (beyond this part of the whole of possible experience), and hence wants to take the measure of its greatest possible and uttermost extension.

constitutive vs
regulative use

A645/B673

If we survey the cognitions of our understanding in their entire range, then we find that what reason quite uniquely prescribes and seeks to bring about concerning it is the **systematic** in cognition, i.e., its interconnection based on one principle.^d This unity of reason always presupposes an idea, namely that of the form of a whole of cognition, which precedes the determinate cognition of the parts and contains the conditions for determining *a priori* the place of each part and its rela-

^a Object

^b The text reads “*ausgeschlossen . . . wären*” (were excluded). Editors have amended the text at this point in various ways. We follow Erdmann, substituting “*ausgeschlossen . . . wären*”; a different but also eligible possibility is “*ausgeschlossen*” (inferred from).

^c Objecte

^d *Zusammenhang aus einem Princip*

tion to the others. Accordingly, this idea postulates complete unity of the understanding's cognition, through which this cognition comes to be not merely a contingent aggregate but a system interconnected in accordance with necessary laws. One cannot properly say that this idea is the concept of an object,^a but only that of the thoroughgoing unity of these concepts, insofar as the idea serves the understanding as a rule. Such concepts of reason are not created by nature, rather we question nature according to these ideas, and we take our cognition to be defective as long as it is not adequate to them. Admittedly, it is hard to find **pure earth, pure water, pure air**, etc. Nevertheless, concepts of them are required (though as far as their complete purity is concerned, have their origin only in reason) in order appropriately to determine the share that each of these natural causes has in appearance; thus one reduces^b all materials to earths (mere weight, as it were), to salts and combustibles (as force), and finally to water and air as vehicles (machines, as it were, by means of which the aforementioned operate), in order to explain the chemical effects of materials in accordance with the idea of a mechanism. For even though it is not actually expressed this way, it is still very easy to discover the influence of reason on the classifications of students of nature.

If reason is the faculty of deriving the particular from the universal, then: Either the universal is **in itself certain** and given, and only **judgment** is required for subsuming, and the particular is necessarily determined through it. This I call the "apodictic" use of reason. Or the universal is assumed only **problematically**, and it is a mere idea, the particular being certain while the universality of the rule for this consequent is still a problem; then several particular cases, which are all certain, are tested by the rule, to see if they flow from it, and in the case in which it seems that all the particular cases cited follow from it, then the universality of the rule is inferred, including all subsequent cases, even those that are not given in themselves. This I will call the "hypothetical" use of reason.

The hypothetical use of reason, on the basis of ideas as problematic concepts, is not properly **constitutive**, that is, not such that if one judges in all strictness the truth of the universal rule assumed as a hypothesis thereby follows; for how is one to know all possible consequences, which would prove the universality of the assumed principle if they followed from it? Rather, this use of reason is only regulative, bringing unity into particular cognitions as far as possible and thereby **approximating** the rule to universality.

The hypothetical use of reason is therefore directed at the system-

^a *Object*

^b *bringt . . . auf*

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atic unity of the understanding's cognitions, which, however, is the **touchstone of truth** for its rules. Conversely, systematic unity (as mere idea) is only a **projected** unity, which one must regard not as given in itself, but only as a problem;^a this unity, however, helps to find a principle^b for the manifold and particular uses of the understanding, thereby guiding it even in those cases that are not given and making it coherently connected.^c

From this, however, one sees only that systematic unity or the unity of reason of the manifold of the understanding's cognition is a **logical** principle,^d in order, where the understanding alone does not attain to rules, to help it through ideas, simultaneously creating unanimity among its various rules under one principle^e (the systematic), and thereby interconnection, as far as this can be done. But whether the constitution of objects or the nature of the understanding that cognizes them as such are in themselves determined to systematic unity, and whether one could in a certain measure postulate this *a priori* without taking into account such an interest of reason, and therefore say that all possible cognitions of the understanding (including empirical ones) have the unity of reason, and stand under common principles^f from which they could be derived despite their variety: that would be a **transcendental** principle of reason, which would make systematic unity not merely something subjectively and logically necessary, as method, but objectively necessary.

We will illustrate this through one case in which reason is used. Among the different kinds of unity according to concepts of the understanding belongs the causality of a substance, which is called "power."^g At first glance the various appearances of one and the same substance show such diversity that one must assume almost as many powers as there are effects, as in the human mind there are sensation, consciousness, imagination, memory, wit, the power to distinguish, pleasure, desire, etc. Initially a logical maxim bids us to reduce this apparent variety as far as possible by discovering hidden identity through comparison, and seeing if imagination combined with consciousness may not be memory, wit, the power to distinguish, or perhaps even understanding and reason. The idea of a **fundamental power** – though logic does not at all ascertain whether there is such a thing – is at least the problem^h

A648/B676

A649/B677

unity of powers and
their fundamentality in
substance

^a Problem

^b Princip

^c zusammenhängend

^d Princip

^e Princip

^f Principien

^g Kraft

^h Problem

set by a systematic representation of the manifoldness of powers. The logical principle^a of reason demands this unity as far as it is possible to bring it about, and the more appearances of this power and that power are found to be identical, the more probable it becomes that they are nothing but various expressions of one and the same power, which can be called (comparatively) their **fundamental power**. One proceeds in just the same way with the rest of the powers.

These comparatively fundamental powers must once again be compared with one another, so as to discover their unanimity and thereby bring them close to a single radical, i.e., absolutely fundamental, power. But this unity of reason is merely hypothetical. One asserts not that such a power must in fact be found, but rather that one must seek it for the benefit of reason, namely for setting up certain principles^b for the many rules with which experience may furnish us, and that where it can be done, one must in such a way bring systematic unity into cognition.

But if one attends to the transcendental use of the understanding, it is evident that this idea of a fundamental power in general does not function^c merely as a problem^d for hypothetical use, but pretends to objective reality, so that the systematic unity of a substance's many powers are postulated and an apodictic principle^e of reason is erected. For even without our having attempted to find the unanimity among the many powers, or indeed even when all such attempts to discover it have failed, we nevertheless presuppose that such a thing will be found; and it is not only, as in the case cited, on account of the unity of substance that reason presupposes systematic unity among manifold powers, but rather reason does so even where many powers, though to a certain degree of the same kind, are found, as with matter in general, where particular natural laws stand under more general ones; and the parsimony of principles^f is not merely a principle of economy for reason, but becomes an inner law of its nature.

In fact it cannot even be seen how there could be a logical principle^g of rational unity among rules unless a transcendental principle^h is presupposed, through which such a systematic unity, as pertaining to the objectⁱ itself, is assumed *a priori* as necessary. For by what warrant can reason in its logical use claim to treat the manifoldness of the powers

^a Princip

^b Principien

^c nicht . . . bestimmt sei

^d Problem

^e Princip

^f Principien

^g Princip

^h Princip

ⁱ Object

A650/B678

A651/B679

which nature gives to our cognition as merely a concealed unity, and to derive them as far as it is able from some fundamental power, when reason is free to admit that it is just as possible that all powers are different in kind, and that its derivation of them from a systematic unity is not in conformity with nature? For then reason would proceed directly contrary to its vocation, since it would set as its goal an idea that entirely contradicts the arrangement of nature. Nor can one say that it^a has previously gleaned^b this unity from the contingent constitution of nature in accordance with its principles^c of reason. For the law of reason to seek unity is necessary, since without it we would have no reason, and without that, no coherent^d use of the understanding, and, lacking that, no sufficient mark of empirical truth; thus in regard to the latter we simply have to presuppose the systematic unity of nature as objectively valid and necessary.

We also find this transcendental presupposition hidden in an admirable way in the principles of the philosophers, although they have not always recognized it or admitted it to themselves. That all the manifoldness of individual things does not exclude the identity of **species**; that the several species must be treated only as various determinations of fewer **genera**, and the latter of still higher **families**,^e etc.; that therefore a certain systematic unity of all possible empirical concepts must be sought insofar as they can be derived from higher and more general ones: this is a scholastic rule or logical principle,^f without which there could be no use of reason, because we can infer from the universal to the particular only on the ground of the universal properties of things under which the particular properties stand.

A652/B680

But that such unanimity is to be encountered even in nature is something the philosophers presuppose in the familiar scholastic rule that one should not multiply beginnings (principles)^g without necessity (*entia praeter necessitatem non esse multiplicanda*).^h It is thereby said that the nature of things themselves offers material for the unity of reason, and the apparently infinite variety should not restrain us from conjecturing behind it a unity of fundamental properties, from which their manifoldness can be derived only through repeated determination. This unity, although it is a mere idea, has been pursued so eagerly in all ages that more often there has been cause to moderate than to encourage the de-

^a i.e., reason^b *abgenommen*^c *Principien*^d *zusammenhängende*^e *Geschlechter*^f *Princip*^g *Principien*^h Entities are not to be multiplied without necessity.¹¹⁶

A653/B681

sire for it. The analysts had already done much when they were able to reduce all salts to two main genera, acidic and alkaline, but they even attempted to regard this distinction as merely a variety or varied expression of one and the same fundamental material. They sought to get the several species of earths (the material of stone and even of metal) gradually down to three, and finally to two; still not satisfied, they could not dismiss from their thought the conjecture that behind these varieties there is a single genus or even indeed a common principle^a for both earths and salts. One might have believed that this is merely a device of reason for achieving economy, for saving as much trouble as possible, and a hypothetical attempt that, if it succeeds, will through this unity give probability to the grounds of explanation it presupposed. Yet such a selfish aim can easily be distinguished from the idea, in accordance with which everyone presupposes that this unity of reason conforms to nature itself; and here reason does not beg but commands, though without being able to determine the bounds of this unity.

A654/B682

If among the appearances offering themselves to us there were such a great variety – I will not say of form (for they might be similar to one another in that) but of content, i.e., regarding the manifoldness of existing beings – that even the most acute human understanding, through comparison of one with another, could not detect the least similarity (a case which can at least be thought), then the logical law of genera would not obtain at all, no concept of a genus, nor any other universal concept, indeed no understanding at all would obtain, since it is the understanding that has to do with such concepts. The logical principle^b of genera therefore presupposes a transcendental one if it is to be applied to nature (by which I here understand only objects that are given to us). According to that principle, sameness of kind is necessarily presupposed in the manifold of a possible experience (even though we cannot determine its degree *a priori*), because without it no empirical concepts and hence no experience would be possible.

To the logical principle^c of genera which postulates identity there is opposed another, namely that of **species**, which needs manifoldness and variety in things despite their agreement under the same genus, and prescribes to the understanding that it be no less attentive to variety than to agreement. This principle (of discrimination, or of the faculty of distinguishing) severely limits the rashness of the first principle (of wit);¹⁷ and here reason shows two interests that conflict with each other: on the one side, an interest in the **domain** (universality) in regard to genera, on the other an interest in **content** (determinacy) in respect

^a *Princip*

^b *Princip*

^c *Princip*

of the manifoldness of species; for in the first case the understanding thinks much **under** its concepts, while in the second it thinks all the more **in them**. This expresses itself in the very different ways of thinking among students of nature; some of whom (who are chiefly speculative) are hostile to differences in kind, while others (chiefly empirical minds) constantly seek to split nature into so much manifoldness that one would almost have to give up the hope of judging its appearances according to general principles.^a

A655/B683

This latter way of thinking is also obviously grounded on a logical principle^b that has as its aim the systematic completeness of all cognitions, if, starting with the genus, I descend to whatever manifold may be contained under it, and thus in this way seek to secure extension for the system, just as in the first case I seek to secure simplicity by ascending to the genus. For from the sphere of the concept signifying a genus it can no more be seen how far its division will go than it can be seen from space how far division will go in the matter that fills it. Hence every **genus** requires different **species**, and these **subspecies**, and since none of the latter once again is ever without a sphere, (a domain as a *conceptus communis*),^c reason demands in its entire extension that no species be regarded as in itself the lowest; for since each species is always a concept that contains within itself only what is common to different things, this concept cannot be thoroughly determined, hence it cannot be related to an individual, consequently, it must at every time contain other concepts, i.e., subspecies, under itself. This law of specification could be expressed thus: *entium varietates non temere esse minuendas*.^d

A656/B684

But it is easy to see that even this logical law would be without sense or application if it were not grounded on a transcendental **law of specification**, which plainly does not demand an actual **infinity** in regard to the varieties of things that can become our objects – for the logical principle^e asserting the **indeterminacy** of the logical sphere in regard to possible division would give no occasion for that; but it does impose on the understanding the demand to seek under every species that comes before us for subspecies, and for every variety smaller varieties. For if there were no lower concepts, then there would also be no higher ones. Now the understanding cognizes everything only through concepts; consequently, however far it goes in its divisions, it never cog-

^a *Principien*

^b *Princip*

^c common concept

^d "The varieties of entities are not to be diminished rashly." Clearly this is Kant's attempt to formulate a counter-principle to the principle of parsimony or "law of genera": *entia praeter necessitatem non esse multiplicanda* (Entities are not to be multiplied without necessity). See A652/B680 and endnote 116.

^e *Princip*

nizes through mere intuition but always yet again through lower concepts. The cognition of appearances in their thoroughgoing determinacy (which is possible only through understanding) demands a ceaselessly continuing specification of its concepts, and a progress to the varieties that always still remain, from which abstraction is made in the concept of the species and even more in that of the genus.

A657/B685

Also this law of specification cannot be borrowed from experience; for experience can make no such extensive disclosures. Empirical specification soon stops in distinguishing the manifold, unless through the already preceding transcendental law of specification as a principle^a of reason it is led to seek such disclosures and to keep on assuming them even when they do not immediately reveal themselves to the senses. That there are absorbent earths of different species (chalky earths and muriatic earths) needed for its discovery a foregoing rule of reason that made it a task for the understanding to seek for varieties, by presupposing nature to be so abundant that it presumes them. For we have an understanding only under the presupposition of varieties in nature, just as we have one only under the condition that nature's objects^b have in themselves a sameness of kind, because it is just the manifoldness of what can be grasped together under a concept that constitutes use of this concept and the business of the understanding.

A658/B686

Reason thus prepares the field for the understanding: 1. by a principle^c of **sameness of kind** in the manifold under higher genera, 2. by a principle of the **variety** of what is same in kind under lower species; and in order to complete the systematic unity it adds 3. still another law of the **affinity** of all concepts, which offers a continuous transition from every species to every other through a graduated increase of varieties. We can call these the principles^d of the **homogeneity, specification and continuity** of forms. The last arises by uniting the first two, according as one has completed the systematic connection in the idea by ascending to higher genera, as well as descending to lower species; for then all manifolds are akin^e one to another, because they are all collectively descended,^f through every degree of extended determination, from a single highest genus.

Systematic unity under the three logical principles^g can be made palpable^h in the following way. One can regard every concept as a point,

^a *Princip*

^b *Objecte*

^c *Princip*

^d *Principien*

^e *verwandt*

^f *abstammen*

^g *Principien*

^h *sinnlich*

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which, as the standpoint of an observer, has its horizon, i.e., a multiplicity of things that can be represented and surveyed, as it were, from it. Within this horizon a multiplicity of points must be able to be given to infinity, each of which in turn has its narrower field of view; i.e., every species contains subspecies in accordance with the principle^a of specification, and the logical horizon consists only of smaller horizons (subspecies), but not of points that have no domain (individuals). But different horizons, i.e., genera, which are determined from just as many concepts, one can think as drawn out into a common horizon, which one can survey collectively from its middle point, which is the higher genus, until finally the highest genus is the universal and true horizon, determined from the standpoint of the highest concept and comprehending all manifoldness, as genera, species, and subspecies, under itself.

A659/B 687

The law of homogeneity leads me to this highest standpoint, while the law of specification leads to all the lower ones and their greatest possible variety. Since, however, in such a way nothing in the entire domain of all possible concepts is empty, and outside it nothing can be encountered, there arises from the presupposition of that universal field of view and its thoroughgoing division the principle: *non datur vacuum formarum*,^b i.e., there are no different original and primary genera, which would be, as it were, isolated and separated from one another (by an empty intervening space), but rather all the manifold genera are only partitionings^c of a single supreme and universal genus; and from this principle its immediate consequence: *datur continuum formarum*,^d i.e., all varieties of species bound one another and permit no transition to one another by a leap, but only through every smaller degree of distinction, so that from each one can reach another; in a word, there are no species or subspecies that are proximate (in the concept of reason), but intervening species are always possible, whose difference from the first and second species is smaller than their difference from each other.

A660/B 688

The first law, therefore, guards against excess in the manifold variety of original genera, and recommends sameness of kind; the second, on the contrary, limits in turn this inclination to unanimity, and demands that one distinguish subspecies before one turns to the individuals with one's universal concepts. The third law unites the first two, prescribing even in the case of the highest manifoldness a sameness of kind through the graduated transition from one species^e to others, which shows a

^a *Princip*

^b There is no vacuum of forms.

^c *Abteilungen*

^d There is a continuum of forms.

^e *Species*

kind of affinity^a of various branches, insofar as they have all sprouted from one stem.

This logical law of the *continuum specierum* (*formarum logicarum*)^b presupposes, however, a transcendental law (*lex continui in natura*),^c without which the use of the understanding through the former prescription would only mislead, since the prescription would perhaps take a path directly opposed to nature. This law must therefore rest on pure transcendental and not empirical grounds. For in the latter case it would come later than the systems; but it really first produced what is systematic in the cognition of nature. Behind these laws there is also nothing like a hidden intention to initiate probes, as mere experiments, though plainly this interconnection, where it applies, gives us a powerful reason to take as well grounded the unity that is hypothetically thought-out, and thus it has its utility in this respect; rather, one can see clearly that the laws judge the parsimony of fundamental causes, the manifoldness of effects, and the consequent affinity^d of the members of nature in themselves reasonably and in conformity with nature, and these principles therefore carry their recommendation directly in themselves,^e and not merely as methodological devices.

But it is easy to see that this continuity of forms is a mere idea, for which a corresponding object can by no means be displayed in experience, **not only** because the species^f in nature are really partitioned and therefore in themselves have to constitute a *quantum discretum*,^g and if the graduated progress in their affinity^b were continuous, they would also have to contain a true infinity of intermediate members between any two given species, which is impossible; **but also** because we could make no determinate empirical use at all of this law, since through it there is indicated not the least mark of that affinity, or how and how far we are to seek the degrees of its variety; rather, we are given nothing more than a general indication that we are to seek for it.

If we transpose the principlesⁱ we have adduced, so as to put them in an order which **accords with their experiential use**, then the principles^j of systematic **unity** would stand something like this: **manifold-**

^a *Verwandtschaft*

^b "continuum of species (of logical forms)"; Kant declines the entire phrase in the genitive.

^c law of the continuum in nature

^d *Verwandtschaft*

^e *bei sich*

^f *Species*

^g discrete quantum

^h *Verwandtschaft*

ⁱ *Principien*

^j *Principien*

A 661 / B 689

A 662 / B 690

ness, affinity,^a unity, each taken, however, as idea^b in the highest degree of their completeness. Reason presupposes those cognitions of the understanding which are first applied to experience, and seeks the unity of these cognitions in accordance with ideas that go much further than experience can reach. The affinity^c of the manifold, without detriment to its variety, under a principle^d of unity, concerns not merely the things, but even more the mere properties and powers of things. Hence if, e.g., the course of the planets is given to us as circular through a (still not fully corrected) experience, and we find variations, then we suppose these variations to consist in an orbit that can deviate from the circle through each of an infinity of intermediate degrees according to constant laws; i.e., we suppose that the movements of the planets that are not a circle will more or less approximate to its properties, and then we come upon the ellipse. The comets show an even greater variety in their paths, since (as far as observation reaches) they do not ever return in a circle; yet we guess at a parabolic course for them, since it is still akin^e to the ellipse and, if the major axis of the latter is very long, it cannot be distinguished from it in all our observations. Thus under the guidance of those principles^f we come to a unity of genera in the forms of these paths, but thereby also further to unity in the cause of all the laws of this motion (gravitation); from there we extend our conquests, seeking to explain all variations and apparent deviations from those rules on the basis of the same principle;^g finally we even add on more than experience can ever confirm, namely in accordance with the rules of affinity,^h even conceiving hyperbolical paths for comets in which these bodies leave our solar system entirely and, going from sun to sun, unite in their course the most remote parts of a world system, which for us is unbounded yet connected through one and the same moving force.ⁱ

A 663/B 691

What is strange about these principles,^j and what alone concerns us, is this: that they seem to be transcendental, and even though they contain mere ideas to be followed in the empirical use of reason, which reason can follow only asymptotically, as it were, i.e., merely by ap-

^a *Verwandtschaft*

^b *jede derselben aber als Idee* . . . Kant's pronoun and noun do not agree in number; with Erdmann, we read *Idee* (singular).

^c *Verwandtschaft*

^d *Principien*

^e *verwandt*

^f *Principien*

^g *Princip*

^h *Verwandtschaft*

ⁱ *Kraft*

^j *Principien*

A664/B692

proximation, without ever reaching them, yet these principles,^a as synthetic propositions *a priori*, nevertheless have objective but indeterminate validity, and serve as a rule of possible experience, and can even be used with good success, as heuristic principles, in actually elaborating it; and yet one cannot bring about a transcendental deduction of them, which, as has been proved above, is always impossible in regard to ideas.

In the Transcendental Analytic we have distinguished among the principles of understanding the **dynamical** ones, as merely regulative principles^b of **intuition**, from the **mathematical** ones, which are constitutive in regard to intuition. Despite this, the dynamical laws we are thinking of are still constitutive in regard to **experience**, since they make possible *a priori* the **concepts** without which there is no experience. Principles^c of pure reason, on the contrary, cannot be constitutive even in regard to empirical **concepts**, because for them no corresponding schema of sensibility can be given, and therefore they can have no object *in concreto*. Now if I depart from such an empirical use of them, as constitutive principles, how will I nevertheless secure for them a regulative use, and with this some objective validity? And what sort of meaning^d can that use have?

The understanding constitutes an object for reason, just as sensibility does for the understanding. To make systematic the unity of all possible empirical actions of the understanding is a business of reason, just as the understanding connects the manifold of appearances through concepts and brings it under empirical laws. The actions of the understanding, however, apart from the schemata of sensibility, are **undetermined**; likewise the **unity of reason** is also in itself **undetermined** in regard to the conditions under which, and the degree to which, the understanding should combine its concepts systematically. Yet although no schema can be found in **intuition** for the thoroughgoing systematic unity of all concepts of the understanding, an **analogue** of such a schema can and must be given, which is the idea of the **maximum** of division and unification of the understanding's cognition in one principle.^e For that which is greatest and most complete may be kept determinately in mind,^f because all restricting conditions, which give indeterminate manifolds, are omitted. Thus the idea of reason is an analogue of a schema of sensibility, but with this difference, that the application of concepts of the understanding to the schema of reason is not likewise a

^a *Principien*

^b *Principien*

^c *Principien*

^d *Bedeutung*

^e *Princip*

^f *lässt sich bestimmt gedenken*; the first edition reads "*lässt sich bestimmt denken*" (may be thought determinately).

A665/B693

the understanding as
object of reason

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cognition of the object itself (as in the application of the categories to their sensible schemata), but only a rule or principle^a of the systematic unity of all use of the understanding. Now since every principle that establishes for the understanding a thoroughgoing unity of its use *a priori* is also valid, albeit only indirectly, for the object of experience, the principles of pure reason will also have objective reality in regard to this object, yet not so as to **determine** something in it, but only to indicate the procedure in accordance with which the empirical and determinate use of the understanding in experience can be brought into thoroughgoing agreement with itself, by bringing it **as far as possible** into connection with the principle^b of thoroughgoing unity; and from that it is derived.

A 666/B 694

I call all subjective principles that are taken not from the constitution of the object^c but from the interest of reason in regard to a certain possible perfection of the cognition of this object,^d **maxims of reason**.¹¹⁸

maxims of reason

Thus there are maxims of speculative reason, which rest solely on reason's speculative interest, even though it may seem as if they were objective principles.^e

If merely regulative principles are considered as constitutive, then as objective principles^f they can be in conflict; but if one considers them merely as **maxims**, then it is not a true conflict, but it is merely a different interest of reason that causes a divorce between ways of thinking.^g Reason has in fact only a single unified^h interest, and the conflict between its maxims is only a variation and a reciprocal limitation of the methods satisfying this interest.

the single interest
of reason

In this way the interest in **manifoldness** (in accordance with the principleⁱ of specification) might hold more for **this** sophistical reasoner,^j while **unity** (in accordance with the principle^k of aggregation) holds more for **that** one. Each of them believes that his judgment comes from insight into the object,^l and yet he grounds it solely on the greater or lesser attachment to one of the two principles, neither of which rests on any objective grounds, but only on the interest of reason, and that could better be called "maxims" than "principles."^m If I see

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^a Princip

^b Princip

^c Object

^d Object

^e Principien

^f Principien

^g Trennung der Denkungsart

^h einiges

ⁱ Princip

^j Vernünftler

^k Princip

^l Object

^m Principien

insightful men in conflict with one another over the characteristics of human beings, animals or plants, or even of bodies in the mineral realm, where some, e.g., assume particular characters of peoples based on their descent or on decisive and hereditary distinctions between families, races, etc., while others, by contrast, fix their minds on the thought that nature has set up no predispositions at all in this matter, and that all differences rest only on external contingency, then I need only consider the constitution of the object in order to comprehend that it lies too deeply hidden for either of them to be able to speak from an insight into the nature of the object.^a There is nothing here but the twofold interest of reason, where each party takes to heart one interest or the other, or affects to do so, hence either the maxim of the manifoldness of nature or that of the unity of nature; these maxims can of course be united, but as long as they are held to be objective insights, they occasion not only conflict but also hindrances that delay the discovery of the truth, until a means is found of uniting the disputed^b interests and satisfying reason about them.

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It is the same with the assertion of, or the attack on, the widely respected law of the **ladder of continuity**^c among creatures, made current by Leibniz¹¹⁹ and excellently supported by Bonnet,¹²⁰ which is nothing but a pursuit of the principle of affinity resting on the interests of reason; for observation and insight into the arrangements of nature could never provide it as something to be asserted objectively. The rungs of such a ladder, such as experience can give them to us, stand too far apart from one another, and what we presume to be small differences are commonly such wide gaps in nature itself that on the basis of such observations (chiefly of the great manifoldness of things, among which it must always be easy to find certain similarities and approximations) nothing can be figured out about the intentions of nature. The method for seeking out order in nature in accord with such a principle,^d on the contrary, and the maxim of regarding such an order as grounded in nature in general, even though it is undetermined where or to what extent, is a legitimate and excellent regulative principle^e of reason, which, however, as such, goes much too far for experience or observation ever to catch up with it; without determining anything, it only points^f the way toward systematic unity.

^a *Object*

^b *streitig*; the first edition reads "*strittig*" (dubious).

^c *kontinuierlichen Stufenleiter*

^d *Princip*

^e *Prinzip*

^f *vorzeichnen*