

Inner Sense, Body Sense, and Kant's "Refutation of Idealism"

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I

We ordinarily think of ourselves as physical things located in space. We suppose that what we can perceive at a given time is determined by where we are at that time, that is to say, by the location of our bodies. The conception of ourselves as physical things located in space thus has an important part to play in helping us to make sense of our experience of the world.¹ It is not just a matter of believing ourselves to be embodied, but also of each one of us typically experiencing himself or herself *as* embodied, as an enduring corporeal object among corporeal objects. Yet, as has often been remarked, these are features of our thought and experience of ourselves of which Kant makes very little in the *Critique of Pure Reason*.²

On the other hand, as some recent commentators have noted, the notion of an *embodied* subject is far more prominent in Kant's writings after 1787.³ In particular, Kant appears to have contemplated the possibility that this notion might have an important part to play in developing and strengthening the argument of the 'Refutation of Idealism', a section which appeared for the first time in the second edition of the first Critique.⁴ The Refutation is concerned with the conditions under which it is possible for one to be conscious of one's own existence as determined in time. The possibility which Kant appears to have contemplated is, in the words of Henry Allison, that 'one's own body functions as the enduring object, with reference to which one's existence is determined in time'.⁵

The aim of the present discussion will be to examine this proposal. One question is whether awareness of one's own body as an enduring object is necessary for the 'empirical' self-consciousness with which Kant is concerned in the Refutation. Another question is whether awareness of one's own body is a sufficient condition. If bodily awareness is both necessary and sufficient for the determination of one's existence in time, it needs to be considered whether this would strengthen or weaken the argument of the Refutation. The answer to this question will depend, in turn, on the relationship between bodily awareness and what Kant called 'inner sense'. Consideration of these issues promises to cast welcome light on Kant's conception of empirical self-consciousness.

II

The thesis of the Refutation is that 'the mere, but empirically determined, consciousness of my own existence proves the existence of objects in space outside me' (B275)⁶. More succinctly, the claim is that inner experience is possible only on the assumption of outer experience. The argument proceeds as follows: I am conscious of my own existence as determined in time. According to the argument of the First Analogy, 'all determination of time presupposes something *permanent* in perception' (B275). This permanent cannot be 'something in me' (*ibid.*), that is, 'an intuition in me' (B275, n. 1). Thus, 'the determination of my existence in time is possible only through the existence of actual things which I perceive outside me' (B275–6). Since consciousness of one's own existence in time is necessarily bound up with consciousness of what is required for time-determination, 'the consciousness of my own existence is at the same time an immediate consciousness of the existence of other things outside me' (B276).

The form of self-consciousness with which Kant is concerned in the Refutation is not the 'transcendental' self-consciousness of the Transcendental Deduction of the Categories (see section III for an explanation of this notion), but rather 'empirical' self-consciousness, that is, the consciousness of oneself that is available to one in 'inner sense'. On this interpretation, commentators who see the Refutation as covering the same ground as the Deduction are mistaken.⁷ Inner sense, whose form is time, is a quasi-perceptual faculty by means of which 'the mind intuits itself or its inner state' (A22/B37). Even if, as has often been objected, the argument of the First Analogy establishes, at best, only that all determination of time requires the perception of something *relatively* permanent or abiding rather than absolute permanence⁸, in inner sense everything is 'in constant flux' (B291). Thus, if a Cartesian were to suggest that one's immaterial soul is the 'object' by reference to which one's own existence in time is determinable, Kant's reply would be that no such object is 'perceivable' in the flux of inner appearances. As he puts it in the Transcendental Aesthetic, 'inner sense . . . yields no intuition of the soul itself as an object' (A22/B37).

In so far as empirical self-consciousness requires the perception of something relatively fixed and abiding, it is not surprising that Kant should have considered the possibility that consciousness of one's own body might be sufficient for the determination of one's own existence in time. For this appeal to bodily awareness not to undermine the conclusion of the Refutation, two closely related conditions need to be fulfilled. The first is that one's body should count as, in the sense in which Kant uses these notions in the Refutation, an object in space *outside* one rather than something 'in' one. The second is that one's awareness of one's own body is a form of outer rather than inner experience.

It is clear that for Kant both these conditions are fulfilled. In the second edition of the Fourth Paralogism, he explicitly characterizes one's body as something 'outside' one⁹, and his references to the body in his post-1787 developments of

the Refutation of Idealism make it clear that he thought of it as an object of *outer* sense. For example, he claims in a Reflexion from 1790 that 'We are first *object of outer sense* to ourselves, for otherwise we could not perceive our place in the world and thus intuit ourselves in relation to other things'¹⁰. What *would* threaten the Refutation of Idealism is an *inner* intuition of oneself as an abiding object, but for Kant there is no question of one's awareness of one's own body constituting such an intuition. Kant would not have regarded the possibility of determining one's own existence in time by reference to one's own body as undermining the thesis that empirical self-consciousness requires awareness of an object distinct from the self, because, as Paul Guyer puts it, in the Cartesian tradition one's own body is 'the *paradigm* of an object independent of one's consciousness or inner sense' (Guyer, 1987, p. 314).

For Kant, the outer senses include sight and touch, and it is certainly true that one can see parts of one's body and touch one part of it with another. On the other hand, there are also forms of bodily awareness about which Kant has very little to say, and which might be characterized as awareness of one's body 'from the inside'. These are the forms of bodily awareness whose bearing on the Refutation of Idealism I shall be concerned with here. Awareness of one's body in this way involves the exercise of what may be called *body sense* (cf. O'Shaughnessy 1989). This form of awareness includes, for example, one's proprioceptive awareness of the position of one's limbs, and consciousness of bodily sensations. Since bodily sensations such as pains and itches present themselves as located in parts of one's body, awareness of such sensations is bound up with awareness of those bodily parts in which they are located. For reasons which will become clearer later (see section V below) it would also be appropriate to describe one's awareness of one's body 'from the inside' as a form of 'introspective' awareness. To the extent that such awareness also yields an intuition of one's body as an abiding object, it would seem that one's 'inner' awareness of this object should suffice for the purposes of determining one's existence in time.

In accordance with the two Kantian conditions introduced above, if the possibility of determining one's existence in time by reference to one's introspective awareness of one's own body is to be compatible with the argument of the Refutation, it would have to be the case that one's awareness of one's body 'from the inside' is a form of outer experience and that one's body is not something 'in' one. It might be wondered whether either of these closely related conditions is met. On the one hand, it seems a short step from saying that one is introspectively aware of one's body to saying that such awareness of it involves the exercise of inner sense. Indeed, it has even been argued (see Armstrong 1984, section 2) that body sense constitutes the best *model* for Kantian inner sense. Even if this does not entail that body sense *is* literally a form of inner sense, Armstrong's proposal certainly lends credibility to such an identification. As for whether one's body is something 'in' one, it would be worth remarking that one is not ordinarily aware of one's body merely as something with which one is 'connected'. Rather, one's body presents itself to one as the *subject* of

sensations such as pain.¹¹ As Merleau-Ponty remarks, when one says that one's foot hurts, one does not mean that one's foot is the cause of one's pain but rather that one's foot 'has' the pain.¹² It is in this sense that 'the body is a natural self and, as it were, the subject of perception' (Merleau-Ponty 1989, p. 206). On the face of it, it is difficult to see how the presented subject on one's perceptions could be 'outside' one, although matters are greatly complicated by the multiple ambiguities in Kant's use of the latter notion.

Kant's transcendental idealism prevented him from doing justice to these characteristics of bodily awareness. The idea that one's body might *appear* to one as the subject of some of one's states of consciousness is not one which he contemplated. As for whether one's body could *be* the subject of one's consciousness, this question does not have a straightforward answer within a transcendental idealist framework. On the one hand, one's body *qua* object in space could not be the possessor of one's states of consciousness. On the other hand, one's body, which appears to one as extended, might nevertheless be *in itself* the non-spatial subject of one's thoughts and states of consciousness.¹³

For those who are not tempted by transcendental idealism's conception of the self, the argument of the Refutation of Idealism does seem to be vulnerable to the line of attack hinted at above. For if one's experience of one's body from the inside suffices for the purposes of time-determination, and if introspective bodily awareness is awareness of the presented subject of one's sensations by means of inner sense, then it is no longer plausible that inner experience is only possible on the assumption of outer experience. Bodily self-awareness now appears to amount to precisely what Kant claims to be impossible, namely, 'an [inner] intuition of the subject as object' (B421). So in order to defend the Refutation against this line of argument, it needs to be shown either that bodily awareness 'from the inside' is not awareness of oneself as an abiding object and does not suffice for the determination of one's existence in time, or that it is outer rather than inner experience. The next section will be concerned with the question of whether bodily awareness suffices for the determination of one's existence in time. Section IV will then consider whether bodily awareness is necessary for empirical self-consciousness. Finally, section V will address the issues of whether one's body is, in the sense of the Refutation, 'outside' one, and whether body sense is inner or outer sense.

To anticipate, it will be suggested here that it is possible to extract from Kant's writings an argument to the effect that *if* empirical self-consciousness requires the experience of something relatively abiding, then one's awareness of one's body is not only sufficient but also necessary for empirical self-consciousness. Whether the antecedent of this conditional is defensible is not a question which will be pursued here. It will, however, be argued that the Kantian defence of the claim that bodily awareness is necessary for empirical self-consciousness is inconclusive. As for whether body sense is a form of inner sense, since the content of body sense is spatial, Kant is committed to the view that body sense is outer rather than inner.¹⁴ To this extent, Armstrong's proposal that body sense is the best model for inner sense cannot be quite right. On the other hand,

reflection on body sense will bring to light certain difficulties with Kant's conception of inner sense.

III

In order to establish whether bodily awareness could be said to yield an intuition of oneself *as* an abiding *object*, one which suffices for the determination of one's existence in time, it needs to be considered what it would be to have such an intuition. Kant's own position on this issue is made clear by his criticism of rational psychology in the Paralogisms of Pure Reason. Kant accuses rational psychology of mistaking the unity of consciousness for an intuition of the subject *as object*. The kind of 'object' of which the rational psychologist thinks he has an intuition is a numerically identical, persisting, immaterial soul-substance. Kant's argument against the rational psychologist takes as its point of departure the claim that the schema of substance is 'permanence of the real in time' (A143/B183). In other words, for the notion of substance to be empirically serviceable, 'we . . . must take our start from the permanence of an object given in experience as permanent' (A349). The notion of permanence also holds the key to Kant's understanding of what it would be to be conscious of oneself as numerically identical, for 'if I want to know through experience, the numerical identity of an external object, I shall pay heed to that permanent element in the appearance to which as subject everything is related as determination . . .' (A361–2). Putting these points together yields the following picture: to have an intuition of oneself as an object would be to experience oneself as a persisting, numerically identical substance. To experience oneself as such a substance would be to experience oneself as something permanent. Finally, experiencing oneself as something permanent requires a permanent element in one's experience of oneself.

Kant's argument against the rational psychologist turns on the claim that 'no fixed and abiding self can present itself in [the] flux of inner appearances' (A107). In other words, inner sense yields no permanent given element of the sort required to justify the claim that one has an inner experience of oneself as a persisting substance. What of transcendental rather than empirical self-consciousness? Transcendental self-consciousness or the unity of consciousness requires that one be able to attach an 'I think' to one's representations. In this sense, the 'I' of apperception is, as Kant himself emphasizes, a 'permanent appearance which we encounter in the soul' (A364). Why should the permanence of the 'I' not constitute just the element required to justify the application to oneself of the concept of substance in an empirically serviceable manner? Kant's response to this challenge is to claim that the permanence of the 'I' of apperception is, as it were, the wrong kind of permanence for the rational psychologist's purposes, for this 'I' is not a permanent intuition – indeed, it is not an intuition at all. Rather, it is a 'merely *intellectual* representation of the

spontaneity of a thinking subject' (B278). Since 'space alone is determined as permanent' (B291), to demonstrate the objective reality of the concept of substance, 'we require an intuition in space (of matter)' (ibid.). Neither inner sense nor transcendental self-consciousness can yield an intuition of the required sort. It is because the rational psychologist takes the permanence of the "I" of apperception for a permanent intuition of himself as an immaterial substance that he can be said to mistake the unity of consciousness for an intuition of the subject as object.

This argument is not without its difficulties¹⁵, but what is important for present purposes is the underlying conception of *what it would be* for one to have an intuition of oneself *as* an abiding object. For, on the face of it, one's awareness of one's body from the inside satisfies all Kant's requirements. It has already been remarked that one's body is the presented subject of one's sensations and perceptions, so bodily awareness is, at least in this sense, a form of self-awareness. By Kant's own lights, to experience the presented bodily subject of one's sensations *as an object* would be to experience it as a persisting substance, and therefore as something abiding and spatial. On the face of it, one does indeed experience one's body as the *abiding spatial* subject of one's sensations and perceptions. Both sensations and the bodily parts in which they are apparently located present themselves as modifications or parts of one and the same persisting, extended substance. It is ultimately unclear what Kant thought was involved in experiencing anything as permanent or abiding, but it is difficult to see why one's awareness of one's own body should not be described as the experience of it as something abiding. To this extent, there seems to be no reason why Kant should not accept that one's experience of one's body 'from the inside' is sufficient for the purposes of determining one's own existence in time.

At this point, it would be worth considering the following objection to the preceding line of thought: just as the permanence of the 'I' of apperception is, as it were, the wrong kind of permanence to constitute an intuition of the subject as an object, so, it might be objected, the 'permanence' of one's body as the abiding subject of one's sensations is also the wrong kind of permanence for one to be said to experience one's body as an *object*. For, as Merleau-Ponty observes, the presence of an object 'entails a possible absence' (Merleau-Ponty 1989, p. 90). In contrast, the presence to one of one's own body is not to be compared to the *de facto* presence of an object; if one's body is permanent, 'the permanence is absolute and is the ground for the relative permanence of disappearing objects, real objects' (Merleau-Ponty 1989, p. 92). From this, Merleau-Ponty concludes not merely that one's body is not given to one as an object but also that 'the body is not an object' (Merleau-Ponty 1989, p. 198).

These remarks raise a number of questions which have a bearing on the Refutation of Idealism. One question is whether one's awareness of one's own body should be thought of as a form of perceptual awareness. The sense in which, in ordinary perception, the presence of an object entails its possible absence is that perceiving an object requires that one be in the right place at the

right time. One might therefore fail to perceive what is there to be perceived because the enabling conditions of perception are not met. In contrast, although the possibility of 'proprio-blindness'¹⁶ shows that the presence of one's body to one is not absolute, there is no question of one's failing to experience one's body 'from the inside' because one is not in the right *place* to experience it. To this extent, it may not be correct to regard one's awareness of one's body 'from the inside' as a form of perceptual awareness.

In so far as awareness of one's body 'from the inside' suffices for time-determination *and* is non-perceptual, this conflicts with Kant's assertion that empirical self-consciousness requires the *perception* of something permanent. If one's body as experienced from the inside suffices for time-determination but is not an object, or, at any rate, not experienced as an object, then it would not be correct to claim that empirical self-consciousness requires awareness of something given to one as an object. The last two points might be connected as follows: on one view, it would make sense to say that one is aware of one's body as an object *only* if one's awareness of it is perceptual.¹⁷ So showing that bodily awareness is non-perceptual is enough to show that one is not aware of one's body as an object.

These remarks call for a number of comments. The first is that it is unclear whether such disanalogies as there are between bodily self-awareness and ordinary perceptual awareness justify the assertion that one's body is not an object or that one is not aware of it as such. It will not be possible here to do justice to Merleau-Ponty's illuminating discussion of these important issues, but what matters for the purposes of the Refutation is whether one is aware of one's body as something abiding. Since this condition does seem to be met, Merleau-Ponty's argument does not threaten the idea that bodily awareness might suffice for the purposes of time-determination.

As for whether bodily awareness 'from the inside' should be classified as perceptual or non-perceptual, it would certainly be possible to define 'perceptual' in such a way that awareness of one's body from the inside comes out as non-perceptual. It is, however, unclear what the interest of such a stipulation would be.¹⁸ As far as Kant is concerned, to 'intuit' an object is to stand in an immediate cognitive relation to it, one which depends upon the object's presence to one.¹⁹ To the extent that in bodily awareness one's body is immediately present to one and is given as something abiding, it would surely not be inappropriate to describe such awareness as amounting, in Kant's sense, to an intuition of it as an object.

IV

Is bodily awareness not only sufficient but also necessary for the determination of one's existence in time? One reason for thinking that it is not would be this: time-determination requires the perception of something abiding, and therefore the perception of an object in space. This object *might* be one's own body, but if

one were not aware of one's own body as an object, then it would be enough that one perceives an abiding spatial object *other* than one's own body.²⁰

Suppose, however, that it could be shown that the perception of spatial objects other than one's own body requires bodily awareness. If, as Brian O'Shaughnessy puts it, 'perception of the World depends upon perception of the body' (O'Shaughnessy 1989, p. 54), then there is no question of someone with no bodily awareness being able to determine his own existence in time by reference to his perception of some other spatial object. Why should anyone suppose that one's perception of the world depends upon bodily awareness? One possibility is that perception of objects in space requires a sense of touch and that tactile sense depends upon body sense.²¹ As it happens, there are suggestions of an argument along these lines in Kant's discussion of the senses in his *Anthropology From a Pragmatic Point of View* (Kant 1974).

Before turning to the *Anthropology*, consider first of all Kant's account of outer sense in the first *Critique*. There Kant says that by means of outer sense, 'we represent to ourselves objects as outside us, and all without exception in space' (A22/B37). The representation of an object as spatial involves the representation of it as having extension and shape (A21/B35). Space is that in which the shape and extension of a body are determined or determinable. A key difference between outer and inner sense is that 'inner intuition yields no shape' (A33/B50). At this point in his discussion Kant has nothing to say about differences between the various outer senses, but matters are quite different in the *Anthropology*. There he claims that 'in outer sense the human body is affected by physical things' (Kant 1974, p. 32), and goes on to argue that touch is the most important of the five outer senses which involve a specific organ.

Of the five outer senses that have specific organs, three – touch, sight and hearing are more objective than subjective. Of the more objective outer senses, sight and hearing must be referred originally to touch if they are to provide 'experiential knowledge' (Kant 1974, p. 34). Since experiential knowledge, for Kant, is knowledge which 'determines an object through perceptions' (A177/B218), this suggests that without touch, perception of objects would be impossible. Although sight is 'the noblest of the senses' (Kant 1974, p. 35), it is no more indispensable than hearing.

Kant explains the pre-eminence of touch in a number of different ways. In the first place, touch is the only sense in which external perception is immediate. In contrast, sight takes place mediately 'by the motion of a matter that is sensible only to a certain organ' (Kant 1974, p. 34). The sense of touch, which Kant claims is located in the fingertips, is also the sense by means of which we can discover the shape of solid bodies: 'Nature seems to have given this organ only to man, so that by feeling all the sides of a body he could form a concept of its shape. . . . Without this sense organ we should be unable to form any concept at all of the shape of a body' (Kant 1974, pp. 33–34). Although Kant refers here to the conditions under which the *concept* of shape can be formed, the context suggests that his view was that we could not form the concept of shape without touch because without touch we could not *perceive* the shape of a body.

What this account suggests is the following argument for the necessity of body sense for empirical self-consciousness: empirical self-consciousness requires the perception of something abiding in space. Outer sense is the means by which we represent to ourselves objects as outside us and in space. To represent an object as spatial is to represent it as extended and as having some shape. In order to have a representation of the shape of a body, one must have the sense of touch. To complete the argument, it would need to be shown that the sense of touch depends upon body sense.

There is at least a hint in Kant's *Opus Postumum* (Kant 1993) that spatial perception requires some form of awareness of one's own body. Just as, in the *Anthropology*, the sense of touch is claimed to be necessary for the perception of spatial properties, so, in the *Opus Postumum*, Kant refers to the possibility of space, which is not an object of perception, being *represented* as an object of experience 'by means of an intermediary concept: that is, by tactile awareness [*Betastung*] of one's own body, as to its three dimensions. . . . In this way one can say something spatial exists . . .' (Kant 1993, p. 94). It would probably be a mistake to read a great deal into these remarks, but whatever Kant's own view might have been, it is independently plausible that body sense and the sense of touch stand in a relation of mutual dependence.²²

Since body sense depends on the sense of touch, from the fact that bodily awareness is sufficient for the determination of one's existence in time, it would be a mistake to conclude that empirical self-consciousness does not require a capacity to perceive objects other than one's own body. Since the sense of touch depends upon body sense, the argument for the claim that empirical self-consciousness requires body sense can now be completed as follows: the earlier proposal, it will be recalled, was that empirical self-consciousness requires the perception of an abiding spatial object, and that this would be possible even if one lacked awareness of one's own body – any abiding object will do. Hence, bodily awareness may be sufficient for empirical self-consciousness but cannot be necessary. It is now clear where this proposal goes wrong by Kant's lights. It assumes that the capacity to perceive spatial objects is independent of body sense, but the two cannot be independent if, as Kant claims or implies, spatial perception requires a sense of touch, and the sense of touch requires body sense. So body sense is not only sufficient but also necessary for empirical self-consciousness.

What is clearly most problematic about this argument is the suggestion that the representation of shape would be impossible in the absence of a sense of touch. Nothing that is said in the first *Critique* prepares one for this assertion, which is at odds with the point that shapes can be seen as well as felt. It is important to note in this connection that Kant's claim is not merely that without a sense of touch we would be able to form only somewhat attenuated representations of shape on the basis of vision alone, but the much stronger claim that without touch one would have no representation *at all* of the shape of a body. It is an interesting and important historical question what led Kant to make this claim, but, on the face of it, the somewhat sketchy discussion in the

Anthropology leaves a large gap in the argument for the claim that experiential knowledge requires a sense of touch and therefore body sense.²³ If empirical self-consciousness requires the perception of something abiding, there appears to be no reason why someone who is completely anaesthetized should not be able to determine his existence in time simply by visually experiencing abiding spatial objects.²⁴

In order to establish the indispensability of body sense, it would need to be shown not only that it is necessary for touch but also that it is necessary for sight. Can this be shown? Here one might appeal to Evans' notion of 'egocentric space', a framework which centres on the subject's body and whose coordinates are given by the concepts 'up' and 'down', 'left' and 'right', and 'in front' and 'behind' (Evans 1982, ch. 6). Using this notion, it might be argued that visually experiencing the shapes of objects around one involves experiencing them as standing in certain relations to one's body²⁵, and that this in turn requires body sense. This argument might be further strengthened by appealing to the idea that the existence of egocentric space requires a capacity for physical action (Evans, *ibid.*) and then claiming that a creature without body sense would be incapable of such action.

There is a great deal here that is problematic. Even if it is true that one's visual experiences of the shapes of objects necessarily embody information about their locations in egocentric space, someone lacking body sense could arguably still see something as in front of him or to his left or right (cf. Peacocke 1992, p. 62). As for the link between action and spatial perception, this presumably cannot be so tight as to imply that someone who is completely paralyzed could not have spatial experiences. This leaves it unclear in what sense spatial perception depends upon the 'possibility' of physical action. Finally, as is brought out by proprio-blind people (see Cole (1991) for a fascinating case study) who are still capable of physical action, the connection between body sense and physical action is less tight than might have been supposed, although it is true that the people concerned are not *completely* lacking in body sense.

Perhaps, then, the most that one could hope to show is that visual experience of objects in space is the experience of them from a certain point of view, which one must *think of* as the point of view of an embodied subject. The suggestion is now that perception of the world requires that one has, and takes oneself to have, a body.²⁶ But this will still not close the gap in the argument unless it could be shown that someone without body sense could not even *conceive* of himself in this way.²⁷ This issue will have to be pursued on another occasion.

Consider, next, the case of someone who is placed in a state of *complete* sensory deprivation, without either sight or body sense. On one view, even this radical form of deprivation need not result in a loss of 'self-consciousness', that is, an ability to think I-thoughts (see Anscombe 1975, p. 58). It might be replied, however, that the 'self-consciousness' of someone in a state of complete sensory deprivation would be 'transcendental' rather than 'empirical', so there is no conflict with the argument of the Refutation. Yet the core of Kant's notion of empirical self-consciousness seems to be the consciousness of oneself as

temporally extended. Thus, it might be objected that even in a state of complete sensory deprivation one could still have some sense of oneself as temporally extended. If this is right, it may not be correct to describe one's I-thoughts as merely expressive of transcendental rather than empirical self-consciousness.

Understood in this way, the sensory deprivation example threatens not only the claim that empirical self-consciousness requires awareness of one's own body but also the claim that it requires the perception of *anything* abiding. It would, however, be worth making the point that such examples are all of human beings who have had the full use of all their senses up to a given moment and who have subsequently suffered a loss of sight and body sense. They therefore do not establish that the attribution of empirical self-consciousness to someone born into a state of sensory deprivation would be unproblematic. If the argument of the Refutation of Idealism has any force at all, then what cannot be made sense of is the idea of someone who has *never* had the capacity to perceive abiding spatial objects either by touch or sight nevertheless being able to determine his own existence in time. As against *this* claim, the case of complete sensory deprivation is inconclusive.

V

If one's body is not an object in space outside one, and if body sense is inner rather than outer, the thesis that bodily awareness is sufficient for empirical self-consciousness would be at odds with the conclusion of the Refutation of Idealism. Earlier, it was remarked that Kant explicitly characterizes one's body as something outside one. Clearly, there is no question of one's body being 'outside' one if this means that it is 'in another region of space from that in which I find myself' (A23/B38). If one is to think of oneself as having a location at all, then one's location is the location of one's body.²⁸ In the second edition of the Fourth Paralogism Kant provides a different gloss on the idea that one's body is outside one. He describes as analytic the proposition that 'I distinguish my own existence as that of a thinking being, from other things outside me – among them my body – . . . for *other* things are such as I think to be *distinct* from myself' (B409). Although Kant is careful not to conclude from this that one could exist without existing in human form, the claim that one distinguishes one's own existence from that of one's body is already a large concession to Descartes.

This might prompt the response that to the extent that one's body is the presented subject of one's sensations, its existence is not distinguishable from one's own existence. If one does not distinguish one's own existence from that of one's body, one's body is not something outside one in the sense of the Fourth Paralogism. To this it may be replied that the sense in which one's body is thought of as distinct from oneself is not that it is thought of as distinct from that which 'has' one's *bodily sensations*; rather, the claim is that one distinguishes one's own existence as *thinking* being from one's body. One's body

may be the presented subject of bodily sensations but not of “pure” thought.²⁹ This is the sense in which one can at least think of one’s thinking subject as distinct from one’s body.

This division between the subjects of thought and sensation is difficult to sustain. For, on the one hand, Kant claims that ‘we are justified in saying that our thinking subject is not corporeal’ because ‘inasmuch as it is represented by us as object of inner sense, it cannot, in so far as it thinks, be an object of outer sense, that is, an appearance in space’ (A357). On the other hand, the objects of inner sense appear to include not only thoughts but also consciousness and feelings (see A357–8). If these categories cover sensations such as pain, then once again the distinction between one’s own existence as thinking subject (*qua* object of inner sense) and the existence of one’s body seems problematic. Kant’s comments serve only to confirm the suspicion that, as M. R. Ayers puts it, he was ‘no less inclined than the dogmatic dualist to underrate the claims of the bodily or empirical self to be, and to be presented as, the subject of experience and consciousness generally’ (Ayers 1991, p. 287).

The sense of ‘outside me’ that is most directly relevant to the Refutation of Idealism may be clarified by noting Kant’s own distinction between transcendental and empirical externality (see A373). Something is outside us in the transcendental sense if it exists apart from us as thing in itself. It is outside us in the empirical sense if it is to be found in space. On this conception of externality, the phrase ‘in space outside’ me is pleonastic.³⁰ Since one’s body is in space, there is no question that it is ‘outside’ one in this sense. As this is the notion of externality which Kant seems to employ in the Refutation, it is easy to understand why he would not have regarded the possibility of determining one’s existence in time by reference to one’s body as undermining the Refutation. It is also clear that for Kant body sense must be outer rather than inner, for one’s body is, and is presented in body sense as being, a spatial object, whereas inner sense ‘has to do neither with shape nor position’ (A33/B4–50).

So far, all seems plain sailing for Kant’s post-1787 developments of the Refutation, but matters become more complicated as soon as the notions of inner sense and body sense are subjected to closer scrutiny. At the outset, it was claimed that one’s awareness of one’s body ‘from the inside’ is a form of introspective awareness. One way of explaining this characterization would be this: introspective self-awareness, properly so-called, is a form of awareness on the basis of which it ought to be possible to make first person statements that are, in Shoemaker’s terminology, ‘immune to error through misidentification’ relative to the first person pronoun.³¹ To say that a statement ‘a is \emptyset ’ is immune to this kind of error is to say that the following is not possible: the speaker knows some particular thing to be \emptyset but makes the mistake of asserting ‘a is \emptyset ’ because, and only because, he mistakenly thinks that the thing he knows to be \emptyset is what ‘a’ refers to (Shoemaker 1968, p. 557). Since self-ascriptions of pain, as well as proprioceptively-based self-ascriptions of limb position are both immune to error through misidentification, the bodily awareness on which they are based is introspective.³²

It has already been noted that for Kant, bodily awareness cannot be a form of inner sense, in so far as its content is spatial. This creates a difficulty for the idea that pains are perceived by means of inner sense. For, to the extent that to experience a pain is to experience it as located in a part of one's body, it seems that the experience of pain has some spatial content. Yet would it not be extremely odd to suppose that pains are perceived by means of *outer* sense? Kant might have responded to this question in one of two ways. Firstly, he might have disputed the claim that the location of a sensation is an intrinsic feature of it. Since there is nothing intrinsically spatial about one's awareness of pains, there is no reason why such awareness should not be seen as involving the exercise of inner sense. This response fits what Kant says in the Anticipations of Perception, where it is claimed that sensations only have intensive magnitude (i.e. degree) on the grounds that 'sensation is not in itself an objective representation, and . . . neither the intuition of space nor that of time is to be met with in it' (A166/B208).

The suggestion that the location of a sensation is not intrinsic to it is sufficiently unattractive to make one want to find an alternative to it. As O'Shaughnessy remarks, experiencing a pain as at a place is not additional to experiencing it; it is 'the logically necessary mode in which it is experienced' (O'Shaughnessy 1980, p. 182). Fortunately, there are suggestions in the *Anthropology* of an alternative to the position adopted in the Anticipations of Perception. In the *Anthropology*, Kant draws a distinction between those outer senses which depend on a specific organ and what he calls 'vital' sensations, which do not. Examples of vital sensations include 'the *thrill* that comes over us at the mere idea of the sublime, and the *gooseflesh* with which fairy tales put children to bed late at night' (Kant 1974, p. 33). What is interesting about Kant's account of vital sensations is that it places them on the side of what is perceived by *outer* sense. The reason for this, it appears, is that the outer senses are those that give us sensations or representations of bodies, and vital sensations 'permeate the body so far as there is life in it' (ibid.). Since vital sensations are placed on the 'outer' side of the inner-outer division of the senses, there seems no reason in principle why pains should not also be placed on this side, for they also permeate parts of one's body.

It was suggested above that it would be extremely odd to claim that pains are perceived by means of outer sense. Why would this be odd? One reason might be that it is hard to reconcile this suggestion with the immunity to error through misidentification of self-ascriptions of pain. For those who are persuaded by this consideration, however, the moral is not that pains are perceived by inner sense; the moral is rather that awareness of pains is not a form of *perception* at all, inner or outer.³³ The idea is that the immunity to error through misidentification of self-ascriptions of a given type is incompatible with the view that self-ascriptions of that type are perceptually based, for perceptually based self-ascriptions would be bound to leave open the possibility of misidentification.

It is unclear whether or not this argument would have moved Kant, but it would be asking what is left for inner sense once it is accepted that bodily

sensations are not perceived by inner sense. Apart from feelings, the objects of Kantian inner sense are supposed to include thoughts, consciousness, desire, and resolution (A357–8). But the idea that the members of this disparate list are inwardly ‘perceived’ is arguably even more problematic than the idea that pains are. The intuitive notion of inner sense is that of inner perception or what Evans calls ‘internal self-scanning’ (Evans 1982, p. 230, n. 42), and if it makes sense to talk about internal self-scanning at all, then bodily perception is the best example of it.³⁴ This much is right about Armstrong’s analogy. Since the spatial content of bodily perception means that Kant cannot regard it as involving the exercise of inner sense, the moral may well be that there is no such thing as Kantian inner sense.

For reasons of space, this argument against the very idea of inner sense cannot be developed here, but it is clear that such an argument would have serious consequences for the Refutation of Idealism. Indeed, the question of whether outer experience is a necessary condition of ‘empirical’ self-consciousness in Kant’s sense could not even be asked. Instead, one would have to ask whether introspective self-awareness, which need not be thought of in perceptual terms, involves the experience of objects in space. As introspective self-awareness includes certain kinds of bodily awareness, this question is all too easy to answer.

To give the revised version of the Refutation some interest, one would have to distinguish those forms of introspective self-awareness which already have spatial content from those which do not, and ask whether the latter require outer experience. The best candidate for being a form of introspective self-awareness without spatial content would be what Kant calls ‘pure consciousness of the activity that constitutes thinking’ (Kant 1974, p. 21). But this also happens to be Kant’s definition of apperception in the *Anthropology*, and the Transcendental Deduction of the Categories, together with the Transcendental Aesthetic, already provide one with the resources to answer in the affirmative the question of whether apperception requires outer experience. So those commentators who do not see the Refutation as a significant advance on the Deduction might not, after all, be very far from the truth.³⁵

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NOTES

¹ See Cassam (1989) for a more detailed defence of this claim.

² Kant (1929).

³ Paul Guyer makes this point in Guyer (1987), pp. 313–314.

⁴ Kant (1929), B274–279.

⁵ Allison (1983), p. 303.

⁶ All references in this form are to the ‘A’ (1781) or ‘B’ (1787) editions of Kemp Smith’s 1929 translation of the *Critique of Pure Reason*.

⁷ This point is emphasized in Allison (1983), chapter 14. My account of the Refutation of Idealism follows Allison's.

⁸ For a version of this objection, see Strawson (1966), p. 129.

⁹ See B409.

¹⁰ Quoted in Guyer (1987), p. 314.

¹¹ It is in this sense that, as Ayers puts it, the bodily self is the '*presented* subject of experience' (Ayers 1991, p. 286).

¹² See Merleau-Ponty (1989), p. 93.

¹³ There are illuminating discussions of this point in Aquila (1979), part V, and Ayers (1991), p. 287.

¹⁴ As Charles Parsons notes, Kant's view would presumably have been that 'such objective content as proprioceptive sensations have would belong to outer sense' (Parsons 1992, p. 93, n. 19).

¹⁵ The most striking is the apparent conflict between the claim that the experience of numerical identity requires a permanent element in experience and Kant's own remark that 'the representation of something *permanent* in existence is not the same as *permanent representation*' (Bxli). The significance of this remark for the Refutation is usefully discussed in Guyer (1987), pp. 309–310.

¹⁶ This is Oliver Sacks' term for a whole-body loss of touch and proprioception. See p. x of his foreword to Cole (1991).

¹⁷ This would be a consequence of Shoemaker's account of what it would be to be aware of oneself as an object in Shoemaker (1984), section 8.

¹⁸ As Martin emphasizes (Martin, forthcoming) even if bodily awareness is not perceptual, it is still awareness.

¹⁹ See A320 and Kant (1977), section 8, for Kant's definition of 'intuition'.

²⁰ This appears to be Aquila's view in Aquila (1979).

²¹ This line of argument is developed in O'Shaughnessy (1989).

²² This is argued for in O'Shaughnessy (1989).

²³ According to Hatfield (1990), Kant's point is that vision originally represents the world only in two dimensions and that 'our perception of solid (three-dimensional) shape would be impossible without the sense of touch' (p. 105). This may help to close one gap in Kant's argument, but it raises the question whether empirical self-consciousness requires the perception of solid shape.

²⁴ See Aquila (1979) for further discussion of this point.

²⁵ Evans claims that 'to have the visual experience of four points of light arranged in a square amounts to no more than being in a complex informational state which embodies information about the egocentric location of those lights' (Evans 1985, p. 392). As John Campbell has noted, however, work in psychology suggests that the shape of an object can be perceived even if one does not experience it as having any particular egocentric location. See Campbell (1989).

²⁶ See Aquila (1979), pp. 277–278 for this suggestion.

²⁷ This appears to have been Evans' view. See Evans (1982), pp. 265–6.

²⁸ Here I ignore the possibility of thinking of one's location as that of one's brain, which may not be where the rest of one's body is.

²⁹ Even this much is disputed in Ayers (1991), at p. 286.

³⁰ As Kemp Smith notes. See Kemp Smith (1962), p. 309, n. 2.

³¹ See Shoemaker (1968) for the notion of immunity to error through misidentification.

³² For a defence of the claim that proprioceptively based self-ascriptions are immune to error through misidentification, see Evans (1982), chapter 7, and Cassam (forthcoming).

³³ This is Shoemaker's view in Shoemaker (1986).

³⁴ This appears to be Evans' view. See Evans (1982), pp. 230–1.

³⁵ Allison accuses Strawson (1966) of misunderstanding the Refutation of Idealism by treating it as an appendage to the Transcendental Deduction (Allison 1983, p. 294). In fact, Strawson does acknowledge that, unlike the Deduction, the starting point for the Refutation is empirical rather than transcendental consciousness (Strawson 1966, p. 127, n. 1). Strawson's conception of empirical self-consciousness is however somewhat different from Kant's.

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