

commonly thereafter. To these predicates belong warmth, color, taste, etc. That I, however, even beyond these, include (for weighty reasons) also among mere appearances the remaining qualities of bodies, which are called *primarias*: extension, place, and more generally space along with everything that depends on it (impenetrability or materiality, shape, etc.), is something against which not the least ground of uncertainty can be raised; and as little as someone can be called an idealist because he wants to admit colors as properties that attach not to the object in itself, but only to the sense of vision as modifications, just as little can my system be called idealist simply because I find that even more of, *namely, all of the properties that make up the intuition of a body* belong merely to its appearance: for the existence of the thing that appears is not thereby nullified, as with real idealism, but it is only shown that through the senses we cannot cognize it at all as it is in itself.

I would very much like to know how then my claims must be framed so as not to contain any idealism. Without doubt I would have to say: that the representation of space not only is perfectly in accordance with the relation that our sensibility has to objects, for I have said that, but that it is even fully similar to the object; an assertion to which I can attach no sense, any more than to the assertion that the sensation of red is similar to the property of cinnabar that excites this sensation in me. [4:290]

### *Note III*

From this an easily foreseen but empty objection can now be quite easily rejected: “namely that through the ideality of space and time the whole sensible world would be transformed into sheer illusion.”<sup>9</sup> After all philosophical insight into the nature of sensory cognition had previously been perverted by making sensibility into merely a confused kind of representation, through which we might still cognize things as they are but without having the ability to bring everything in this representation of ours to clear consciousness, we showed on the contrary that sensibility consists not in this logical difference of clarity or obscurity, but in the genetic difference of the origin of the cognition itself, since sensory cognition does not at all represent things as they are but only in the way in which they affect our

<sup>9</sup> This charge represents the tenor of the Garve–Feder review.

senses, and therefore that through the senses mere appearances, not the things themselves, are given to the understanding for reflection; from this necessary correction an objection arises, springing from an inexcusable and almost deliberate misinterpretation, as if my system transformed all the things of the sensible world into sheer illusion.

If an appearance is given to us, we are still completely free as to how we want to judge things from it. The former, namely the appearance, was based on the senses, but the judgment on the understanding, and the only question is whether there is truth in the determination of the object or not. The difference between truth and dream, however, is not decided through the quality of the representations that are referred to objects, for they are the same in both, but through their connection according to the rules that determine the connection of representations in the concept of an object, and how far they can or cannot stand together in one experience. And then it is not the fault of the appearances at all, if our cognition takes illusion for truth, that is, if intuition, through which an object is given to us, is taken for the concept of the object, or even for its existence, which [4:291] only the understanding can think. The course of the planets is represented to us by the senses as now progressive, now retrogressive, and herein is neither falsehood nor truth, because as long as one grants that this is as yet only appearance, one still does not judge at all the objective quality of their motion. Since, however, if the understanding has not taken good care to prevent this subjective mode of representation from being taken for objective, a false judgment can easily arise, one therefore says: they appear to go backwards; but the illusion is not ascribed to the senses, but to the understanding, whose lot alone it is to render an objective judgment from the appearance.

In this manner, if we do not reflect at all on the origin of our representations, and we connect our intuitions of the senses, whatever they may contain, in space and time according to rules for the connection of all cognition in one experience, then either deceptive illusion or truth can arise, according to whether we are heedless or careful; that concerns only the use of sensory representations in the understanding, and not their origin. In the same way, if I take all the representations of the senses together with their form, namely space and time, for nothing but appearances, and these last two for a mere form of sensibility that is by no means to be found outside it in the objects, and I make use of these same representations only in relation to possible experience: then in the fact that I take them

for mere appearances is contained not the least illusion or temptation toward error; for they nonetheless can be connected together correctly in experience according to rules of truth. In this manner all the propositions of geometry hold good for space as well as for all objects of the senses, and hence for all possible experience, whether I regard space as a mere form of sensibility or as something inhering in things themselves; though only in the first case can I comprehend how it may be possible to know those propositions *a priori* for all objects of outer intuition; otherwise, with respect to all merely possible experience, everything remains just as if I had never undertaken this departure from the common opinion.

But if I venture to go beyond all possible experience with my concepts of space and time – which is inevitable if I pass them off for qualities that attach to things in themselves (for what should then prevent me from still permitting them to hold good for the very same things, even if my senses might now be differently framed and either suited to them or not?) – then an important error can spring up which rests on an illusion, since I passed off as universally valid that which was a condition for the intuition of things (attaching merely to my subject, and surely valid for all objects of the senses, hence for all merely possible experience), because I referred it to the things in themselves and did not restrict it to conditions of experience. [4:292]

Therefore, it is so greatly mistaken that my doctrine of the ideality of space and time makes the whole sensible world a mere illusion, that, on the contrary, my doctrine is the only means for securing the application to actual objects of one of the most important bodies of cognition – namely, that which mathematics expounds *a priori* – and for preventing it from being taken for nothing but mere illusion, since without this observation it would be quite impossible to make out whether the intuitions of space and time, which we do not derive from experience but which nevertheless lie *a priori* in our representations, were not mere self-produced brain phantoms, to which no object at all corresponds, at least not adequately, and therefore geometry itself a mere illusion, whereas we have been able to demonstrate the incontestable validity of geometry with respect to all objects of the sensible world for the very reason that the latter are mere appearances.

Secondly, it is so greatly mistaken that these principles of mine, because they make sensory representations into appearances, are supposed, in place of the truth of experience, to transform sensory representations

into mere illusion, that, on the contrary, my principles are the only means of avoiding the transcendental illusion by which metaphysics has always been deceived and thereby tempted into the childish endeavor of chasing after soap bubbles, because appearances, which after all are mere representations, were taken for things in themselves; from which followed all those remarkable enactments of the antinomy of reason, which I will mention later on, and which is removed through this single observation: that appearance, as long as it is used in experience, brings forth truth, but as soon as it passes beyond the boundaries of experience and becomes transcendent, brings forth nothing but sheer illusion.

[4:293] Since I therefore grant their reality to the things that we represent to ourselves through the senses, and limit our sensory intuition of these things only to the extent that in no instance whatsoever, not even in the pure intuitions of space and time, does it represent anything more than mere appearances of these things, and never their quality in themselves, this is therefore no thorough-going illusion ascribed by me to nature, and my protestation against all imputation of idealism is so conclusive and clear that it would even seem superfluous if there were not unauthorized judges who, being glad to have an ancient name for every deviation from their false though common opinion, and never judging the spirit of philosophical nomenclatures but merely clinging to the letter, were ready to put their own folly in the place of well-determined concepts, and thereby to twist and deform them. For the fact that I have myself given to this theory of mine the name of transcendental idealism cannot justify anyone in confusing it with the empirical idealism of *Descartes* (although this idealism was only a problem, whose insolubility left everyone free, in *Descartes'* opinion, to deny the existence of the corporeal world, since the problem could never be answered satisfactorily) or with the mystical and visionary<sup>10</sup> idealism of *Berkeley* (against which, along with other similar fantasies, our *Critique*, on the contrary, contains the proper antidote).<sup>11</sup> For what I called idealism did not concern the existence of things (the

<sup>10</sup> The German word *schwärmerisch*, and the related *Schwärmerei*, can also be translated as “enthusiastical” and “enthusiasm,” in the sense of religious enthusiasm; the word has the connotation of someone’s being guided by imagination and feeling, perhaps to a pathological extreme.

<sup>11</sup> René Descartes (1596–1650) raised a skeptical challenge concerning the existence of bodies in the First of his *Six Meditations* (original Latin edition, Amsterdam, 1641), but he in fact claimed to remove it in the Sixth. George Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne (1685–1753), presented his idealism, which granted existence only to immaterial beings, in the *Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge* (Dublin, 1710) and *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous* (London, 1713); his works appeared in German translation in 1781.

doubting of which, however, properly constitutes idealism according to the received meaning), for it never came into my mind to doubt that, but only the sensory representation of things, to which space and time above all belong; and about these last, hence in general about all *appearances*, I have only shown: that they are not things (but mere ways of representing), nor are they determinations that belong to things in themselves. The word transcendental, however, which with me never signifies a relation of our cognition to things, but only to the *faculty of cognition*, was intended to prevent this misinterpretation. But before it prompts still more of the same, I gladly withdraw this name, and I will have it called critical idealism. But if it is in fact reprehensible idealism to transform actual things (not appearances) into mere representations,<sup>12</sup> with what name shall we christen that idealism which, conversely, makes mere representations into things? I think it could be named *dreaming* idealism, to distinguish it from the preceding, which may be called *visionary* idealism, both of which were to have been held off by my formerly so-called transcendental, or better, [4:294] *critical* idealism.

<sup>12</sup> At the very end of Berkeley's *Three Dialogues*, Philonous summarizes the immaterialist position by conjoining two phrases that he attributes respectively to "the vulgar" and to philosophers: "that those things they immediately perceive are the real things," and "that the things immediately perceived are ideas which exist only in the mind"; this is in effect to equate things with (mere) ideas or representations.