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Manifest Ideality: A Response to Lucy Allais' Account of Kantian Appearances.

Risha Kuthoore
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

MANIFEST IDEALITY

A RESPONSE TO LUCY ALLAIS' ACCOUNT OF KANTIAN APPEARANCES

by

Risha Kuthoore

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ABSTRACT

MANIFEST IDEALITY

by

Risha Kuthoore

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In *Manifest Reality,* Lucy Allais aims to explain the mind-dependence of Kantian appearances without regarding them as constructions out of what exists merely in the mind. To this end, Allais develops an account where cognizing an appearance involves direct consciousness of a thing in itself, though only as it is in relation to us, i.e. as appearance. She thus reads Kant's distinction between things in themselves and appearances as a distinction between the mind-independent and essentially mind-dependent relational properties of one and the same objects. In this paper, I articulate two important challenges for Allais' account of appearances. First, I argue that her relational view is incompatible with Kant's claim that space and time are wholly subjective: they do not represent any feature of things in themselves. Second, I argue that Allais' starting point, her anti-phenomenalism, skews her reading of Kant's text. Her arguments against phenomenalism, which also carry the burden of her relationalism, thus turn out to be less conclusive than she takes them to be.

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> "One possible definition of the work of genius: a book of genius is a book that can be read in a slightly or very different way by each generation"— Borges, *Selected Non-Fictions*, 1999 (p. 473).

§1. Introduction.

§1.1. Kant's Idealism and Realism: Navigating Towards a Moderate Metaphysical Interpretation.

In Manifest Reality, Lucy Allais presents a moderate metaphysical reading of Kant's transcendental idealism. Kant's doctrine of transcendental idealism, as Allais describes it, consists of three main parts (MR, 7):[1]

1. **A distinction:** between things in themselves (*Dinge an sich*) and things as they appear to us, or appearances (*Erscheinungen*).
2. **A claim about appearances**: that appearances are mere representations, and that they do not exist apart from a connection to possible perception.
3. **A claim about things in themselves:** that we do not, and cannot, have cognition (*Erkenntnis*) of things as they are in themselves.

Allais' reading of this doctrine is "moderate" because she situates it between two historically influential "extreme" ways of reading Kant's doctrine (MR, 7):

1. **Phenomenalism**:[2] proponents of this view claim that appearances and things-in-themselves are two ontologically distinct classes of objects. Whereas things-in-themselves are non-sensible, non-spatio-temporal objects,[3] appearances are mind-dependent spatiotemporal objects of experience that exist in the mind.[4]
2. **Deflationism**: the proponents of this view maintain that the distinction between things in themselves and appearances is not ontological, but methodological or epistemic, and that Kant

[1] All quotations of Kant are from the Cambridge Editions of the Works of Immanuel Kant, Paul Guyer and Allen Wood general editors. Citations of the *Critique of Pure Reason* use standard B-edition pagination alone, save for cases where passages only appear in the A-edition. Citations from other works refer to *Akademie Ausgabe* volume number and page number.

[2] She has in mind views like that of Turbayne (1955), Bennett (1966), Wilkerson (1976), Guyer (1987), and Van Cleve (1999). She also notes that there has been a recent resurgence of the phenomenalist and noumenalist readings and cites Jauernig (forthcoming) and Stang (2015) as examples.

[3] Allais calls this position "noumenalism" about things in themselves. She attributes this view to P. F. Strawson (1966: 236) among others. Not all phenomenalists are noumenalsists though; some phenomenalists might think that there are objects that are distinct from appearances, without giving a positive characterization of what these objects. See, for example, Guyer (2007: 12).

[4] I will say more in what follows about what Allais means by this.

is not committed to a metaphysical position according to which there exists an aspect of reality which we cannot know.[5]

The continuing interpretative swing between these two extremes arises out of a difficulty in resolving a tension that lies at the heart of the *Critique,* a tension which provided the impetus to Kant's own intellectual development. This is the tension between idealism and realism. Idealism and realism give rise to competing philosophical concerns, and one of Kant's crucial aims in the *Critique* is to accommodate the philosophical pressures that arise from each side (MR, 10).[6] The extreme views fail, according to Allais, because they do not do justice to Kant's successful reconciliation of these traditionally competing positions. Whereas phenomenalist views compromise Kant's realism by pushing appearances into the mind, deflationary views trivialize his idealism by denying that Kant was committed to the existence of an incognizable aspect of reality. Allais, in an effort to overcome these shortcomings, provides an account that focusses on capturing Kant's notoriously difficult balancing act. She thus provides the following "moderate" reading of each prong of Kant's tripartite doctrine:

1. The distinction between a thing in itself and its appearance is a **metaphysical** one—these are two ways in which one and the same object exists. Allais' calls this one object that exists in two ways the "thing in itself". This thing in itself has a twofold nature:[7] it has a way in which it is in relation to experience ("appearance"), and a way in which it is independent of experience ("thing as it is in itself").
2. An appearance is a "mere representation" not because it exists as modification of an inner states of the mind, but because it is a feature the thing in itself has *only* in relation us.[8] An appearance is the **essentially mind-dependent nature** of an object which can exist independently of us.
3. The mind-dependent nature of an object is grounded in more fundamental, mind-independent nature, which is never given to us in experience. Intuitions provide us with things-in-

[5] She has in mind views like that of, Bird (1962; 2006), Grier (2001), Allison (2004), Senderowicz (2005).
[6] It should be noted that my concern here is with the first *Critique* alone.
[7] For Allais, not all things-in-themselves have this two-fold nature. There are some things (e.g. Cartesian souls and Leibnizian monads) which never become manifest in sense experience, and which we can never therefore have cognition of. Hereon, when I speak of the "thing-in-itself", I will only refer to the objects which have an essentially manifest nature in addition to their intrinsic nature.
[8] By "us" I meant suitably situated, and suitably receptive sensible beings.

themselves (as appearance), and we have cognition only of these things in experience. Thus, we have **no cognition of things as they are in themselves**.[9]

On this moderate reading, Kant's distinction between things-in-themselves and appearances is understood as a difference between the intrinsic and extrinsic nature of one and the same object.[10] On the one hand, the object has an intrinsic nature which is given by its mind-independent properties. These properties determine how the object is "as it is in itself". On the other, the object has a way it is in relation to us, "as appearance".[11] This is its extrinsic or relational nature, which is constituted by its mind-dependent properties. Allais calls the object's extrinsic properties its "essentially manifest" properties. Allais elucidates the notion of an essentially manifest property by using the example of colour: being colored is a property *of the object*, it is a property of how the object *looks*,[12] and it is *essentially* such a property, because an object's being coloured is dependent on its possible appearance to conscious subjects (MR, 122).[13] An appearance, therefore, is the essentially manifest nature of an object; it is how an object is, but *only* how it is in virtue of being perceivable.[14] To use Kant's terms, an appearance is 'what is not to be encountered in the object in itself at all, but is always to be

[9] Allais takes Kant's central term *Erkenntnis,* to refer to cognition. She says, "Cognition, unlike knowledge, can be false (B83), and what is relevant to whether or not something qualifies as cognition is not whether it has some specified kind of justification or warrant, but rather the kind of representation of objects with which it is able to provide us" (MR, 13). She says, "cognition requires, in addition to conceptual thought, the possibility of acquaintance with the objects of cognition. Acquaintance (unlike merely having a concept) is a relation to an object that guarantees the existence of the object and which individuates a specific particular", and she takes intuition to play this role (MR, 14). In this paper, I will not deal with the issue of whether concepts are needed for intuitions.

[10] Allais herself avoids using this distinction, because of the confusion that surrounds it in contemporary philosophy. Yet, she repeatedly calls the mind-independent nature of object their "intrinsic nature" (see for instance: 33, 72, 75, 106, 221). Thus, I use this distinction to track her difference between mind-independent properties and mind-dependent (relational) properties.

[11] Thus, the difference between the thing in itself and an appearance is not *just* a difference between two ways of considering things. Instead, it is a difference between the kinds of properties an object has.

[12] The idea that colours are *essentially* manifest goes beyond the claim that they are manifest—the thought is that "these properties do not exist apart from the possibility of visual experience like ours" (MR, 122).

[13] This accounts for two commonly accepted features of colour which pull in opposite directions. One pressure is to preserve the idea that colour is, as it phenomenologically appears to be, a property of objects. The other pressure is a function of the idea that colour has an essential relation to visual experience: it is a feature of the way things look.

[14] Properly speaking, it has these properties so long as the *possibility* of perception exists, for Allais.

encountered in its relation to the subject and is inseparable from the representation of the object' (B70n).

The moderate view, thus, avoids the two extremes: it allows that there is an aspect of reality which we do not cognize, and it avoids reducing appearances to mere mental items. Allais' Kant posits that there are things in the world, and that it is *these* things that are given to us in experience – albeit never in themselves, but only as appearance. While this position makes the radical claim that we cognize only those features of reality that are mind-dependent, i.e. the essentially manifest nature of the world, it straightforwardly allows cognition of things in themselves, rather than objects that exist only as constructions of the mind. This, according to Allais, is supposed to give us both a radical form of idealism and a robust form of empirical realism.

My aim in this paper is to press on Allais' ability to draw this conclusion. Allais' view, I will argue, requires a more robust form of realism than Kant's idealism can accommodate. This is not to say that any one of the accounts she challenges is to be preferred over hers: there is much to be said in favour of each of the different interpretations of Kant's doctrine. Instead, I hope to make a more modest contribution to the debate by pointing to some issues that Allais should take note of, specifically in relation to the nature of appearances.

§1.2. Setup: Representationalism v. Relationalism.

Allais attempts to explain the mind-dependence of appearances without regarding them as constructions out of what exists merely in the mind. To this end, she rejects the Cartesian model of perception on which we perceive external objects only by becoming conscious of a mental intermediary that represents them. This indirect model of perception is the one phenomenalism draws on, according to Allais. In contrast to this, Allais adopts a direct-realist model to explain the nature of

appearances. On this model, perception is understood as a direct *relation* between a subject and the object she perceives. Contrary to the Cartesian view, in perceiving an object we are directly *presented* with external objects themselves, because they form a constituent of our perception. Relationalism thus gives Allais a way of understanding Kant that does not involve positing some mental entity. Accordingly, she argues that in experience we are given external things in themselves, though only as they are in relation to us i.e. only their relational properties (or their essentially manifest properties).

In what follows, I offer two main arguments against her view. First, I point to the difficulties that arise from characterizing an appearance in terms of the relational properties of a thing in itself. The properties of an empirical object are *relational* on Allais' account because they are partly grounded in our nature, and partly grounded in the intrinsic nature of an object. This, however, is in conflict with Kant's claim that space and time are wholly subjective. Allais, in accommodating this claim, argues that, unlike the empirical properties of an appearance, space and time are merely grounded in us, and that they play a role in "binding" our sensations. This, however, gives rise to a more pressing issue. I will argue that if space and time are to play a role in binding our sensations in a way such that we can attribute properties of appearances to an object that partly exists mind-independently, space and time would need to have intrinsic properties that partially grounds them, just like any other property of an appearance. Allowing for this would not only seriously undermine Kant's idealism, but it would also leave spatiotemporal properties indistinct from other empirical properties, contrary to what Allais (and Kant) suggests. Denying this, however, would leave her interpretation of Kant's idealism unexplained: it would leave indeterminate how space and time can bind sensations, and therefore also how a thing-in-itself and an appearance can be of one and the same object.

My second argument concerns Allais' methodology. Allais' account of appearances is entirely grounded in her rejection of the phenomenalist interpretation. She thus adopts a top-down approach

in developing her own view: she begins by providing a non-phenomenalist account of appearances by relying on distinctions made in the contemporary debate on perception, and *then* cavasses textual support for this reading. This approach, I will argue, skews her reading of Kant's text. Consequently, her arguments against phenomenalism, which also carry the burden of her relationalism, end up being less conclusive than she deems them to be.

Here is the plan for the paper: in section 2, I will briefly introduce phenomenalism in the way Allais understands it, since her arguments against it provide the guiding thread of her work. In Section 3, I will present Allais' relational view of Kantian appearances. In Section 4, I will argue that the relational view undermines Kant's idealism, because of the role the view accorded to space and time. This forms the first part of my paper. The second part of my paper will be mostly exegetical—I will show how Allais' top-down approach fails to provide a holistic reading of Kant. In Section 5 I will argue that her account of intuition significantly departs from how Kant introduces the notion in the *Critique*. Finally, in Section 6 I will discuss the textual basis Allais offers for her view and argue that the passages she relies on fail to conclusively support her argument in the way that she deems them to. I will conclude by remarking on how Allais' metaphysical two-aspect interpretation of Kant's doctrine undermines the manifest ideality of appearances.

§ 2. Kant's Non-Phenomenalism: Refuting the Cartesian Account of Perception.

Phenomenalism, on Allais' account, analyzes appearances in terms of mental states. She provides a rather broad definition of phenomenalism: "phenomenalism is the view that appearances exist only in the mind like Berkeleyan ideas, *or* that they exist as constructions out of mental states or mental activities, *or* that they supervene on properties of mental states" (MR, 37). What is common to all these views, according to Allais, is that they analyze appearances in terms of what she calls the "Cartesian" account of perception:

> "This is the view that perception involves being in a mental state which the subject could be whether or not an object was being perceived. This makes perception *indirect*, because *the object itself is not a constituent of the mental state* the subject is in when perceiving, rather, the *object is merely the cause of the mental state*. According to this view the subject could be in the same mental state when perceiving an object as when hallucinating; the fact that the former state is one of perception and the latter is not is a function of the different causes of the two cases, and not of their content" (MR, 12).

On the Cartesian view, perception does not involve becoming directly conscious of something external to us. Instead, we perceive an external object by becoming conscious of something that arises in us because of the object's effect on us.[15] Thus, the content of our perception is in "in our mind", because what we become conscious of is a mental intermediary that stands for the external object we perceive. This makes perception "indirect" because the object we perceive is "itself is not a constituent of the mental state a subject is in when perceiving; rather, the object is merely the cause of the mental state". In contemporary parlance, this view is sometimes also referred to as a *representational* theory of perception, because it stipulates that we perceive an external object only by becoming conscious of a mental representation of it.

Allais argues that the phenomenalist reading has held much sway because of the ways in which Kant repeatedly characterizes appearances: he says that they are *mere representations*,[16] and that they exist *in us* (or in our minds).[17] For example, at B520, he says that "space itself, however, together with time, and, with both, all appearances, are *not things*, but rather nothing but *representations*, and they *cannot exist at all outside our mind*". Despite the strong textual support provided by passages like this, Allais rejects

[15] Not all phenomenalists have a Cartesian or a representational view of perception. A phenomenalist might take an appearance to be in the mind, without thinking that is represents something outside the mind. That is, she might argue that perception involves becoming conscious of a construction of the mind, where this construction is not a representation of something outside the mind. Instead, an appearance might represent an object that is merely intentional. I take it that Allais does not differentiate intentional phenomenalists from Cartesian phenomenalists, because on her view, all phenomenalists make appearances "in the mind" by not regarding them as "object-involving". Thus, she says: ""combination of something *mental*—something characterized entirely subjectively—and an external *cause* which is *extrinsic* to the individuation of the relevant subjective state" (MR, 39)." It is extrinsic, because the appearance does not contain the external object that gives rise to it as a constituent or part. I will say more about what it means for an object to be a constituent of the mental state, when I introduce Allais' account in the next section.

[16] See for instance, (B45, A490-1/B518-19, A369-70).

[17] See for instance, (A49/B59, A370, A490-1/B518-19, A492/B520).

phenomenalism. Allais argues that Kant explicitly distinguishes his view from Berkeley's by taking the immediate objects of perception to be three dimensional things, rather than "mental items" on the basis of which we construct three-dimensional spatial properties as a kind of interpretation of the ideas we are presented with (MR 46).[18] Phenomenalism seems to undermine this. Allais thus argues that one of Kant's central aims in the *Critique* is to refute a Cartesian account of perception, and that one must therefore resort to it *only* if there is no better way of explaining how appearances are mind dependent.

§ 3. The Relational Account of Kantian Appearance.

Allais' relational model attempts to capture how appearances can be mind-dependent without being in the mind. In this Section, I will provide a reconstruction of Allais' account of what appearances are, and how they are constituted. Given their essentially manifest nature, Allais explicates her account of appearance in terms of perception. I will follow her in doing so in my reconstruction. I will, however, draw some distinctions that Allais does not make explicit, in order to highlight how her account differs from the realist version of relationalism she draws inspiration from. Keeping these distinctions in mind will also enable us to evaluate whether Allais' account does justice to Kant's balancing act in the next section.

Allais employs Campbell's (2002) direct relational model of perception in order to make sense of Kantian appearances. Here, I will reconstruct Allais' interpretation of his model.[19] On Campbell's model, to perceive an object is to stand in a direct perception-relation to it. This claim can be broken down into a few parts. First, the object in this relation are the external physical objects that populate

[18] This is Allais' understanding of how Kant refutes Berkeley's idealism. It is controversial whether Kant's realism, and his rejection of Berkeley's idealism, can *only* be understood in terms of a rejection of phenomenalism or the Cartesian view of perception. I will not take up this question in this paper, instead, I will stay focused on Allais' relationalism, and whether it does justice to Kant's idealism. For more on this, see Stang (2016)

[19] This reconstruction is based on things she says in Chapter 1, 4, 5, 6 and 7. I also draw support from Stephenson (2016) to make sense of the relational model.

our environment, rather than some non-physical mental entity. Second, we perceive these objects directly, because we become conscious of *these* objects, rather than of something that stands for them (like an image, or a vehicle of representation). Third, since an external physical object is one of the two relata of the perception relation, it is a "part" or a "constituent" of perception. Perception, accordingly, is considered to be "object-involving".[20] Fourth, the metaphysical nature of the relation that constitutes perception necessarily implies the existence of the object of perception. And finally, though perception involves becoming directly aware of an external object rather than of some mental intermediary that represents it, relationalism does not imply that the mind plays *no* role in constituting perception. The perception relation could be grounded in a series of processes, some of which involve the mind.[21] Yet, the content of perception wouldn't be a mental because these processes would ultimately make us conscious of the object itself, rather than some intermediary that is constructed by the mind. [22] Since, on this view, perception is a relation between the mind and the world, perceptions can be said to be in the mind only to the extent that that they can be said to be in the world.

Allais adopts Campbell's relational framework almost entirely wholesale in order to keep appearances out of the mind.[23] She argues that Kant begins with the presumption that there are mind-independent things-in-themselves, and that he argues that it is *these* things that form the immediate

[20] If a subject perceived an object through becoming conscious of something other than it i.e. something that stands for it, perception would be *indirect*—the subject would perceive an object not by grasping *it*, but some mental intermediary that *represents it*. As we saw in the previous section, on this view, perception would not be "object involving", because it would consist in the consciousness of a mental intermediary, which itself would not contain the object perceived as a part. As opposed to relationalism, representationalism thus keeps perception "in the mind", because perception would involve consciousness of something mental, rather than the external object itself. Thus, Allais argues, "according to an alternative to the Cartesian account of perception, a perceptual mental state is a state which involves the presence to consciousness of the object perceived. The idea is that the presence to consciousness of the object is part of what makes the mental state the state that it is. Such views are called 'relational' because the object perceived is a constituent of the conscious experience itself. I argue that we should approach transcendental idealism with a relational view as a starting point" (MR, 12).

[21] Cognitive processing, for example.

[22] Thus, the question is not whether the *content* of perception *solely* arises from the mind or not—but a question of whether perceiving involves being conscious of something mental or not.

[23] In the next section, we will see how she adopts his framework in order to make sense of the givenness of objects in intuitions, and the role of the mind in structuring sensations.

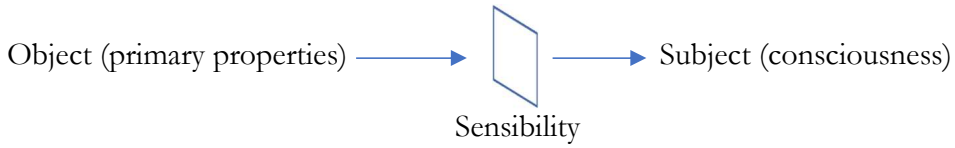
content perception (MR, 35)[24] She departs from Campbell's relationalism only in order to introduce Kant's idealism—she argues that the object as it is in perception is distinct from how it is apart from perception. In other words, she introduces a distinction between how an object appears, from how it is as it is in itself. To explain this distinction, she starts with a metaphor Campbell uses in presenting his relationalism. She asks us to think of perceiving as looking through a lens: when we observe an object through a lens, we directly see the object itself, rather than some image of it. She then modifies his metaphor, by asking us to suppose that this lens was fish-eyed and tinted. We will still see the object itself through it, but the object will look different from how it looked without lens—it will appear red and bent. Allais thus argues that "a relational view can allow that the way an object is present to consciousness may differ, to some extent, from the way it is independently of its being present to consciousness (MR, 113)"[25]

Allais draws several conclusions from this. First, she notes that the properties that are given in perception are properties of the object itself; it is the *object* that has the property of *appearing* red and bent.[26] These properties are nonetheless *relational* in nature, because they are determined by how the object's intrinsic properties (like solidity and reflectance) *relate* to a specific perceptual apparatus (like the fish-eyed red lens). Moreover, they are *essentially* relational, because if there were no possibility of a fish-eyed lens and an observer like us, the object would not possess the property of appearing red and bent. Allais thus calls these properties essentially manifest properties and argues that we should

[24] Thus, she says, "intuitions involve the *presence* to consciousness of the object perceived" (MR, 153), where the object perceived is the thing in itself.
[25] It is worth noting that she says "to some extent" here. It might be that a relational view cannot accommodate a view on which the object that is present to consciousness *is entirely distinct* from the way it is independently of its being present to consciousness—for what, then, would explain the claim that what we are conscious of is the object itself, rather than something else?
[26] They are thus one-place properties: they are only properties of the object, although they arise out of a relation.

read Kant as saying that *all* the properties we experience are like this. Empirical reality, for Kant, can therefore be understood as essentially manifest (MR, 121-123).[27]

This gives us Allais' account of Kantian appearances. In intuition, we perceive things in themselves, but only their essentially manifest properties i.e. properties they have solely in relation to our unique way of perceiving things. On the Kantian picture, sensibility is thus analogous to the lens—so to speak it is the cognitive apparatus through which we are given things in themselves. The properties we perceive are therefore partly determined by the nature of sensibility, and partly determined by the intrinsic properties of the object. An appearance can therefore be regarded as a relation between a thing in itself (its intrinsic properties) and us. Thus, when we perceive an appearance, we directly perceive the thing-in-itself, but as it is in relation to us, or as appearance.[28]



On this account, perception has the following features:

(1) **Directness**: we perceive the object of perception, namely, the thing-in-itself, without any mental intermediaries. We perceive it *immediately*.
(2) **Mind-dependence:** the content of our perception i.e. the object as appearance, exists only in relation to the possibility of sense experience.
(3) **Grounding**: The intrinsic nature of the thing-in-itself plays a grounding role.
(4) **Humility**: since the thing-in-itself always appears to us through sensibility, we are never conscious of the thing-as-it-is-in-itself.[29]

[27] Allais presents this argument in Chapter 5 of her work.
[28] This is my illustration of Allais' relational view, and not a diagram she provides.
[29] This presupposes that an object is not given to us just as it is in itself. One might wonder why this needs to be the case. On Allais' view, Kant doesn't provide a separate argument for this claim, because he takes the ideality of properties given in space and time to follow from something, he does provide an argument for, namely, the ideality of space and time (MR, 187).

§4. The Role of Space and Time in Allais' Account.

On Allais' account, an object's essentially manifest properties are relational in nature—they are determined by how the object's intrinsic properties relate to us. This general rendering of the properties of an appearance, however, raises an immediate concern. For Kant, space and time are more mind-dependent than the object's sensible properties, because there are no intrinsic properties in things-in-themselves that ground them. Thus, Kant says, space and time represent 'no property *at all* of any things in themselves, *nor any relation* of them to each other' (A26/B42). Thus, contrary to what Allais suggests, it cannot be Kant's view that "colour is mind-dependent in some way, and that shape is mind-dependent in the same way" (MR, 124, 127). In a different work, Allais responds to a worry of this kind.[30] Allais attempts to accommodate Kant's claim by arguing that, unlike other relational properties, space and time are grounded only in us, and that they play a role in binding our sensations. But if this is right, I will argue that Allais faces a dilemma: she must either be committed to the existence of a spatiotemporal correlate in the noumenal world, or she must leave unexplained how an appearance and the thing in itself are of and one and the same object. While the first option leads to an implausible reading of Kant, the second leads to an unsatisfactory interpretation of how appearances and things in themselves are two aspects of one and the same object.

On Allais' view, space and time are distinct from other empirical features because they are *only* feature of our mind (Allais 2011, 11). On Allais' view, one can understand the role Kant assigns to space and time as a solution to what gets called the "binding problem" in cognitive psychology. Allais, following Treisman (2003), describes the binding problem in the following way:

> Sensory information arrives in parallel as a variety of heterogeneous hints, (shapes, colors, motions, smells, and sounds) encoded in partly modular systems. Typically, many objects are

[30] See Allais (2011, 289). It is worth noting, that in *Manifest Reality* Allais makes no attempt to clarify how an appearance's spatiotemporal properties differ from its sensible properties. Much of what I will argue for in this section, thus, is based on my understanding of Allais' remark in her earlier work.

present at once. The result is an urgent case of what has been labeled the binding problem. We must collect the hints, bind them into the *right spatial and temporal bundles, and then interpret them to specify their real-world origins. (*Treisman 2003: 97, my emphasis)

An example often given to illustrate the binding problem is the fact that the visual system processes colour and shape in different streams, and needs some way of organizing (binding together), for example, sensations indicating red and sensations indicating round, as both belonging to a round red tomato, as opposed to just informing the subject that redness is present and roundness is present (MR, 170).[31] The binding problem, thus understood, expresses a need for an objectivating function. Allais finds a similar need within Kant's system—for Kant, while intuitions have objective purport,[32] the sensations from which they are made lack any such purport. Thus, there is a need in Kant for a process that enables us to go from sensations to intuitions.

Most interpreters of Kant take *synthesis* to perform this function, and therefore argue for a "conceptualist" reading of intuitions. As opposed to this, Allais argues that in Kant, we find a non-conceptual process that gives rise to intuitions, and that this process is distinct from the synthesis (MR, Ch.6). She calls this process "binding" and argues that space and time play a role in the "structuring, binding, and organizing" our sensory content (Allais 2011, 15). This, according to her, explains the role Kant assigns to the a priori forms of intuition—they convert an unorganized mass of sensory input to a distinct particular.[33] While this answers the initial worry about how space and time are distinct from other properties, it gives rise to a more pressing concern: how can a process

[31] It might be thought that the notion of synthesis is precisely where one should look for Kant's account of something like the perceptual binding that is needed to get us from the input of a mass of sensations to perception of objective perceptual particulars, but Allais argues that this is not the case. While binding gives us perceptual particulars from sensations, synthesis, on Allais' account, plays a much higher-level role in Kant's account.

[32] Again, objective purport here should simply be understood as them referring to a "whole distinct particular" as Allais suggests (MR, 170).

[33] Though Allais doesn't explicitly say our a priori forms perform this binding process (rather than being combined with sensations through this process), she equates binding with "the ordering of sensations" in Allais (2011) and Manifest Reality (167, 172) and compares the role space and time play in binding with the role categories play at the level of synthesis.

like binding be undertaken without granting that there is something in the input (sensations) that corresponds to space and time? If we bind together the inputs of various streams in accordance with forms provided entirely by the mind, there is nothing to say that they are the right spatiotemporal bundles, which are true to their real-world origin.

To appreciate the puzzle at hand, consider the following case. There are two fruits before me—an apple and a pear. While I look at the apple (which is placed on a table before me), I bite into the pear (without looking at it). Say we then have three sensations in this case: round, red, and juicy. What the binding problem asks is how we group these sensations in a way that is true to their "real world origins", i.e. how we group our sensations into two bundles rather than one. For a realist, this is possible, crudely speaking, because we are *given* a spatiotemporal coordinate that is common only to redness and roundness, and not juiciness.[34] The redness and the roundness occur at contiguous spatio-temporal locations, and so they belong together as properties of one and the same object, whereas the juiciness does not. But on an idealist picture, what sense does it make to ask whether our sensations are bound according to their "real world origin"? And if this question is somehow an intelligible one, how can an idealist answer this question without positing something like a spatiotemporal correlate at the noumenal level?[35]

The "binding problem", I will argue, is an intelligible problem for Allais,[36] because she needs a way to explain how appearances and things-in-themselves are "two aspects" of *one and the same object.*[37] That is, there must be a way of explaining how it is that the properties we perceive can belong to the

[34] This is how Treisman supposedly answers the question. For an analysis of how the Treisman's solution to the "binding problem", see Dunlop (2017).
[35] Problematically, Allais does not provide an explanation of how the binding problem must be understood within Kant's idealist framework.
[36] The intelligibility of the binding problem becomes an actual interpretative problem for Allais' view, we will see.
[37] Thus, Allais does not resort to some other way of explaining the non-conceptualism of intuition.

same object that has the primary properties that ground them.[38] The only way in which this is possible is if we *receive* something that is akin to a spatiotemporal coordinate from the noumenal world. To see why, we need only consider the alternative—that we do not group our sensations according to how the world in itself is grouped, but rather according to an order that is predetermined by the structure of the mind. On this view, appearances would exist *qua* objects only in virtue of us.[39] This, however, would be incompatible with Allais' claim that, for Kant, objects exist independently of us, and our appearances are only an aspect of these objects.

Allais repeatedly maintains that appearances and things-in-themselves are not "objects" properly speaking, and only two aspects of one and the same object.[40] On her view, Kant starts with the presumption that the world in *itself* is objectivated—that there are multiple things in themselves—and that these objects exist independently of us (MR, 34-35). Kant *then* argues that some of these objects, in addition to having an intrinsic nature, have properties that exist only in virtue of their relation to us (MR, 35).[41] Thus, some objects have both a set of intrinsic, and a set of extrinsic properties. The former amount to what she labels 'things in themselves *as they are in* themselves', and the latter to 'things in themselves *as appearances*'.

If this is Allais' view, she must also hold that there is some kind of correspondence between how we bind extrinsic properties in intuition and how intrinsic properties are bound in the world in itself—

[38] And this is precisely what the binding problem asks for—it does not merely ask us *how* we can bind our sensations, but *on what basis* we can bundle our sensations such that they correspond to their sources

[39] On this view, however, one would have to start with empirically real objects, and then argue that they have a way they are in themselves. Allais explicitly rejects a reading of Kant that takes him to "start with the empirically real objects of our knowledge and then postulate that there are, in addition to these, unknowable noumena. But this is not how Kant presents his position" (MR, 34).

[40] Allais summarizes this helpfully in Allais 2017.

[41] Allais says "Kant's central concern in the *Critique* is not to oppose the Cartesian sceptic; he starts by assuming that there are things. He then argues that our cognition of these things is limited to mind dependent appearances of them (to aspects of them which exist only in relation to us) and that we cannot know them as they are apart from their mind- dependent appearances—as they are in themselves" (MR, 35).

because this would be the *only* way of making sense of how extrinsic properties can *belong to the same objects* that possess the intrinsic properties that ground them. Put differently, if an appearance (which is constituted by the object's extrinsic properties) must be *of an object which also* possesses some intrinsic properties, there must be a way of ensuring that we group the extrinsic properties according to the way the intrinsic properties that ground them are grouped in the world. To wit: if an object 'x' has appearance properties of 'redness', 'roundness' and 'juiciness', her view would predict that this same object also possesses a set of intrinsic properties (however many they are) which together ground the object appearing red, round and juicy. It *cannot* be the case that the thing in itself merely appears as one because of how we bind its appearance properties, when the things-in-themselves which possess the relevant grounding properties are actually many, as they are in themselves. If that were the case, we would not have a single object which has a subset of extrinsic properties along with a corresponding set of grounding, intrinsic properties[42]. In other words, there would be no one object that has two aspects.

For things to be as her view predicts, the mind must have a way of differentiating sensations arising from different sources, or their "real world origin", so to speak. Accordingly, if an appearance is to be the set of *extrinsic properties of a thing in itself*, rather the set of properties of something that exists solely because of the mind, Allais must grant that the mind has a way of tracking the source of its sensations. The mind must therefore receive something that corresponds to space and time i.e. something that indicates how the properties in the world are bundled.[43] Alternately, Allais must have some other way of explaining how appearances and things-in-themselves can be "of one and the same object", how

[42] This leaves open the possibility that the thing in itself may also have intrinsic properties which do not ground any appearances.
[43] The alternative is to say that our mind, by sheer accident, ends up tracking how the source of its sensations.

the binding problem is to be understood, and what role space and time play in all this .[4445] The more she tightens up her account, the more untenable the position becomes as an interpretation of Kant. To intentionally leave all this loose and vague, however, is equally damning; it leaves all three parts of Kant's doctrine of transcendental idealism unexplained.[46]

A related concern is that Allais does not spell out what warrants the claim that a property we perceive is a property of the thing-in-itself, rather a property of us (or our mental state, for instance). That is, she does not spell out how we can claim that e.g. the apparently red and bent stick really is red and bent, rather than merely seeming to be that way because of the lens being red and bent. Presumably, on Allais' view we can claim that a property is *of* an object, or that it belongs to a thing-in-itself, only because the object has a set of intrinsic properties that appear a certain way to us. In

[44] It is worth noting that Allais says nothing about this. It is also worth noting, the kinds of things she says in foreshadowing this objection. In Allais 2017 she says "Even if it is accepted that because they are aspects of things, appearances and the way things are in themselves are not identical things, it might be objected that in holding that the things that appear to us have a way they are in themselves, my view is committed to thinking we can individuate things in themselves (because we can individuate appearances of these same things), and that this is not compatible with Kant's restrictions on our knowledge of things as they are in themselves. I think that the secondary quality analogy that I draw on in explaining Kant's idealism is potentially helpful here. Suppose that colors are essentially manifest qualities: qualities that do not transcend our possible experience of them, but which also do not exist merely in our minds. Suppose also that they have some mind-independent grounds. *It might be that there are no one-to-one relations between any mind- independent ground and particular color appearances (for example, there is more than one in itself property that appears as red). It might be that the color divisions we make exist as divisions only at the level of visual experience. This will mean that our division of colors at the level of visual experience does not allow us, for example, to count the number of mind-independent color grounds there are"* (Allais 2017, p.3). Note, this only comments on how it is not possible for us to pick out the *number of intrinsic properties*, based on the number of relational properties (there might be three relational properties, that in combination, give rise to colour). But all these properties would still have to be in the one object, for it to be *this* object that appears red. In a different paper, it seems like she concedes to our having cognition of how things-in-themselves are bound. In response to Stang (2016) who argues that on Allais' picture we have cognition of the "lower bound of the number of noumenal objects" (though, he does not make an argument for this), she says, "Stang has two other main worries. The first concerns my saying that the things that appear to us also have a way they are in themselves. As I document in the book (chapter 1), Kant speaks like this throughout the Critique. Stang worries that this gives us too much knowledge of things in themselves, since, most obviously, it seems to give us knowledge how many things in themselves there are. I do not think this follows. *First, note that at most it could give us knowledge of how many correlates of appearances there are, and not how many mind-independent things there are, since it says nothing about the number of monads, Cartesian souls and other noumena"* (Allais 2016b, 8). Here she seems to concede that we could, at best, have cognition of the number of things that have manifest properties (that are given in sense perception), and denies cognition of the total number, because there are many things that don't have manifest properties. This, it seems to me, grants us more cognition than Kant allows. Even if Allais grants that we have such cognition, and she grants that there is something corresponding to space, she will need a different way of addressing how spatiotemporal properties are distinct from other empirical properties.

[45] Importantly, this explanation must be compatible with her relationalism; it must allow for the prior existence of objects which give rise to perception (by being one of their relata).

[46] I am thankful to Bill Bristow for helping me elucidate this point in the specific way I do.

case of the stick, we can say that it is the *stick* that has properties of redness and bentness only if the stick has certain intrinsic properties (e.g. of solidity and reflectance) which are a necessary part of the explanation of how, when observed through a tinted fish-eyed lens, it appears red and bent.[47] But, if space and time are merely "features of the glass, and not of what is seen through it" (Allais 2011, 15), on what basis can Allais' Kant attribute spatiotemporal properties to an appearance? Allais' view, in leaving questions related to space and time open, also leaves open how empirical objects can be spatiotemporal, rather than merely seeming to be this way.[48]

§5. The Role of Intuitions in Allais' Account.

Kant opens the Transcendental Aesthetic with the claim that intuitions give us objects,[49] that *only* they give us objects, and that it is only through intuitions that cognition can relate to an object *immediately*. One consequence of requiring that intuitions give us objects, according to Allais, is that our cognition has to be of an object that actually exists (MR, 154). On Allais' view, intuitions thus guarantee the existence of an object, and crucially, they do so without any contribution from concepts. Intuitions are able to play the role of immediately giving us objects because of their relational nature. Since intuitions involve a direct relation between an object and a subject, they *themselves* imply the existence of their object-relata. Thus, she says, "intuitions involve the *presence* to consciousness of the object perceived" (MR, 153).

[47] We thus say that the stick has the properties of *appearing red* and *appearing bent*.

[48] If, as Allais argues, Kant distinguishes his view from Berkeley's by taking the immediate objects of perception to be three dimensional things, rather than "mental items" on the basis of which we construct three-dimensional spatial properties as a kind of interpretation of the ideas we are presented with (MR 46), she must make clear how Kant would answer this question on her view.

[49] By object, Allais just means a spatiotemporal particular, here. She says, ""a particular" should be understood minimally, as a thing which a subject singles out as a perceptual unit—a distinct, bounded thing to which the subject can pay perceptual attention. This could be a causally unitary object, but could also be less than, or more than, an object. A subject may intuit, for example, a desk and the lamp attached to it, or may attend just to the light bulb in the lamp. A spot of light moving on a wall could be a perceptual particular—it is something outside of and other than the subject, that the subject can pick out as a unit" (MR, 147).

In addition to reading Kant as requiring intuitions to give us objects independently of concepts, it is also important to Allais that one does not read Kant in a way that implies that intuitions give us objects in virtue of providing us with sensory content. She says that "much of the work on Kant's account of cognition has failed to take sufficiently seriously the role of intuition in cognition: it is frequently assimilated to the role of sensation, so Kant is seen simply as saying that cognition requires some kind of causal-input from objects" (MR, 146).[5051] One reason why she thinks an intuition should not be taken to guarantee the existence of an object through sensations is because sensations are present even when an object is not—we have sensations in hallucinations and illusions. Perception is markedly distinct from these states precisely because it is "object involving" i.e. it contains an actual and present object as its part or constituent.[52] Thus, she says, while a sensation might "indicate the existence of something other than itself, it does not *guarantee* the existence of the particular object" (MR, 161).

There is a flurry of recent papers that argue, contra Allais, that intuitions are not object-involving for Kant.[53] These papers heavily rely on what Kant says in other works,[54] and on his account of a priori intuition in the *Critique*.[55] Here I will instead rely only on what Kant says in the first *Critique*, and

[50] Despite this charge, she herself limits the role intuitions play in cognition by only taking into consideration outer intuition. She says that when Kant "talks about the role of intuitions in giving us objects, he is concerned with *outer* intuitions giving us ordinary macroscopic spatio-temporal objects" (MR. 150). If in talking about the role intuitions play in cognition Allais takes Kant to only be talking about outer intuition, it is not clear what role intuitions are supposed to play in a priori cognition, or cognition of the self.

[51] It is worth noting that Allais does not cite anyone in making this criticism. One could hold that an intuition puts us in touch with the thing-in-itself through sensations, while still maintaining that it is *intuition* that give us objects; while sensations guarantee the existence of something other than us, they don't, themselves give us object. The forms of intuition and understanding are necessary for us to actually become conscious of an object i.e. be "given" an object. That said, I take it that the crucial point for Allais is that contrary to what is usually thought, sensations cannot guarantee the existence of an object, whereas outer intuitions can.

[52] Kant, she says, thinks that intuitions are object-dependent in the sense that "we have an intuition of an object only when that object is in fact present to us: a dream of hallucination of an object does not count as an outer intuition. The idea is that intuitions do not merely represent objects, or give us mere images of things, but in fact present them" (MR, 156).

[53] See for instance, Grüne (2017), McLear (2017), Stephenson (2015, 17).

[54] Stephenson, for example, cites a number of passages from the *Anthropology*.

[55] Grüne (2017) for example does this.

stick to his notion of empirical intuition as Allais does. I will do so in order to show how the relationist model does not fit well with the way in which Kant introduces the idea of an empirical intuition.

Above, I said that Allais takes an intuition to establish the existence of an object because she takes the object to be a constituent of the perception. Allais says that there are many ways of motivating and explaining the idea of what it means for an object to be a "constituent" of a mental state. The strategy she adopts is to explain it through "denying that a perceptual mental state and a merely subjectively indistinguishable mental state that does not involve the presence of the object are metaphysically identical states—by rejecting a common factor view" (Allais 2016b, 3).[56] Thus, perception, for it to be distinct from subjectively indistinguishable states like illusions or hallucinations, must include some components other than sensations and binding, because they have these components in common with hallucinations and illusions.

This requirement, however, is in direct conflict with how Kant introduces the notion of intuitions. Intuitions, for Kant, start with us being causally affected; the effects of this causal affection, sensations, are then arranged in a priori forms which results in intuitions. Now, if Kant had a relational view of perception, the only way in which he could maintain that intuitions arise from sensations and binding would be to grant that sensations guarantee the existence of an outer object (even if they don't represent these things by themselves).[57] This would allow him to say that intuitions, unlike hallucinations, are a product of sensation and binding, because having a "sensation" already implies the existence of an object. But, in denying that sensations guarantee the existence of objects for Kant, Allais cannot resort to this line of response. Thus, it is far from clear how Allais' relational view can make sense of the way Kant introduces the constitution of an empirical intuition.

[56] Examples of subjectively indistinguishable states include hallucinations and illusions. Recollect that this is how Allais explains the difference between a relational and a cartesian view as well.
[57] For detailed argument for how Kant takes sensations to guarantee the existence of an object, see Tolley (forthcoming).

Kant, in fact, offers a different distinction between veridical and non-veridical perception, one that has to do with the understanding rather than sensibility. In the Prolegomena, he says:

> "the different between truth and dreaming is not ascertained by the *nature of the representation, for they are the same in both,* but in their connection according to those rules which determine the coherence of representations in the concept of an object, and by ascertaining whether they can subsist together in experience or not. And it is not the fault of the appearance if our cognition takes illusion for truth i.e., *if the intuition,* by which an object is given us, is taken for the concept of the thing or even of its existence, which the understanding can only think…Thus, even *if we did not at all reflect on the origin of our representations,* whenever we connect our intuition of sense (whatever they may *contain*) in space and time, according to the rules of the coherence of all cognition in experience, illusion or truth will arise according as we are negligent or careful. It is merely a question of the *use of sensuous representations in the understanding, and not their origin*" (Proleg. 4.291, my emphasis).

Here, Kant makes explicit that the distinction between truth and illusion has nothing to do with the *nature* of our intuition. It does not matter how they *originate*, and it does not matter whether they *contain* an object. We have intuitions in cases of both illusion *and* truth.[58] Thus, an intuition on its own cannot guarantee the existence of an object. Instead, what guarantees the existence of an appearance is the fact that it is the object of an intuition which is in accordance with the rules of experience (the analogies of experience).[59] Accordingly, for Kant, a hallucination is distinct from a veridical perception *not* because the latter is an object-involving intuition while the former is not, but because the latter coheres with other perceptions according to the analogies of experience, whereas the former fails to do so. This means that Allais must explain the role intuitions play in the givenness of objects in some other way; Kant cannot be read as requiring intuitions for the givenness of objects because of their "object-involving", relational nature.

[58] Stephenson (2015, 18) canvases strong textual support from different works in order to make this point.
[59] See Stang (2016) for this point.

§6. Arguments for Relationalism

Allais provides several arguments in favor of reading Kant as holding a relationist view of perception, some of which are also meant to count against a phenomenalist reading. Of these, she takes two arguments to be the most forceful:[60] (1) that only the relationist view can make sense of Kant's distinction between the transcendental and empirical senses in which an object is "outside us" as opposed to "inside us" (5.1), and (2) that Kant explicitly rejects phenomenalism in a remark in the *Prolegomena*, where he introduces an analogy between Lockean secondary qualities and the properties of appearances (5.2). I will comment on each of these arguments in this section. I will argue that the passages Allais relies on in order to make her case do not mandate a relationist reading like she takes them to.

§6.1. The Unavoidable Ambiguity of "Outside Us".

Phenomenalists interpret the mind-dependence of spatiotemporal objects by pointing to Kant's repeated claim that appearances are in "in us". For example, Kant says,

> We have therefore wanted to say that...if we remove our own subject or even only the subjective constitution of the senses in general, then all the constitution, all relations of objects in space and time, indeed space and time themselves would disappear, and as appearances they cannot exist in themselves, but only *in us*. (A42/B59, my italics).
>
> Space itself, however, together with time, and, with both, all appearances, are **not things**, but rather nothing but representations, and they cannot exist at all outside our mind. (A492/B520)

Allais argues that while the most straightforward reading of Kant's talk of appearances being "*inside* us" suggests a phenomenalist reading of appearances, Kant resists such a reading by disambiguating between the two ways in which an object can be "*outside* us":

[60] She has a set of other arguments, but none of these arguments are against a sophisticated version of phenomenalism, as she herself points out. Accordingly, I do not engage with any of them in this paper.

> [T]he expression **outside us** carries with it an unavoidable ambiguity, since it sometimes signifies something that, **as a thing in itself**, exists distinct from us and sometimes merely something that belongs to outer **appearance**, then in order to escape uncertainty and use this concept in the latter significance—in which it is taken in the proper psychological question about the reality of our outer intuition—we will distinguish **empirically external** objects from those that might be called "external" in the transcendental sense, by directly calling them "things **that are to be encountered in space**". (A373)

Here, Kant argues that an object can be outside us in two ways: it can be transcendentally outside us, in which case it would exist independently of our minds, or it could be empirically outside us, in which case it would not exist independently of our minds. Allais, however, takes Kant to be making a further distinction in the foregoing passage. She says, "the point of the passage is to say that objects which are not *literally* in our minds since they are in space might still not exist distinct from us" (MR, 23). Thus, according to Allais, the point of Kant's disambiguation is to demonstrate that spatiotemporal objects which are not "outside" us in the transcendental sense are still *literally* outside us, and this is what Kant means when he says objects are "in space" or "empirically outside us" as opposed to being "empirically in us" or "in our minds" (MR 22-23). Thus, she argues for a *literal* interpretation of "outside" and "inside" in the empirical sense, but a metaphorical interpretation of "outside" and "inside" inside in the transcendental sense.

Before evaluating the merit of this claim, let us situate it within Kant's work. The paragraph below is found in the Fourth Paralogism, where it is preceded by a section in which Kant discusses how transcendental realism results in empirical idealism:

> Now since as far as I know all those psychologists who cling to empirical idealism are transcendental realists, they have obviously proceeded very consistently in conceding great importance to empirical idealism as one of the problems from which human reason knows how to extricate itself only with difficulty. *For in fact if one regards outer appearances a*s representations that are effected in us by their objects, *as things in themselves found outside us*, then it is hard to see how their existence could be cognized in any way other than by an inference from effect to cause, *in which case it must always remain doubtful whether the cause is in us or outside us.* Now one can indeed admit that something that may be outside us in the transcendental sense is the cause of our outer intuitions, *but this is not the object we understand by the representation of matter and corporeal things; for these*

> *are merely appearances, i.e., mere modes of representation, which are always found only in us, and their reality, just as much as that of my own thoughts, rests on immediate consciousness.* The transcendental object is equally unknown in regard to inner and to outer sense. But we are talking not about that, but about the *empirical object, which is called an* ***external*** *object if it is* ***in space*** *and an* ***inner*** *object if it is represented simply in the* ***relation of time***; but space and time are both to be encountered only **in us** (A372, my italics).

Now, if the point of the disambiguation is to differentiate between the "literal" and "non-literal" way in which an object is inside us as Allais suggests, Kant would have said that the word 'inside' was ambiguous, rather than saying that 'outside' is. That is, in the A373 passage, Kant would be clarifying that though he says objects are "in us" at A372, his reader should not take this to mean that these are *literally* in us. But Kant makes no such suggestion. Instead, given that he attaches "outside" to both the transcendental and the empirical object in A372, and because he regards these objects as being "outside us" in different ways, he disambiguates between the two usages of "outside" in A373.[61]

Part of what motivates Allais' reading, it seems, is a worry about how the phenomenalist can make sense of the two ways in which an object can be "in us". She says, "A non-phenomenalist kind of idealism will make more sense of his contrast between what is transcendentally in us (dependent on us) and what is empirically in us (what is inside our minds, rather than outside us in space) than will phenomenalism" (MR, 22). I take Allais' argument here to be that a non-phenomenalist account can make better sense of the distinction because it can explain why Kant would need to draw it. If, as the non-phenomenalist claims, the object wasn't dependent on us in virtue of being literally in us, it could be "in us" in one way (by being dependent on our minds) without being "in us" in another (by being literally in our minds). That is, it could be transcendentally in us, without being empirically in us. On the other hand, if appearances were mind dependent simply in virtue of being in the mind, there would be no case in which an object would be transcendentally in us (dependent on us) without also being

[61] Allais' talk of objects in space being "literally" in us rather than outside us is difficult to make sense of for yet another reason. Since the mind is itself is not in "in space", it makes little sense to asks whether the empirical objects we represent are "literally" in us or outside us.

empirically in us (in our mind). Accordingly, Allais argues that the phenomenalist would not be able to provide a reason for why Kant might need a distinction between the two senses in which an object can be "in us".

At first pass, a phenomenalist might respond to this by arguing that Kant doesn't say that *all* objects that are dependent on us are "in space"—he differentiates between objects that are only "in time" from those that are in space, and he takes both these objects to be transcendentally "in us". Accordingly, the phenomenalist might say that Kant uses "in us" in the transcendental significance to denote that an object is dependent on us by being in space *or* time, whereas he says that an object is empirically "in us" in order to emphasize that it is dependent on us in a particular way i.e. in virtue of being ordered *only* in time. In support of this, a phenomenalist might point to the end of A372, where Kant says that objects "in space" are "outside us", whereas those "in time" are "in us".

Presumably, this response would only begin to explain what Allais is after—it would mark the difference at the level of what is transcendentally inside us, without highlighting what it means for an object to be at this level. Thus, Allais says, this response wouldn't "settle the interpretative question or establish any particular account of what it means for an object to be transcendentally 'in us'" (MR, 22).[62] Her argument seems to be that the phenomenalists' response wouldn't "settle" this question because it wouldn't provide a difference between an object that is transcendentally "in us" as opposed to an object that is wholly subjective.[6364] It is *this* object that Allais seems to be concerned with when she speaks of an object that is "empirically in us", i.e. that which "is inside our mind".[65] Accordingly,

[62] While I proceed to point to what the significance is, I do not take this to be what Kant is doing at A372. There, he is merely clarifying that he is only concerned with the object that is empirically outside us. His argument about what it means for an object to be "in us" in the transcendental significance, I take it, occupies everything that comes prior to this.
[63] I will say more about what I mean by "wholly subjective" in what follows.
[64] Of course, Kant could not be seen as taking this merely subjective object to be "in time".
[65] To use Allais' terminology, this would be the object that is "literally in us".

she argues that phenomenalism cannot make sense of the difference between the two ways in which an object can be in us, and rightly says that this difference has "nothing to do with the two ways in which objects can be considered in relation to the conditions of human sensibility" (MR, 22).[66]

The phenomenalist need not, however, bite the bullet on this—she can make sense of the two ways in which an object can be "in us" by pointing to a distinction Kant draws at the level of empirical objects. Kant differentiates between an "empirical thing in itself" from an "empirical appearance". Whereas an empirical thing in itself is one that is "valid for every human sense in general", an empirical appearance is different for differently situated observes with properties that are particular to a situation "or organization of this or that sense" (A45/B62). This gives the phenomenalist a plausible way to explain what it means for an object to be transcendentally "in us" as opposed to being empirically "inside us". While an object that is transcendentally in us is intersubjectively valid because it depends on the a priori forms of experience that are common to all cognitive beings, an object that is empirically in us lacks intersubjective validity because it depends on the particular constitution of an individual's sense organs (cf. A226/B273). For instance, the empirical "rainbow in itself" is a collection of water droplets with particular sizes and shapes and spatial relations, while the empirical "rainbow appearance" is the colorful band we see in the sky. This distinction, thus, gives the phenomenalist a way of making sense of the two ways in which an object can be "in us" while still keeping objects in the mind—whereas the empirical thing in itself is common to all minds, the

[66] I cite her entire remark here: "Allison's interpretation of this distinction is that, understood empirically, the terms 'in us' and 'outside us' mark a distinction between objects of inner and outer sense, respectively, but understood transcendentally, they mark a distinction between 'two manners in which objects can be considered in relation to the conditions of human sensibility' (Allison 2004: 24). Allison is clearly right to point out the significance of the disambiguation between the empirical and transcendental senses of 'in us', but this does not settle the interpretative question, or establish any particular account of the latter. Notably, Kant's disambiguation of the empirical and transcendental senses of 'in us' and 'outside us' says nothing about two ways in which objects can be considered in relation to the conditions of human sensibility, as Allison's interpretation requires" (MR, 22).

empirical appearance is different for different minds.[67] Consequently, it is not clear why the relationist reading should be preferred over a phenomenalist reading on this count.

§6.2. The Secondary Quality Analogy.

In this section, I will consider the chief textual evidence Allais deploys in favor of her interpretation—Kant's analogy between secondary qualities and the properties of appearances, in the *Prolegomena*. I will argue, first, that the most straightforward reading of this passage is a phenomenalist one. Allais rejects such a reading *not* by preempting and responding to the parts of the text that I point to, but by arguing that Kant explicitly distances himself from phenomenalism in the passage that precedes the analogy. I will consider this passage and argue that Allais neglects a crucial phrase from it. Read holistically, Kant need not be seen as rejecting a phenomenalist reading of appearances. Thus, when these passages are taken together, they do not conclusively refute phenomenalism in the way Allais takes them to do.

Allais puts much weight on Kant's suggestion that his idealism should be understood in terms of an analogy with secondary qualities like colour.[68] In the *Prolegomena*, Kant says that:

> One could, without detracting from the actual existence of outer things, say of a great many of their predicates: they belong not to these things in themselves, but only to their appearances and have no existence of their own outside our representation, is something that was generally accepted and acknowledged long before *Locke's* time, though more 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

[67] It is important to be careful here. While an object that is empirically inside us is referred to as an empirical "appearance", properly speaking, they are not how Kant speaks of appearances. Appearances for Kant, unlike objects that are empirically inside us, only possess properties that are common to all subjects.

[68] I am skeptical of how much weight one should put on Kant's analogy in understanding his idealism. In the analogy, Kant seems to *equate* space to other secondary properties. If one puts too much weight on this suggestion, as Allais does, it undermines the role space plays in Kant's system—space, unlike other properties, is a form of representation, and is nothing apart from this. Significantly, Kant's idealism turns on space being *unlike* other properties—his idealism falls from the apriority of space and time, rather than a primary-secondary distinction that is found in Locke.

> 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, *nay, 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. (Proleg. 4:289).

Allais argues that the central difficulty in making use of this analogy to explain Kant's idealism is "deciding on the account of colour to read into the analogy", because "Kant does not spell out the account of secondary qualities he wants to appeal to in the analogy" (MR, 126). Allais argues that the two options that are usually considered lead to the traditional interpretative extremes in understanding Kant's idealism. On the one hand, if we take something like the primitivist objectivist account of colour, "colour" will attach to the mind-independent property of an object that produces a sensation in us.[69] Allais argues that this view will "fail to capture any sense in which Kantian appearances are mind-dependent, and, implausibly, identify Kantian appearances with qualities whose natures are not presented to us in perceptual experience" (MR, 126). On the other hand, if colour is understood in terms of the subjectivist dispositional account, "colour" will be understood as a property of "a merely mental inner state" or "modifications of a state of the subject" (MR, 126).[70] On this account, saying that appearances are mind-dependent in the way colour is would be to say that they exist merely in minds. Allais thus argues that the best way to understand Kant's secondary quality analogy is through her essentially manifest view.[71]

Allais rejects the phenomenalist way of making sense of Kant's analogy in favor of her own account because of her starting presumption—that Kant does not make explicit what his account of colour is in the analogy. Though Kant does not offer an account of what colour is in the passage cited, he makes clear what his account of colour is in saying that it is a property that attaches only to "the

[69] In Lockean terms, on this account, "colour" will refer to the mind-independent power that causes our ideas.
[70] In Lockean terms, on this account, "colour" will refer to the mental ideas which fail to resemble their cause.
[71] It is worth pointing out that she does not make a case for how the essentially manifest view, that she attributes to Kant, provides an unproblematic reading of Locke.

sense of vision as modification". It would make no sense for Kant to regard colour "as a modification" if it were property of an object, regardless of whether the object is mind-dependent or mind-independent. Further, in the paragraph that immediately follows the analogy, Kant says:

> 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 spac*e 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 (*Proleg.* 4:290).

Here, Kant clearly distinguishes between a sensation and the capacity an object has to give rise to that sensation, and he uses the predicate 'red' for the former rather than the latter. Further, he explicitly compares the representation of space to the sensation of red in arguing that it makes little sense for one to say that a sensation (or representation of space) resembles the object that gives rise to it, in order to avoid skepticism. When this passage is read with the previous one, it is clear that Kant regards colour as a sensation (or a modification of the sense of vision), and therefore as a property of something that exists merely in the mind.[72] In order to refute a phenomenalist understanding of Kant's account of colour, Allais, then, needs to say more about why one should ignore Kant's own suggestions.

Allais, in support of a non-phenomenalist reading of Kant's secondary quality analogy, points to the passage that precedes the analogy. I quote the passage in full:

> Idealism consists in the claim that there are none other than thinking beings; the other things that we believe we perceive in intuition are only representations in thinking beings, to which in fact no object existing outside these beings corresponds. I say in opposition: There are things given to us as objects of our senses existing outside us, yet we know nothing of them as they may be in themselves, but are acquainted only with their appearances, that is, with the representations that they produce in us because they affect our senses. Accordingly, I by all means avow that there are bodies outside us, that is, things which, though completely unknown to us as to what they may

[72] It is pertinent to note that Kant does not call colour a "*mere* modifications", and that in comparing spatial properties to colour, he does not mean that it could be different for different people. For a defense for why one should see Kant's view of colour as objective rather than wholly subjective (as it is in B45) see Allais' (MR 127).

> be in themselves, we know through the representations which their influence on our sensibility provides for us, and to which we give the name of a body – which word therefore merely signifies the appearance of this object that is unknown to us but is nonetheless real. Can this be called idealism? It is the very opposite of it. (*Proleg.* 4:289).

Allais argues that in this passage Kant "defines idealism in terms of the idea that the immediate objects of perception have a merely mental existence and *denies* that this is his position" (MR 128). Accordingly, on Allais' view, in analogizing all the properties of the object we perceive to secondary properties, Kant does not make them properties of things that are only representations in thinking beings. Thus, she says, a phenomenalist reading of appearances cannot make sense of the idealism Kant disassociates himself from in this passage.

Allais' analysis however overlooks a crucial part of Kant's definition of idealism. Kant does not simply take idealism to be the view that "the things we perceive in intuition are only representations in thinking beings" (as Allais suggests). Instead, he defines idealism as the position that claims that "there are none other than thinking beings". He calls this type of idealism "real idealism" in the secondary quality analogy. Real idealism, according to Kant, "nullifies" the "existence of the thing that appears" (the thing in itself), because it maintains that the objects of perception are "*only* representations in thinking beings, *to which in fact no object existing outside these beings corresponds*" (*Proleg*, 4: 289). As opposed to this, Kant takes it to follow from the fact that we have an appearance that there must be something that exists that "influences our sensibility" by "affecting us". Thus, Kant can be understood here as saying that even though his idealism makes objects of intuition mere representations, it does not deny the existence of something which corresponds to these objects i.e. that which appears. Hence, he says, unlike the empirical idealism of Descartes and Berkeley, his idealism "concerns not the existence of things (the doubting of which, however constitutes *idealism in the ordinary sense*), since it never came to my head to doubt it; but concerns the sensuous representations

of things, to which space and time properly belong" (*Proleg* 4:293).[73] This gives us a plausible way of understanding appearances that is compatible with the idealism he rejects *and* the view of colour he presents, while keeping appearances "in the mind".

Conclusion

At the beginning of *Manifest Reality*, Allais announces that we should resort to a phenomenalist reading of appearances only if there is no alternate reading that makes sense of their mind-dependence in a way that does not undermine Kant's realism. She provides such a reading through a relational account of perception. I have argued in this paper that Allais' relationalism ends up trading on Kant's realism at the cost of his idealism. In analogizing the properties of an appearance with Lockean secondaries, she inevitably commits herself to the existence of spatiotemporal correlates, where none are to be found in Kant's system. For Kant, reality is essentially ideal.

I have also argued that Allais' top-down approach skews her reading of Kant's text; she emphasizes elements of the text that support her relational reading, while overlooking elements a phenomenalist might rely on. In making this argument, I rely on the same passages she uses to support her reading. This is of significance because I take some of the impetus for the literature's continuing oscillation to come from a tendency of the opposing camps to rely on passages that favor their respective views. In arguing on behalf of the phenomenalist, though, I do not commit myself to any specific version of phenomenalism. Rather, I simply hope to contribute to the ongoing debate by pointing to ways in which a phenomenalist view might be developed in response to relationalism.

[73] Contrary to what Allais repeatedly maintains, this suggests that one of Kant's primary projects in the Critique is *not* to establish the existence of objects which "Descartes doubts". This also suggests one way in which Kant might be distancing himself from a position like Berkeley's, since unlike Berkeley he does not deny the existence of the thing in itself.

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