

Kant's Modalities of Judgment

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Abstract

This paper proposes a way to understand Kant's modalities of judgment—problematic, assertoric, and apodeictic—in terms of the location of a judgment in an inference. Other interpretations have tended to understand these modalities of judgment in terms of one or other conventional notion of modality. E.g., Matthey (1986) argues that we should take them to be connected to notions of epistemic or doxastic modality. I shall argue that this is wrong, and that these kinds of interpretation of the modality of judgments cannot be reconciled with a key claim made by Kant, namely, that the modality of a judgment does not contribute to its content, and has nothing to do with the matter that is judged. I offer an alternative interpretation based upon Kant's explicating these modalities in terms of the location of a judgment in an inference, whereby the modality of a judgment is determined by the role a judgment plays in a given course of reasoning. If I am right, then Kant in fact presents an intriguing thesis pertaining to the inferential status and potential of all our judgments.

In several places, most notably the *Table of Judgments* in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and in the *Jäsche Logic*,¹ Kant claims that there are three modalities of judgments—problematic, assertoric, and apodeictic—and gives an account of these modalities. It is tempting to understand these in terms of one or other conventional notion of modality. Indeed, Matthey (1986) presents an impressive case for taking them to be, at heart, connected to notions of epistemic or doxastic modality. In the following paper I shall argue that this is wrong. I will argue that these kinds of interpretation of the modality of judgments cannot be reconciled with a key claim made by Kant, namely that the modality of a judgment does not contribute to its content, and has nothing to do with the matter that is judged. I offer an alternative interpretation based upon Kant's explicating these modalities in terms of the location of a

judgment in an inference. If I am right, then Kant in fact presents an intriguing thesis pertaining to the inferential status and potential of all our judgments.

Preliminary Clarifications

It is important first to be clear on what Kant's view on modality of judgment is about. It is not an account of modal judgments conceived of as judgments containing a modal term or modal claim, such as 'Socrates is necessarily wise' or 'Necessarily 9 is greater than 5'. Kant claims that *all* judgments have a mode: either problematic, assertoric, or apodeictic. So judgments such as 'Socrates is wise' or 'There are 9 potatoes' are included. When Kant then goes on to explicate the modalities of judgment, one cannot take him to be giving an account of something like modal terms in *de dicto* modal contexts. He is giving an account of features at least one of which he believes all judgments have.

It is also important to clarify what Kant means by 'judgment'. This is a difficult and thorny issue, and indeed one which would require a long and separate paper to address. I will here make do with a few comments about the most important points to bear in mind.ⁱⁱ Kant's initial characterisation of judgment is as follows.

Judgment is [therefore] the mediate cognitionⁱⁱⁱ [*Erkenntnis*] of an object, hence the representation of a representation of it. (A68/B93)^{iv}

First and foremost, judgment is a species of *cognition* or *Erkenntnis*. This seems strange. A cognition, in this sense, is supposed to be something like an instance of coming to know. It would be very strange indeed if *judgment* was a special case of something like *knowledge*. Indeed, although the usual meaning of the German words 'Erkenntnis' and 'erkennen' do imply a relation to knowledge and truth, Kant specifically mentions that there can be *false cognitions*.

If truth consists in the agreement of cognition [*einer Erkenntnis*] with its object, that object must thereby be distinguished from other objects; for cognition is false [*eine*

Erkenntnis ist falsch], if it does not agree with the objects to which it is related, even although it contains something which may be valid of other objects. (A58 / B83)

For although our cognition [*einer Erkenntnis*] may be in complete accordance with logical demands, that is, may not contradict itself, it is still possible that it may be in contradiction with its object. (A59 / B84)

By 'cognition' Kant must mean something that can be true or false, such as a thought or proposition, rather than something like knowledge. This is not a spurious use of the word, but rather a meaning of '*Erkenntnis*' and '*erkennen*' which was common at the time. See this dictionary entry for '*erkennen*':

2. To conceive of a thing, whether we may conceive of it clearly or obscurely, distinctly or confusedly; in this widest meaning it is commonly used by the recent philosophers. To recognize a thing obscurely, clearly, distinctly. A merely obscurely recognised truth. To indicate something to someone, to awake an idea in him, either by means of words or in some other way. The heathens recognized God in a very confused way. In common language, as well as in the sciences, this is the most common usage. [*2. Sich eine Sache vorstellen, wir mögen sie uns nun klar oder dunkel, deutlich oder undeutlich vorstellen; in welcher weitesten Bedeutung es bey den neuern Philosophen sehr häufig ist. Eine Sache dunkel, klar, deutlich erkennen. Eine nur dunkel erkannte Wahrheit. Einem etwas zu erkennen geben, eine Vorstellung davon in ihm erwecken, es geschehe durch Worte oder auf andere Art. Die Heiden erkannten Gott auf eine sehr verworrene Art. In dem gemeinen Sprachgebrauche, auch in den Wissenschaften, gebraucht man es am häufigsten.*]^v

The 'common use by the new philosophers' is that to cognize [*erkennen*] something is to conceive of or represent it [*vorstellen*]. Thus I shall take judgment to be a species of *representation*, and judging a kind of *representing*, rather than a species of knowledge or

knowing. Indeed, Kant himself presents judgments as a species of the genus of representation (A320 / B376).

Second, a judgment is a *mediate* representation. Kant took judgments to be higher order representations acting on lower order representations, concepts and intuitions, which themselves represent objects directly. Concepts are general and represent objects by means of their properties; intuitions are particular and represent objects simply and directly:

This is either *intuition* or *concept* (*intuitus vel conceptus*). The former relates immediately to the object and is single, the latter refers to it immediately by means of a feature which several things may have in common. (A320 / B376)

Higher order representations then apply to these representations. For example, in applying the representations of *universality*, *affirmation* and *categoricity* to the concepts *dog* and *animal*, one results in the representation, the judgment, *that all dogs are animals*. The notion of mediate representation in this way relates to what Kant says about the function of unity in judgments. In general, by 'function' Kant means a kind of unity associated with noting what disparate things have in common. This is the basic idea of a concept or a 'one over many'. For example, I unify a rose, a house and a shoe by noting that they all share something in common, they all fall under the same representation, e.g. they all fall under the concept *red*.

Whereas all intuitions, as sensible, rest on affectations, concepts rest on functions. By 'function' I mean the unity of the act of bringing various representations under one common representation. (A68 / B93)

In the application of the notion of a function to judgment, Kant claims that, 'All judgments are functions of unity among our representations' (A69 / B93). This is because he thinks judgments unify other representations, whether those representations are intuitions or concepts (or indeed other judgments, as in a disjunctive or hypothetical judgment). A judgment is a unified thing, say, and a judgment arises from the joining of concepts with concepts (e.g. All dogs are animals) or intuitions with concepts (e.g. That dog is brown). Given that a judgment unifies representations (concepts, intuitions) under one common

representation (the judgment) it falls under Kant's definition of a function. But there is not just one function that results in the unity that comprises a judgment. Concepts and intuitions can be unified into differently structured judgments, and so the function of unity, the kind of common representation, is different in different cases. This is where the forms of judgment come in.

The functions of the understanding can, therefore, be discovered if we can give an exhaustive statement of the function of unity in judgments. That this can quite easily be done will be shown in the next section. (A69 / B94)

It is in this context that Kant then introduces the Table of Judgments.

If we abstract from all content of a judgment, and consider only the mere form of understanding, we find that the function of thought in judgment can be brought under four heads, each of which contains three moments. (A70 / B95)

The 'functions' we are left with, at least in the cases of *quantity*, *quality* and *relation* of judgments, can perhaps be understood as being like determinables for the possible logical form of a judgment. This is what we are left with when we abstract away from particular content to assess the structure of a judgment. E.g. by doing so, we can see that 'All dogs are animals' and 'All shades of red are colours' have something in common, the form of a universal judgment. (They are unified under a common representation, Kant might say.) But these determinables also contribute to the content of a judgment insofar as the logical form of a judgment affects the truth-conditions of the judgment, i.e. a singular and a universal judgment involving the same concepts can have a different content, e.g. 'This dog is an animal' and 'All dogs are animals'. Again, these are different judgments with different truth-conditions. Insofar as the logical form of a judgment contributes to the truth-conditions of the judgment, along with the specific concepts used, this is how I will understand how these parameters can be said to contribute to the content of a judgment.^{vi}

Third, a judgment is a mediate representation *of an object*. It is important to Kant that judgments have *objective validity*, i.e. they are applicable to an objective world. Kant argues that mere relating of representations in thought is not sufficient for a judgment, but that more needs to be said about the relation between these representations.

I have never been able to accept the interpretation which logicians give of judgment in general. It is, they declare, the representation of a relation between two concepts. I do not here dispute with them as to what is defective in this interpretation [...] I need only point out that the definition does not determine in what the asserted relation consists. (B140-1)

The problem is that one may relate representations in thought and never advance to a claim about an objective world. To ensure that judgments are properly objective, it appears, one must apply the copula, i.e. a particular concept of *relation* must be applied.

This is what is intended by the copula 'is'. It is employed to distinguish the objective unity of given representations from the subjective [...] Only in this way does there arise from this relation a *judgment*, that is, a relation which is *objectively valid*, and so can be adequately distinguished from a relation of the same representations that would have only subjective validity—as when they are connected according to laws of association. In the latter case, all that I could say would be, 'If I support a body, I feel an impression of weight'; I could not say, 'It, the body, is heavy'. (B141-2)

So what distinguishes any higher-order representation from a *judgment*, is that the latter makes a claim about an objective world. A judgment is a mediate representation applicable to an objective world.

Finally, one must consider whether this characterisation of a judgment coheres with the contemporary understanding of a judgment as a mental act which is the mental counterpart of the speech act of *assertion*. On this understanding, a judgment already has something like assertoric force. Characterised merely as a representation of an object, there is no obvious reason to take this representation to come along with some kind of mental act of

endorsement—Kant's mental act of judgment would appear at first sight to be the representing, not an endorsement of the representing, of something. In any case, if we are to make sense of the discussion of the modality of judgments at all, then it must make sense to speak of problematic judgments, i.e. judgments with no assertoric force. A problematic judgment is not like a potential judgment—given its position in the table of judgments, it really should count as a *judgment*. But if judging is already endorsing the representation, then there is no way to make sense of the problematic judgment. Indeed, Kant writes:

In a judgment the relation of different presentations to the unity of consciousness is thought as merely problematic, in a proposition, however, as assertoric. A problematic proposition is a *contradiction in adjecto*. Before I have a proposition, I must indeed first judge, and I judge of much that I do not make out. (*Logic*: 116)

(Note that by 'proposition' Kant means assertoric judgment). Thus, I shall take Kant's notion of judgment to be the following: To judge is to (mediately) represent something, essentially, to have an objective conscious thought.

The Modalities of Judgment

The main source of Kant's account of the modality of judgments can be found in and around the *Table of Judgments* in the first *Critique*, where he lays out what he thinks are the different forms a judgment can and must take. For Kant any judgment has four parameters to be fulfilled: each judgment must have some quantity, quality, relation and modality. Each of these four parameters has three 'moments'. (Think four determinables, each with three determinates, although it is not clear that they are mutually exclusive). The first three parameters involve the logical form of the judgment, for example, the parameter of *quantity* requires that every judgment be either universal, singular or particular. The three moments for modality are problematic, assertoric and apodeictic. So for any judgment, it must either be a problematic judgment, an assertoric judgment or an apodeictic judgment. However, modality differs from

the other parameters of judgment. Modality is the only feature of a judgment which does not contribute to the logical form of the content.

The *modality* of judgments is a quite peculiar function. Its distinguishing characteristic is that it contributes nothing to the content of the judgment (for, besides quantity, quality, and relation, there is nothing that constitutes the content of a judgment) [...]. (A74/B99-100)

This determination of the merely possible, actual, or necessary truth, thus, concerns only *the judgment itself*, not at all *the matter* that is judged. (*Logic*: 115)

In contrast to modality, the other parameters are supposed to contribute to the content of a judgment in fixing the logical form of the judgment which will structure the concepts included in order to yield the content of the judgment, as I outlined above. The general idea is just that, like quantity, quality and relation, modality is something that every judgment has. But whereas the first three parameters pertain to a certain structuring of the content of the judgment, the fourth, it is claimed, has a different role to play.

If modality does not contribute to content, what does it do? A natural way to understand Kant's view is in terms of the judger's having an attitude towards the making of the judgment, or an attitude towards the truth-value of the judgment. I will now look at the main Kant texts and consider how we can arrive at this interpretation, with some help from Matthey (1986). First, the *Critique* view.

The *modality* of judgments is a quite peculiar function. Its distinguishing characteristic is that it contributes nothing to the content of the judgment (for, besides quantity, quality, and relation, there is nothing that constitutes the content of a judgment), but concerns only the value of the copula in relation to thought in general. Problematic judgments are those in which affirmation or negation is taken as merely possible (optional). In assertoric judgments affirmation or negation is viewed as real (true), and in apodeictic judgments as necessary. (A74-5 / B99-100)

Modality is a matter of a relation between the 'value of the copula' and thought in general.

The copula is supposed to be *the characteristic form of a categorical judgment* (i.e. a judgment of subject-predicate form).

In categorical judgments, subject and predicate make up their matter; the form through which the relation (of agreement or disagreement) between subject and predicate is determined and expressed is called copula. (*Logic*: 110-111)

Similarly, the relation of consequence is the characteristic form of a hypothetical judgment; one judgment is represented as following from another in some way. And presumably something like disjunction is the characteristic form of a disjunctive judgment.

What the copula is to categorical judgments, the consequence is to the hypothetical—their form. (*Logic*: 111)

This characteristic form can determine different relations between subject and predicate, i.e. agreement or disagreement. The value of the copula is explicated in terms of affirmation or negation. I therefore take Kant's value of the copula to be as follows: a positive affirmative value for the copula results in something being predicated of the subject, e.g. 'Socrates is wise'; a negative value for the copula results in some predicate being denied of the subject, e.g. 'Socrates is not wise'.^{vii} Either way, the copula plays a crucial role in joining subject and predicate in judgment. This is in contrast to a notion of the copula as a linguistic particle, i.e. a word ('is') or a finite verb-ending, which can be modified by certain positioning of adverbs, for example, 'Socrates *must be* wise'. If a judgment is the unity of bringing various representations under a common representation, and if the copula is described as the characteristic form of a categorical judgment, then the copula here looks to be this common representation: the logical form of a categorical judgment. This does not accord with the notion that the copula is a linguistic particle, the word 'is' or a finite verb ending (although it may be that such linguistic particles are required in a linguistic expression of the judgment).

It is important not to make the mistake of assuming that the value of the copula is *modal*, e.g. as in 'Socrates *must be* wise'. For example, Matthey writes

By 'copula', Kant has in mind the semantical relation between the subject and predicate in a categorical judgment (and in an extended sense between the antecedent and consequent in a conditional, and among disjuncts in a disjunctive, judgment). The 'value', is the attitude the judger has toward this semantical relation, and it is expressed by the modal operator.^{viii}

This is a mistake because the copula contributes to the content of a judgment, insofar as it is supposed to be a moment of relation, which is supposed to contribute to the content of a judgment. The copula determines the logical form of a judgment, and takes different values. If it were to take modality as a value, then this would become part of the logical form and would contribute to the content of the judgment. Granted, the mode of judgments can be expressed using modal copulae.

[...] the problematic judgment, *The soul of man may be immortal*; [...] the assertoric judgment, *The human soul is immortal*; [...] the apodeictic judgment, *The soul of man must be immortal*. (*Logic*: 115)

However, this is rather modal modification of the linguistic particle I mentioned above, which is not to be understood as Kant's copula. Kant's copula contributes to the content of the judgment, so its value does too. So modality cannot be a value of this copula. The value of this copula is affirmation or negation. The linguistic copula is just a device used in conjunction with other linguistic expressions to express a judgment. Indeed, Matthey and I agree to this extent.

Syntactically, the mode is generally expressed by the qualification of the copula by "may be" and "must be" in the cases of the problematic and apodeictic modes, and by the absence of any qualifier in the case of the assertoric.^{ix}

If grammar allows us to modalise this copula, then so be it. But it is the relating of subject and predicate in thought or judgment that Kant is concerned with here, not with its linguistic expression.

Modality is supposed to be a matter of a relation between the value of the copula and thought in general. Kant goes on to explicate apodeictic judging as being 'thought to be determined' by the laws of the understanding. Does this mean the relation is to the laws of the understanding? Not really. The judging is only required to be *thought* to be determined by these laws. The important point is clearly the notion of being 'taken' or 'viewed' or 'thought' to be a certain way. So the relation to thought in general should be understood as some kind of attitude, i.e. an attitude towards the making of the judgment. That relation is something like *taking to be ϕ* , where ϕ stands for being optional, true or necessary. What is taken to be optional, true, or necessary is thus presumably the relating of subject and predicate in judgment, be it positive or negative. It is important to be aware at this stage of the danger of framing such a view so that it looks like the mode of a judgment is, in effect, another judgment. If I take a judgment to be ϕ , this cannot be cashed out in terms of judging the judgment to be ϕ , on pain of regress. Rather, one must think either in terms of something accompanying the judgment, say a commitment to its truth or a commitment to its permissibility, or in terms of the way ones judges, i.e. one relates subject and predicate in thought in a particular way.

What is the purported attitude in each case? A problematic judgment 'is thought only as an optional judgment, which it is possible to assume'. There is, 'a free choice of admitting such a proposition, and a purely optional admission of it into the understanding' (A75/B101). Note the use of 'proposition' here. There is a free choice of admitting the *proposition*, i.e. a free choice of *assertorically judging* the content. Remember the different meanings of 'judgment' and 'proposition'. A problematic judgment is the entertaining of a thought, where nothing is asserted, but assertion remains merely as an option. Indeed, it wouldn't make sense to say that the *judging* was optional in the case of a problematic judgment, because a judgment, in Kant's sense, has been made. If I judge problematically, I judge, and it is no longer an option

for me that I don't judge. What is left open is whether to endorse or reject that judgment. For the assertoric judgment, the attitude here must simply be *s takes it to be real/true*. I not only judge that p, but I bear some kind of commitment to its being true. I have exercised the free choice described above and somehow endorsed the judgment. The apodeictic judgment is explicated in terms of being thought to be determined by the laws of the understanding. As well as making the judgment, one might say that I also bear some commitment to its truth along with certain reasons for its truth.

Mattey (1986) frames the *Critique* view in terms of rational obligation. He agrees that, 'the modality of judgment reflects the attitude the judger has toward the acts of affirming or negating'.^x An assertoric judgment occurs when this act of affirming or negating is actually performed: 'When the act is actually performed, the judging is assertoric'.^{xi} Problematic and apodeictic judgments are then treated in terms of an attitude towards the act of affirming or negating with respect to rational obligation.

Apodeictically judging is a form of actually judging, in which the act of affirming or negating is taken to be necessary. The primary meaning of 'necessary' here is 'obligatory,' and one judges apodeictically when one takes it that the affirming or negating is demanded by the laws of the understanding.^{xii}

If one does not actually affirm anything, but merely considers the semantical relation of subject and predicate (ground and consequent, etc.), one judges problematically. This may take place for two different reasons: one may be unwilling to make the commitment to the truth of the judgment implicit in affirming, or one may suspend a currently held commitment for some purpose. In either case, the attitude here is the opposite of that taken when judging apodeictically. The person judging problematically [...] considers himself to be under no constraint imposed by the laws of the understanding, so he takes it that it is not obligatory to affirm it.^{xiii}

One problem is that Matthey does not make it clear here how to understand, for example, *taking it that affirming or negating is demanded etc.* without this constituting a *judgment that affirming or negating is demanded etc.* I will highlight a second problem, which will motivate my alternative interpretation, below.

In Kant's *Logic* modality determines the *relation of the entire judgment to the faculty of cognition*. This is explicated in terms of the consciousness of the modality of judging.

As to modality, by which moment is determined the relation of the entire judgment to the faculty of cognition, judgments are either problematic, assertoric, or apodeictic. Problematic judgments are accompanied with the consciousness of the mere possibility, assertoric judgments with the consciousness of the actuality, apodeictic judgments, lastly, with the consciousness of the necessity of judging. (*Logic*, p.114-5)

Admittedly, this does not tell us a great deal. In what does the possibility, actuality, or necessity of judging of which we are supposedly conscious consist? This is the question we wanted to answer in the first place. Moreover, if I entertain the thought that p problematically, it seems strange to say that I am conscious of the possibility of entertaining the thought that p—of course it is possible, given that I am actually entertaining the thought.

This is then explicated by Kant in terms of *the manner in which something is asserted or negated in judgment*.

This moment of modality indicates the manner in which something is asserted or negated in judgment: Whether one does not make out anything about the truth or untruth of a judgment, as in the problematic judgment, *The soul of man may be immortal*; or whether one determines something about its truth or untruth, as in the assertoric judgment, *The human soul is immortal*; or lastly, whether one expresses the truth of a judgment even with the dignity of necessity, as in the apodeictic judgment, *The soul of man must be immortal*. This determination of the merely

possible, actual, or necessary truth, thus, concerns only *the judgment itself*, not at all *the matter* that is judged. (*Logic*: 115)

Again it is the act of judging that is at issue in the modality of the judgment, not the content. Affirming or negating in judgment was described above as the value of the copula, so affirming and negating are relating subject and predicate in thought—judging categorically. Modality concerns *the manner* in which something is asserted or negated, so the manner in which something is judged. The particular manner in which something is judged here is whether one judges so as to determine something about the truth of what is judged, i.e. whether one judges so as to commit oneself to truth/untruth, so as not to commit oneself to any truth value, or whether one judges so as to commit oneself to necessary truth.

The treatment in the *Logic* is expounded by Matthey (1986) in terms of attitudes towards truth-values.

An alternative way of describing the modes of judging is by noting the attitude of the judge toward the truth value of the judgment, rather than toward the act of affirming or negating.^{xiv}

Assertorically judging that p is straightforwardly taking p to be true. Problematically judging that p is neither taking p to be true nor taking p to be false. Apodeictically judging that p is not presented as taking p to be necessarily true because, ‘this seems to violate Kant’s dictum that the modality concerns the judging, not the content of the judging’.^{xv} Matthey thus chooses instead a characterisation in terms of semantic entailment: one apodeictically judges that p if one ‘takes the truth of p to be semantically entailed by [the laws of the understanding]’.^{xvi}

A Problem and a Proposal: Courses of Reasoning

One can see, then, that it is natural to understand the modality of judgments in terms of some kind of attitude towards the making of a judgment. These attitudes might be understood in terms of rational obligations to make the judgments, attitudes towards the

truth-values of the judgments, or commitments to truth incurred in the way the judgment is made. However, how can we make sense of all of this as having nothing to do with the content of the judgment? The problem is that in order to have the requisite attitudes, it looks like I have to take into account the content of *p*. For example, if I take it to be obligatory to judge that *p*, doesn't that imply that I have thought about whether or not *p* is the case? When I take an attitude towards judging that *p*, I cannot take the attitude towards the content of *p*, on pain of violating the core idea running through Kant's understanding of modal judgment, that 'it contributes nothing to the content of the judgment' and 'concerns only *the judgment itself*, not at all *the matter* that is judged'. For example, if I apodeictically judge that $2 + 2 = 4$, it cannot be that I take it to be necessarily true *that* $2 + 2 = 4$, nor can I be taking *that particular content* to be determined by the laws of the understanding. The major challenge here is to reconcile this emerging view of the modes of judgment with the idea that they are not connected to the content of particular judgments.

I think Matthey (1986) falls foul of this problem, albeit only narrowly. He is well aware of the importance of this dictum. Indeed, this motivates what he says about apodeictic judging in the *Logic*—'this seems to violate Kant's dictum that the modality concerns the judging, not the content of the judging'^{xvii}—and his rejection of some previous interpretations of Kant's modalities of judgment: 'The moral of these criticisms is that we ought to take Kant seriously when he states that the modality of a judgment does not concern its content, but the manner in which something is judged'.^{xviii} However, his interpretation still seems to rely on a connection between the modality of a judgment and its content.

First, problematically judging that *p* is characterised either as being unwilling to commit to the truth of *p* or as suspending one's commitment to the truth of *p*. But this seems to be underpinned by the idea that the judger has considered the truth of *p*, and hence must have considered the content of *p* in order to do so. *Second*, any characterisation of the modality of judging that *p* in terms of an attitude towards the truth-value of *p* must require the judger to

entertain the content of *p*. How else could they form an attitude about it? If I take it to be true that *p*, surely I have engaged with the question whether *p*, and hence the content of *p* will have come into my considerations. *Third*, apodeictically judging that *p* is at one point characterised as taking *p* to be semantically entailed by the laws of the understanding. But in order to take this attitude, the judger must have an idea of what these laws are, and what the content of *p* is. Otherwise how could he or she take the one to semantically entail the other? The judger may be in error about the details—he or she only *takes* things to be thus and so—but he or she at least takes the content of *p* into account.

Fourth, the very presentation of the kind of interpretation propounded by Matthey is in danger of being taken to involve content.

The forming of such a higher-order representation [a judgment], [Kant] maintained, is always accompanied by what we would now term a propositional attitude toward the end-product of judging, the judgment proper.^{xix}

In order for a subject *S* to have a propositional attitude towards a proposition *p*, *S* must at least entertain the proposition. Classic examples of propositional attitudes include *S* believes that *p*, *S* knows that *p* and *S* doubts that *p*. In each case, the content of *p* is important. The content of *p* becomes less important when we change the construction, e.g. from *S believes that Fa* to *S believes of a that it is F*. But this change replaces a propositional attitude with something else. We no longer describe *S* as having an attitude towards (the content of) a proposition, but rather we explain what *S* believes (knows, doubts, etc.) about a particular object without having to use his or her particular mode presentation of that object. In order to respect Kant's 'dictum', we should not characterise the modes of judgment as propositional attitudes.

One diagnosis of Matthey's treatment of these issues, is that whilst he agrees that alethic modalities rely on the content of a proposition, as in *p is necessarily true*,^{xx} he does not take this to be so for other kinds of modality, namely deontic and epistemic modalities, as used in

his explications in terms of rational obligation and his connection between the modalities of judgment and *opining*, *believing* and *knowing*^{xxi} respectively. However, other modalities besides the alethic are intimately connected with the content of the propositions to which they attach. In deontic modality, knowing that judging that p is obligatory, without knowing the content of p, is not enough to understand what must be done; one must know the content of p in order to be able to act upon such an obligation. And in epistemic modality, in order to assess whether, for example, it is epistemically possible that p (whether, for all I know, p), one must know the content of p, the content of an epistemic agent's pre-existing knowledge, and whether the former is consistent with the latter.

This problem leaves us with the challenge to find an alternative interpretation of what Kant writes about the modality of judgment. I think we can make sense of this if we return to something Kant writes in the *Critique*.

The problematic proposition is therefore that which expresses only logical (which is not objective) possibility—a free choice of admitting such a proposition, and a purely optional admission of it into the understanding. The assertoric proposition deals with logical reality or truth. Thus, for instance, in a hypothetical syllogism the antecedent is in the major premise problematic, in the minor assertoric, and what the syllogism shows is that the consequence follows in accordance with the laws of the understanding. The apodeictic proposition thinks the assertoric as determined by these laws of the understanding, and therefore as affirming *a priori*; and in this manner it expresses logical necessity. (A75-6 / B101)

Kant explicates the modes of judgment in terms of the location of a judgment in a syllogism. The modes of judgment look like they are to be understood in terms of the role a judgment is intended to play in reasoning. This is why the content does not matter; (propositional) logic is about general rules of inference and thought with respect to form, not content. For example, take the rule of deduction *modus ponendo ponens* (the hypothetical syllogism):

$p \rightarrow q$

p

therefore, q.

Here we are only interested in the general rules and form of inference, not at all in the content of p or q. In the context of this course of reasoning, the modality of p in the first premise, $p \rightarrow q$, is problematic, as nothing is claimed or determined regarding the truth-value of p. Insofar as one judges *if p then q*, one must also be judging *that p* and *that q*. I.e. the concepts (and intuitions) involved in p and q must be appropriately related in judgment, before the resulting judgments p and q can be related in a further judgment, *if p then q*. So, in Kant's sense, p is judged. All the judgments here have a mode. Certainly nothing is thought regarding the truth or falsity of the antecedent of a conditional, even if the conditional itself is asserted. So judging that p is problematic.^{xxii} In the second premise, the modality of p is assertoric; here we suppose that p is true. In the conclusion, q is therefore taken to be necessary, insofar as it is determined by the premises via the laws of thought; it follows logically. Given the premises and certain rules of inference (the laws of thought), the conclusion *must be true*.

On Kant's view, the antecedent of a conditional is problematic: it is not asserted, but only thought. For example,

In the above example ['If there is a perfect justice, the obstinately wicked are punished'], the proposition, 'There is a perfect justice', is not stated assertorically, but is thought only as an optional judgment, which it is possible to assume; it is only the logical sequence which is assertoric. (A75 / B100)

Note also that Kant says that the logical sequence is assertoric, by which he means that one might assert the whole conditional—assertorically judge that $p \rightarrow q$ —but that in this asserted conditional, the antecedent p will be merely problematic and not asserted at all. And surely this is true. When I assert a conditional, I certainly do not thereby assert the antecedent (or the consequent for that matter).

If we can take the modality of a judgment to merely be the role it plays in a course of reasoning, rather than an attitude proper, we will avoid the problem of having to explain why we should take any attitude towards the constituent parts of a complex judgment, such as the antecedent in a hypothetical judgment. One might think it implausible that when I assert *if p then q*, that even if I have an attitude towards *if p then q*, that I also have any attitude towards *p*. However, I explained above how it makes sense on my interpretation to say that the antecedent of a conditional is judged problematically. Taking the mode of a judgment to be its role in a course of reasoning also avoids any danger of turning it into an additional, second-order judgment. The mode is simply the inferential location, say, not a judgment about that.

In short, it seems that the mode of a judgment (a relating of representations in objective conscious thought) is a matter of where it appears in the course of reasoning of the judger. The conclusion of such an inference is apodeictic. Indeed, it makes sense to say that, given some premises, the conclusion *must* be true, or that the conclusion is *necessitated* by its premises. Certain parts of the premises, such as the disjuncts of a disjunction or the antecedent or consequent of a conditional, are problematic. Although these judgments occur, nothing is thought regarding their truth, and nothing is asserted regarding them. The premises themselves will be assertoric: we take them to be true, and see what follows. One might treat assumptions, as are used in systems of natural deduction, as problematic judgments entertained only as suppositions, without thought of their truth. Understanding this element of modes of judgment makes it clearer what role truth is supposed to play here. Normally we would expect truth to have something to do with the content, but not so. Truth plays a role insofar as it plays a role in our characterization of logical inference and reasoning.

Note also that judgments and the courses of reasoning in which they occur will be distinct events. In different courses of reasoning the same content may be judged under different

modes. For example, consider two courses of reasoning one might engage in at different times for different purposes.^{xxiii}

(P1) If Socrates is wise then grass is green.

(P2) Socrates is wise.

(C1) Therefore, grass is green.

(P3) If $2 + 2 = 4$ then it is not the case that Socrates is wise.

(P4) $2 + 2 = 4$.

(C2) Therefore, it is not the case that Socrates is wise.

In the first course of reasoning, the same content 'Socrates is wise' appears both problematically and assertorically. In the second course of reasoning, 'It is not the case that Socrates is wise' is judged apodeictically. But 'Socrates is wise' was already judged merely problematically and then assertorically. It can't be necessarily true that it is not the case that Socrates is wise and also true that Socrates is wise. Moreover, it would be strange for someone to take 'Socrates is wise' to be true one day, and necessarily false the next; or to believe that Socrates is wise one day, and believe that necessarily, Socrates is not wise the next (in the absence of new information about Socrates). It doesn't look like problematic, assertoric and apodeictic judging should have anything to do with taking the content of a judgment to be possibly, actually or necessarily true. Note also, in the antecedent of the first premise ' $2 + 2 = 4$ ' is only problematic, and not taken to be necessary, but this does not mean that that ' $2 + 2 = 4$ ' is not a necessary truth (whether alethically or epistemically understood^{xxiv}). Such cases allow us to reiterate the fact that content has no role to play here, and that these notions of possible, actual and necessary truth are not taken to apply to the content of a judgment.

Kant places one minimal restriction on the content of judgments with respect to their modality, which is that the content of a problematic judgment must at least be *thinkable*.

The principle of contradiction is applied in all problematic judgments. Here all that matters is that the predicate does not contradict the subject in itself, e.g., a divisible soul [...] If this is so, then the judgment is not at all thinkable. (*Metaphysik Vigilantius* (K₃) 29:966)

Kirk Dallas Wilson exhibits this constraint in his interpretation of Kant: 'it is impossible to judge problematically whatever is itself logically impossible'.^{xxv} The content of a purported judgment, Kant claims, cannot be self-contradictory: we cannot think self-contradictory thoughts or concepts. This is the mark of logical possibility—a lack of contradiction. What is not logically possible is claimed to be unthinkable, i.e. cannot be thought.^{xxvi} In particular, the content of a problematic judgment must adhere to this principle of contradiction, and hence state something logically possible. Such a view about thinkability brings in various problems. For example, *reductio ad absurdum* works by assuming something and deriving a contradiction, showing that the negation of it must be true. But how can I assume the first premise if it is ultimately contradictory and therefore unthinkable? I shall leave such problems aside (although it is worth noting that if one takes 'unthinkable' to express a deontic, not an alethic, modality, as in the common meaning of 'unspeakable', then one will be able to think contradictions after all, although one ought not to). This part of the view is not a crucial element of the general account of modes of judgment.

Further evidence for this interpretation of Kant can be found in his *Logic*. First, he describes inference via contraposition as moving from an assertoric judgment (a premise) to an apodeictic judgment (a conclusion).

The immediate manner of concluding through contraposition consists in that transposition (*metathesis*) of judgments in which the quantity remains the same, the *quality*, however, is changed. They concern only the modality of judgments, in changing an assertoric into an apodeictic judgment. (*Logic*: 124)

Here the conclusion of an (immediate) inference is characterised as being apodeictic, as I suggested, and the antecedent premise is characterised as assertoric, which accords with

my suggestion that premises in a course of reasoning are assertoric judgments. A second promising passage concerns syllogisms. Here Kant argues that we cannot distinguish between different kinds of syllogism, such as hypothetical and disjunctive, with respect to modality because the modal properties are always the same: the conclusion of a syllogism is always apodeictic.

Syllogisms can be divided neither as to *quantity*, for every *major* is a rule, thus something general; nor in respect of *quality*, for it is equally valid whether the conclusion is affirmative or negative; nor, finally, in regard to *modality*, for the conclusion is always accompanied by the consciousness of necessity and consequently has the dignity of an apodeictic proposition. (*Logic*: 127)

This supports my claim that, according to Kant, any conclusion of a given inference should be classed as apodeictic. A conclusion in an inference bears a certain relation to the premises: if the premises are true, the conclusion *must be* true. This peculiar feature of the conclusion is all there is to the apodeictic judgment. It is not a *de dicto* affirmation of necessary truth *simpliciter*. The conclusions to inferences are not always themselves necessary truths, but only follow necessarily from certain premises.

The status of an apodeictic judgment might be said to be parasitic on the necessity of the inference to it from some premises, and hence also on the necessity of the conditional formed from those premises and the conclusion. I.e. if R is a logical consequence of P and Q, then the conditional $((P \ \& \ Q) \rightarrow R)$ is necessarily true. But, it would be a grave mistake to start with $\Box((P \ \& \ Q) \rightarrow R)$ and conclude $\Box R$. This would be to confuse the necessity of the conditional with necessity of the consequent. Does Kant make this mistake? I don't think so, but this point brings out the danger of taking the modality of judgment to be akin to standard alethic and other modalities. It certainly seems true to say that, given the valid inference, and hence also the necessary conditional, that the conclusion is *necessitated* by its premises, and thus has some special status. However, this cannot mean that the conclusion is itself necessary. Yes, on this view the conclusion of an inference has a special status, a mode,

according to its positioning as the conclusion, but it does not thereby afford this judgment with something like logical necessity.

One problem for Kant's view, as I have presented it, might be that it is too easy to make judgments apodeictic. After all, consider the valid inference

p,
therefore, p.

It seems that this could be added to any course of reasoning, turning every assertoric judgment into an apodeictic one. But then this will undermine the distinction between assertoric premises and apodeictic conclusion. I think, however, there are two answers to this objection. First, modes are supposed to be relative to a given course of reasoning, and the premises and conclusions that are actually involved there: not also premises and conclusions that *could* always be added. Insofar as in many cases a reasoner will not include this inference, the premise p will remain merely assertoric. Indeed, one could probably always manage to cobble together some premise entailing p, but if the premise is not included in an inference, the mere possibility of its inclusion should not make p apodeictic. Second, in most cases, use of this inference will be unacceptable as involving a circle of justification.

By *petitio principii* one understands the assumption of a proposition as an immediately certain proposition for serving as a ground of proof, although it is in need of a proof.

One commits a circle in proving, when the proposition one wanted to prove is underlying one's *own* proof. (*Logic*: 139)

Insofar as we are interested in following valid patterns of reasoning to learn the consequences of our assumptions or premises, we should shy away from concluding p from p in our everyday reasoning practices.

What about a case where I happen to have a long-standing belief that $p \rightarrow q$, and a long-standing belief that p? Must I therefore apodeictically judge that q? Does the current view

require logical closure of my pre-existing beliefs? I see no reason why this should be. The idea is that a judgment is something like the current thinking of a propositional thought, and that all judgments have a mode according to their role in a course of reasoning. A long-standing belief that p need not be a current conscious thought, but rather only a disposition to have conscious (assertoric) thoughts that p . If the judgment that p is not part of my current thought process, and if for the same reasons the judgment that $p \rightarrow q$ is also not part of my current thought process, then I will not be drawn to conclude that q , and hence to judge that q apodeictically.

This proposed interpretation of Kant on modal judgment can be used to improve upon the attitude views. For example, whether something is taken to be true is not a matter of considering whether the content correctly represents the world (or something like that), but rather what role the judgment, i.e. that making of a judgment, is currently playing in reasoning, regardless of the truth-value of the content. Further, we do not want to imbue the content of such judgments with this kind of modal force; just because I assume for the purposes of a course of reasoning that it is true that Socrates is foolish, and hence judge assertorically, does not mean that I want to claim that Socrates is in fact foolish. Kant will inject modality into the content elsewhere when he discusses the modal categories.^{xxxvii} In light of my proposal, then, we can understand having an attitude towards a judging—the ‘taking to be so-and-so’—in other terms. The relation to thought in general, the ‘attitude’, is merely the role a judging plays in a course of reasoning. The attitude of *taking a judging to be ϕ* is to be explained as, or replaced by, the mere fact that a judging plays a ϕ -role in a current course of reasoning. The manner in which something is judged is to be cashed out in terms of the role a judging plays in a course of reasoning.

One case which is interesting to consider is that where the judgment follows from no premises. If I take the judging of p to be determined directly by the laws of the understanding,

the most general laws of thought, then it seems plausible that I might take p to be a theorem in any course of reasoning, and that I am always entitled to enlist p in any course of reasoning.^{xxviii} Theoremhood in this sense (following logically from no premises) is the standard mark of logical truth or necessity. So perhaps we could take the class of conclusions following from no premises, according to the laws of the understanding, to be the class of logical necessities. If one takes the view that logic is concerned with the most general laws of thought, then what follows according to those laws of thought from no premises can be considered as truly logically necessary, which is in turn an alethic notion of necessity. The other cases, where an apodeictic judgment follows from premises will have to be left as cases of being merely logically necessary *relative to* some given premises.

Indeed, the apodeictic judgment is explicitly linked by Kant to logical necessity and a *prioricity*.

The apodeictic proposition thinks the assertoric as determined by these laws of the understanding, and therefore as affirming *a priori*; and in this manner it expresses logical necessity. (A76 / B101)

If we take a judgment to be a logical consequence of some premises, then we are inclined to say we come to know the conclusion *a priori* (albeit probably weakly *a priori*, following *a priori* from non-*a priori* premises). In the case of no premises, if a judgment is taken to be a logical theorem, following from the laws of thought, with no reference to particular experience or empirical evidence, then intuitively it seems that the judgment should also be taken to be potentially *a priori*. The most general kind of logic, for Kant, is concerned with these general laws of thought, taken in isolation of what could actually be experienced using them.

Logic, again, can be treated in a twofold manner, either as logic of the general or as logic of the special employment of the understanding. The former contains the absolutely necessary rules of thought without which there can be no employment whatsoever of the understanding. It therefore treats of understanding without any

regard to difference in the objects to which the understanding may be directed. (A52 / B76)

As such, if something is taken to be determined by these laws of thought, these most general laws of the understanding, then one should also take it to be logically necessary.

However, it seems strange to make such claims about the occurrence of such theorems in any and every course of reasoning. It is important to remember that these are modes of *judgings*, particular occasions of judgment taking place in particular courses of reasoning. It is the particular judging that has the modal status, not the theorem judged in common by all particular judgings of that theorem. Furthermore, consider a particular theorem of the laws of the understanding, T. For the time being I forget about T's status, and use it just to illustrate to somebody the validity of the following kind of inference:

T ∨ R

¬T

Therefore, R.

This demonstrates again how the same proposition can have a different modal status, depending upon the logical location of a judgment of that proposition, regardless of its independent logical status. I don't have to conclude every theorem in every course of reasoning, and may even use a theorem as part of a premise. Note: if T is necessary, of course ¬T cannot be true, and yet I can judge it assertorically.^{xxix} Modes of judgment really do seem far removed from standard alethic modalities.

However, Kant does describe the modes of judgment as expressing logical modality. How can this be? How far can an alethic or logical modality (such as is discussed elsewhere by Kant) and the modes of judgment here be said to be anything like the same idea? Kant writes about the logical possibility of a concept, e.g., 'A concept is always possible if it is not self-contradictory. This is the logical criterion of possibility [...]' (A596 / B624, footnote), yet he also writes that 'the problematic proposition is [...] that which expresses only logical

(which is not objective) possibility' (A75 / B101). A plausible general link can be found in what Kant means by the word 'logical'. For Kant,

The sphere of logic is quite precisely delimited; its sole concern is to give an exhaustive exposition and a strict proof of the formal rules of all thought, whether it be *a priori* or empirical, whatever be its origin or its object, and whatever hindrances, accidental or natural, it may encounter in our minds. (Bix)

Logic is supposed to be a completely general account of the rules of thought. In the logical modality of judgment we are concerned with patterns of reasoning, irrespective of content, and therefore we are concerned with formal rules of inference; formal rules of thought. Likewise, in the logical modality of concepts we are concerned with what makes a concept a good, well-formed concept, such that we can *think it*, i.e. use it in thought. Again, here we find some general rules for thought. So we can say that logical modality is the same with respect to judgments and concepts insofar as it is a matter of general rules of thought. Of course, the particulars differ with respect to the kinds of things we are considering, i.e. the status of judgments, or the status of concepts used in judgments.

Further Questions

A number of further questions for Kant's view on my proposed interpretation remain.

(a) What kind of modality do the modes of judgment display?

I think it's clear that this is not alethic modality, as it has nothing to do with the mode of truth of these judgments. I explained above why I doubt this is epistemic or deontic modality, because this again requires taking account of the content. E.g., if it's epistemically possible that it will rain tomorrow, then for all I know, it will rain tomorrow. In order to assess the epistemic possibility here, we will need to consider the logical relations between the proposition that it will rain tomorrow and the content of all the other propositions known to

me. Furthermore, a proposition may be true for all I know, yet I may judge its negation apodeictically in a given course of reasoning. This does not mean that the proposition is now epistemically impossible. Indeed, it seems strange to talk of these modes of judgments in terms of standard kinds of modality at all. It is not the content of a claim of the form 'possibly p' that we are interested in here, because the point was that these modes do not add to the content, but are rather a feature of the making of the judgment, giving that judgment a certain inferential status.

One might think that one way to approach the question is to consider whether certain logical relations hold of the modes of judgment. For example, one might consider the validity of the T-axiom: $\Box p \rightarrow p$.^{xxx} This is an axiom that holds for certain kinds of modality, such as alethic modalities (stronger than T), temporal and epistemic modality, but fails for certain others, such as deontic or doxastic modality.^{xxxi} Again, the problem here is that these kinds of axioms are about modal judgments *qua* propositions with modal content, whereas we are interested in any judgment with any content (as explained above). Perhaps one way to put it is that the modal logician is interested in premises with modal content, whereas the modes of judgment here are concerned with the status shared by *any* premise or conclusion, as a consequence of playing that particular role in an inference.

(b) Can the claim that all judgments are modal be supported?

The question to be addressed here regards the consequence of claiming (i) that all judgments have a mode (from Kant's table of judgments), and (ii) that the mode of a judgment is determined by the role the making of that judgment plays in a given course of reasoning (my interpretation), namely that (iii) all judgments play some role in a course of reasoning. One might initially find this implausible. Surely many of our judgments are not parts of courses of reasoning, but just variously unconnected thoughts, or thoughts connected by other means, such as non-logical forms of inference?

Perhaps one could just deny (i), that all judgments have a mode. Kant's comments on modal judgment, in the *Critique* at least, appear in the context of an elucidation of the table of judgments. Kant commentators often reject as a matter of course the plausibility of the claim that this table correctly picks out exhaustive, necessary features or parameters of judgment, based as it is on Aristotelian logic. It is not clear why, in a contemporary setting, one should agree that all judgments have the peculiar inferential status I have described. I do not have room here to explore possible arguments for this view, but even if (i) is rejected, we can still learn something interesting from what Kant has to say about modal judgment. One must only weaken the range of the claim to cases where the subject is engaging in reasoning processes. The case of perceptual judgments, for example, might be particularly difficult to incorporate into the current view. If we judge that p simply on the basis of something perceptually appearing before us, it is not clear why this should immediately be incorporated into an inferential sequence.

Alternatively, in the *Logic* Kant describes methods of reasoning other than the syllogism, which do not yield necessary conclusions.

In proceeding from the particular to the general in order to draw general judgments from experience—hence not *a priori* ([but] *empirically*) general judgments—the power of judgment concludes *either* from *many* to *all* things of a kind or from *many* determinations and properties in which things of the same kind agree, to *the others so far as they belong to the same principle*. The first manner of concluding is called conclusion through *induction*, the second, conclusion by *analogy* [...].

Note 2. Every syllogism must yield necessity. *Induction* and *analogy* are therefore no syllogisms but only *logical presumptions* or empirical conclusions; and through induction one does get general, but not universal propositions. (*Logic*: 136-7)

Rather than denying that all judgments have a mode, perhaps we just need to take more care to consider other kinds of reasoning beyond logical inferences such as syllogisms.

These may not yield apodeictic judgments, but perhaps only assertoric. Or perhaps Kant is not wrong in according every judgment a mode, but is wrong to stop at only three. New modes of judgment might correspond to the conclusions arising from reasoning by analogy, induction, and perhaps even perceptual judging.

One response which looks promising, but which would ultimately undermine (ii), would be to defend the claim that all judgments have a mode by considering the *potential* for a judgment (judging) to be used in (logical) inference. Even in cases where no explicit, extended or complex chain of reasoning is taking place—perhaps this is most cases—we might say that our judgments are always ready to be included in an unexpected chain of reasoning, and as such are primed with a modal status. For example, for no particular reason, I may assert out loud that *p*. My neighbour unexpectedly then asserts, *but if p then q*. From this, I go on to assert that *in that case, it must be that q*. I did not initially intend my judgment that *p* to be part of a chain of reasoning, but circumstances conspired to build the judgment into such a chain. But to carry this through I did not have to go back and judge that *p* differently; it already counted as a usable premise and therefore as an assertoric judgment. Assertions are ‘premise apt’, one might say. One might try to reinforce this by recourse to arguments in the literature on modality for thinking that inferential practices and abilities underlie any linguistic or conceptual practices and abilities.^{xxxii} If judgments involve relations between concepts in thought, then, by these kinds of arguments, inferential abilities will underlie our abilities to make judgments. The idea is, roughly, that we don’t possess these conceptual abilities until we are able to assess certain inferential, normative or modal consequences of our judgments and concepts. Although this line of thought may assure us that we are at least *able* to draw inferences from our judgments, it does not look like this can assure us that all of our judgments actually play some role in an inference. The problem with such a proposal, however, is that if the modality of a judgment is now explained, not in terms of the role a judgment plays in a course of reasoning, but in some other feature of it which determines which role a judgment *could* play in a course of reasoning, then we have changed the

subject. The potential for playing a role would be the crucial feature, and not the mere playing of the role itself, which is what I take Kant to have described.

Concluding Remarks

In this paper I have argued that the natural interpretation of Kant's view about the modality of judgment, in terms of attitudes, which is developed and endorsed by Matthey (1986), cannot accommodate Kant's central dictum that the modality of a judgment does not concern the content of what is judged. I have proposed, as an alternative, a reading whereby the modality of a judgment is the role a judgment plays in a given course of reasoning. The upshot of this is a view whereby every judgment has a peculiarly modal status in virtue of being part of such a course of reasoning. Whether this view as it stands is correct remains to be seen, but on this interpretation, Kant has at least presented an interesting thesis about human thought: objective thoughts occur in an inferential structure, and as a consequence are afforded some modal status.^{xxxiii}

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ⁱ It is a matter of contention regarding how much of the *Jäsche Logic* is Kant, and how much Jäsche. For now, I am content to leave this question aside. Here I am more interested in a philosophical view put forward by Kant, where ‘Kant’ may refer to more than one author (as with ‘Homer’), than in the historical details of the exact identity of this ‘Kant’.

ⁱⁱ For a thorough exploration of Kant’s theory of judgment see Hanna (2004) where, for example, he gives the following much more detailed characterization: ‘According to Kant, judgments are complex conscious cognitions that (i) refer to objects either directly (via intuitions) or indirectly (via concepts), (ii) include concepts that are predicated either of those objects or of other constituent concepts, (iii) exemplify pure logical concepts and enter into inferences according to pure logical laws, (iv) essentially involve both the following of rules and the application of rules to the objects picked out by intuitions, (v) express true or false propositions, (vi) mediate the formation of beliefs and other intentional acts, and (vii) are unified and self-conscious.’

ⁱⁱⁱ I have here replaced ‘knowledge’, the word which appears in the translation, with ‘cognition’, as it provides a less loaded translation of the difficult word ‘*Erkenntnis*’. I will continue to make this change to all other quotations.

^{iv} All references for Kant quotations will appear in the text. For *The Critique of Pure Reason* I will use only the A and B references, and not refer directly to the text again.

^v Adelung 1808: 1906. Thank you to Mark Textor for the translation.

^{vi} Of course, taking a different notion of content as a starting point is likely to yield different conclusions about the modality of judgment. For example, an anonymous referee for this journal suggests taking a much more restrictive notion of content, such that modality can enter into what I call the content without modifying this more restrictive notion (put roughly, content involves first-order or directly referential concepts, whilst modal concepts are higher-order or ‘transcendental’ predicates or operators). This would allow one to introduce a standard notion of modality, against my conclusions later in this paper. To properly discuss this proposal would be too much of a digression from my present line of argument. However, I suspect that (i) this notion of content will not be able to honour Kant’s distinction between modality and the other forms of judgment, if those forms turn out to be higher-order concepts; and (ii) it will be difficult to explain why all judgments have a modality. Perhaps more importantly, (iii) I take these considerations regarding real/first-order predicates and logical predicates to be better related to Kant’s discussion of the modal *categories*—possibility, actuality and necessity—, concepts one of which must apply to any *object*. Here Kant can explain how modal concepts do not determine properties of the object, in terms of them not being real or determining (first-order) predicates. These concepts may well be alethic, but I take them to play a very different role to the modalities of judgment. (All this is explored in more detail in current work in progress.)

^{vii} Kant would also include what he calls an infinite judgment here, i.e. ‘Socrates is unwise’.

^{viii} Matthey 1986: 424

^{ix} *ibid.*

^x *ibid.*: 426

^{xi} *ibid.*

^{xii} *ibid.*: 427-8

^{xiii} *ibid.*: 428

^{xiv} *ibid.*: 431

^{xv} *ibid.*: 432

^{xvi} *ibid.*

^{xvii} *ibid.*

^{xviii} *ibid.*: 425

^{xix} *ibid.*: 423

^{xx} In reply to Kirk Dallas Wilson, Matthey complains that, ‘The mode of the judging is thus derivative from the modal status of the content of the judging, i.e. whether it is possibly true, actually true, or necessarily true’. Matthey 1986: 425

^{xxi} See Matthey 1986: Section 5.

^{xxii} Note of course that the full conditional ‘ $p \rightarrow q$ ’ is itself assertoric, given that it is a premise.

^{xxiii} For example, to demonstrate to the logic class a valid pattern of inference.

^{xxiv} And perhaps also deontically understood: it might be a rational requirement to believe necessary truths such as $2 + 2 = 4$.

^{xxv} Kirk Dallas Wilson 1978: 259. See Matthey 1986: 424-5 for his criticism of this part of Wilson’s interpretation.

^{xxvi} (Bxxvi), footnote; (A244 / B302) & footnote; *Metaphysik L₂*: 28:544, 28:557.

^{xxvii} (A80 / B160); (A218-235 / B265-287)

^{xxviii} This line of thought is reminiscent of McFetridge’s view of logical necessity as being the distinctive feature of a proposition that a rational thinker would include as a premise in any inference whatsoever.

^{xxix} There is a problem here that, if T is logically necessary, then according to Kant $\neg T$, as a logical impossibility, is unthinkable, and so could not appear as a judgment at all. However, as I have mentioned elsewhere, the view that logical impossibilities are unthinkable is itself problematic.

^{xxx} See, e.g., Matthey 1986: 429-30

^{xxxi} If p is necessarily true, it is true. If p is always true, it is true now. If p is known, p is true. But, if p is obligatory, it does not follow that p is true. And if p is believed, it may not be true.

^{xxxii} See for example Baldwin (2002) and Brandom (2008).

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