IV.—KANT'S ANTITHESIS OF DOGMATISM AND CRITICISM.

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KANT's distinction between two sharply contrasted types of philosophical method, designated by the names of 'dogmatism' and 'criticism' has come to be one of the accepted rubrics in the current treatment of the history of philosophy. It is commonly supposed to correspond to actual historical differences that are both definite and important. For this celebrated antithesis not only sums up in a single phrase what Kant conceived to be the most important and distinctive feature of his own doctrine; it also, as Kant sets it forth, contains several plain implications as to matters of historical fact which concern much more than his own doctrine: implications, namely, as to the real character of the philosophical procedure of his predecessors, especially of Leibniz and Wolff; as to the measure of his own divergence from them, in his conception of the nature and scope of the ultimate criteria of truth; and as to the degree of essential novelty and originality that can be claimed for the Kantian system. In particular, the customary assumption of the validity of the antithesis has brought about that many more or less instructed persons carry about with them, as their one firmly fixed philosophical idea, the persuasion that between the method of philosophy in vogue before Kant's day, and that in vogue since, there is a great gulf fixed. I propose here to show that the antithesis in question is seriously misleading, and to point out certain misrepresentations of historic facts, certain exaggerations and certain ambiguities in Kant's way of presenting it, and certain errors in those ideas about the criteria of truth employed in metaphysical reasoning, upon which the antithesis is based. Behind this simple and popular and apparently convincing scheme for classifying historic tendencies lies a very considerable, though not uncharacteristic, confusion in Kant's thinking. He was able to make so sharp the antithesis between his own and earlier systems only because he had been

guilty of three rather singular oversights. In the first place, he had failed to hold clearly in mind what the doctrine of philosophical method held by his immediate predecessors had actually been. In the second place, he had failed to consider duly and define clearly the relation of his own doctrine to a familiar principle which has been the main and the generally accepted instrument of metaphysical reasoning, as well before his day as after it. And in the third place, he had forgotten—and most of his expositors have ever since overlooked—the fact that, of the special arguments in which he worked out his own ‘critical’ method, the most important and ostensibly the most ‘critical’—namely, the argument about causality embodied in the Second Analogy of Experience—was merely an elaboration of an argument already employed by Kant’s ‘dogmatic’ predecessor, Wolff, from whom he seems unconsciously to have borrowed it.¹ These considerations will, I hope, throw an appreciable, and, if that be conceivable, a somewhat new illumination upon the limitations of Kant’s thought and upon its historical connexions. Now that the world, and especially the Germanic part of it, has ceased celebrating—not without a certain measure of unphilosophical *Schwärmerei*—the centenary of the worthy Koenigsberger’s death, nothing, I take it, could be more fitting than that students of the history of thought should undertake a new inquest into the real originality, and the real value, of this central idea of the thinker who is credited, above all, with giving to philosophy a new and definitive method. The outcome of the inquiry will, I think, tend somewhat to qualify the conventional high estimate of Kant’s importance, so far as the methodological question is concerned. Prof. William James has, in a public address, laid hands on our father Parmenides with some boldness: “I believe,” he says, “that Kant bequeaths to us not one single conception which is both indispensable to philosophy and which philosophy either did not possess before him, or was not destined inevitably to acquire after him, through the growth of men’s reflexion upon the hypotheses by which science interprets nature. The true line of philosophic progress lies, in short, not so much *through* Kant as *round* him, to the point where we now stand. Philosophy can perfectly well outflank him, and build herself up into an adequateness by prolonging more directly the older English lines.” This is rather more than I care here to maintain; it is not

¹ This third point cannot be dealt with within the limits of this paper. The proof of it is offered in a forthcoming article by the present writer in the *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*.

so much from Kant's positive contentions as from his negations and his unfair reflexions upon his precursors, that this paper will offer reasons for dissenting. Yet it is true, I think, that our present somewhat minute inquiry will make it evident that the tendency of Kant's influence has been to obscure or disguise the proper and the historic method of metaphysical reasoning, and to lead to the assumption of a breach of continuity in the secular working out of philosophical problems, where none really exists.

What Kant means by his antithesis is, of course, sufficiently clear. The distinction between dogmatism and criticism is represented as radical; and it has a perfectly definite technical character. A dogmatist, in the special sense, is a philosopher who deliberately goes about making synthetic judgments *a priori*, without first pausing to ask himself whether, or how, such judgments are logically possible. That is the definition of the creature; and of the motive which leads him to be such as he is, Kant gives a plain account in various passages of the *Transcendental Dialectic* and of the *Prolegomena*. The weakness in human nature which causes men to construct dogmatic systems of philosophy is the passion for completeness in the conception of things and in the explanation of their conditions, the disposition "to find for every conditioned an unconditioned and so to complete the unity of knowledge". The speculative metaphysician, in short, is the man who suffers from an uncontrolled craving for the absolute and ultimate. The reader of Kant cannot fail to derive the impression that the philosophical ambitions of earlier thinkers, and especially of the school in which Kant himself had been brought up, had been characterised by a general ignoring of limits, by a naïve assumption of the adequacy of the powers of human reason, and by a careless neglect to define the criteria of truth with either proper narrowness or proper explicitness. Kant's whole picture of the motives and the achievement of all constructive pre-Kantian metaphysicians is the picture of the motives and the achievement of an Icarus.

Now this picture is entirely in keeping with the view about metaphysics commonly held by the man in the street, and even by many natural scientists and some philosophers; but to any one who will take the trouble to understand the inner springs of the historical movement of metaphysical reflexion, it must seem an unintelligent caricature. The primary and exigent philosophic passion, as the history of philosophy displays it, is not the passion for completeness in the conception of the world of experience and of the conditions of

it, but the passion for consistency and coherency in that conception. The greater philosophers have been distinguished, not by a more insatiable lust for the synthesis of abstruse ideas, but by a superior talent for the analysis of the common ideas used in all thinking. Philosophy begins, no doubt, in the case of a Thales or any similar pioneer, with a demand for completeness and ultimateness of explanation of given facts; but—if I may repeat what I have already remarked elsewhere—philosophy once begun is kept going and endlessly changing by the continual fresh discovery of latent inconsistencies in the accepted interpretations of experience. Every man is more or less disturbed at any intimations of the presence of such inconsistencies in his body of apparently settled opinions; and the philosopher, as he is usually exemplified in history, is merely the man who is peculiarly alert to this situation, and peculiarly—and, perhaps, unnecessarily—uncomfortable at finding himself in it. Often enough, no doubt, it has been some religious or practical need that has set him to looking for the contradictions in the current opinions; but in so far as his revision of those opinions has been philosophical, the motive that shaped it has been the demand for consistency in the explication of the conceptual necessities implicit in the facts of experience. We are not called upon here, however, to review the whole history of metaphysics; and it is therefore not possible to point out in detail how, at nearly all the great steps of philosophical transition, the method, both of metaphysical criticism and of metaphysical construction, has consisted in some special application of the two logical maxims involved in the principle of contradiction, in its broader meaning: *that which, after the completest analysis of the ideas involved, implies the coinherence, in a single subject, of concepts that the mind is incapable of combining in thought, cannot be real, and that proposition of which the opposite is, in the sense just specified, inconceivable or self-contradictory, must be true.*

It suffices for our present purpose to recall the manifest fact that Kant's more immediate 'dogmatic' predecessors, Leibniz, Wolff and Baumgarten, so far from constructing their metaphysical edifices without first examining the foundations, had been entirely explicit in naming the criterion of *a priori* knowledge, through the use of which metaphysics was to be possible;¹ and had limited that criterion to the single

¹ In his criticism of Kant Eberhard declared that "die Leibnitzische Philosophie ebensowohl eine Vernunftkritik enthalte, wie die Kantische; denn sie gründe ihren Dogmatismus auf eine genaue Zergliederung der

principle of contradiction—or, to give it a name that better covers their full meaning, the principle of the compossibility of concepts. There had, moreover, during the period just before the appearance of the critical philosophy, been taking place a progressive clearing up of the significance and scope of this principle, and an especially determined effort to elucidate the whole question of the nature of *a priori* judgments. Since this was the case it will be of use to inquire, first, just what Leibniz and Wolff meant by the principle of contradiction, especially in its relation to the question of “the possibility of synthetic judgments *a priori*”; and, second, to ascertain precisely what Kant's own views were about the validity and the reach of that principle. We shall find the results of such an inquiry somewhat surprising.

The principle of sufficient reason is still sometimes represented as holding in the Leibnizian system an independent place, virtually co-ordinate with the principle of contradiction. But in reality Leibniz fully recognised that this principle can apodictically establish no conclusions *a priori*; and Wolff either treated it as a special case of the principle of contradiction, or else attempted to justify it by a peculiar mode of argument, of which Kant would have been obliged to recognise the legitimacy on strictly ‘critical’ grounds. With the exception, then, of this last-mentioned argument, which cannot be dealt with here, Leibniz and Wolff rested the whole possibility of demonstrative proof or disproof in metaphysics upon the principle of contradiction, and professed to have no metempirical theoretical knowledge save such as could be gained through the use of that principle. Wolff takes pains to point out that even the Cartesian *cogito ergo sum* is nothing more than a special case of the sort of logical necessity which the principle establishes.

What, then, did these philosophers understand by the *Grund des Widerspruches*?

We must remember, to begin with, that Leibniz—a fact of which both Mr. Bertrand Russell and M. Couturat have made much, in their recent expositions of his doctrine—liked to call all judgments analytical, contingent ones no less than necessary; this because of the familiar truth of formal logic that the connotation of the predicate of a proposition is always embraced within the connotation of the subject. As M. Couturat points out, the whole metaphysics of Leibniz

Erkenntnisvermögen”. Upon this Kant remarked that, if such was the case then, indeed, “there is no dogmatism in that philosophy, in the sense in which our Kritik always employs the word” (*Reply to Eberhard, 1te Abschn.*).

follows from the logical principle: "Dans toute vérité, universelle ou singulière, nécessaire ou contingente, le prédicat est contenu dans le sujet". But while Leibniz thus makes all judgments analytical in a sense, it is also true that he fully recognises a distinction corresponding to Kant's distinction between analytic and synthetic judgments. Some predicates are contained in their subjects essentially and inextricably, so that, lacking those predicates, the subject would cease to be itself, would become an inconceivability; in other words, the concept, as a whole, is made up of a complex of attributes, some one or more of which are inconceivable without the others. In other cases the inclusion of the given predicate with the several other predicates that make up the essence (or definition) of the subject is purely accidental; the several attributes do not cohere of necessity. In the latter cases, the connexion of predicate with subject can only be known *a posteriori*; the former class constitute the field where *a priori* reasoning is legitimate, and where necessary and eternal truths are to be looked for. It is, of course, true that Leibniz called propositions of this class identical propositions, their distinguishing mark being that their opposites involved self-contradiction. But by identity Leibniz did not really intend to mean mere tautology, and by contradiction he does not always signify merely verbal contradiction. It was, indeed, difficult for him to make out how he could mean anything else; but he was, none the less, firmly persuaded that the *Grund des Widerspruches* is no empty and sterile maxim, but the fruitful source of important insights; and he especially (if not always very successfully) exerted himself to prove its positive utility. Thus he remarks (Gerhardt vii., p. 299) that though there may seem to be nothing but a *cocoysmus inutilis* in identical propositions, yet *levi mutatione utilia inde axiomata nascuntur*. This, to be sure, is a somewhat naïf way of putting it, and the examples which follow are hardly convincing; but it all shows Leibniz's unwillingness to take his principle in its strict and narrow sense. There are, moreover, he maintains, two distinct kinds of judgment included within its range of application: (1) identical judgments, of which the opposite is formally self-contradictory, e.g., A is A; (2) judgments *virtualiter identicae*, of which the opposite can be seen to involve contradiction only *per terminorum intellectum et resolutionem*—that is, only by an examination of the whole implicit connotation of the terms involved, showing that the two notions are 'impossible'. It is chiefly these latter, or "virtually identical," judgments which constitute the substance of our demonstrative knowledge, and especially

of metaphysics. Demonstration consists in just the process of conceptual analysis whereby the implied content or meaning of two concepts is thus brought out with such definiteness as to make clear to the mind the impossibility of thinking them together, and therefore the necessity of thinking each of them and the opposite of the other together. "Virtually identical" judgments, to be sure, always bring us back *ad identicas formales sive expressas*, that is, to propositions involving two "simple" concepts, the necessary coinherence of which, in the given proposition, is manifest because the opposite of that proposition involves an explicit and literal contradiction: "Manifestum est omnes propositiones necessarias . . . ad primas veritates revocari possunt, ita ut appareat oppositum implicare contradictionem et cum identica aliqua sive prima veritate pugnare" (Gerhardt vii., p. 300).

There is still, it is true, in all this a singular inconsistency, or failure in clear thinking, on the part of Leibniz, which Mr. Bertrand Russell has already noted (*Philosophy of Leibniz*, p. 18). If the *primæ veritates* are literally "identical" propositions—A is A, B is not non-B—and if other necessary propositions are demonstrable only in so far as they are reducible (by the process of definition of the concepts involved) to such *primæ veritates*, then nothing but identical propositions can be really demonstrable at all—the principle of contradiction can never help us to prove anything more than that a thing is itself and is not anything not-itself. And again, to note another aspect of Leibniz's confusion—if all demonstration consists in definition, and if definition is the analysis of complex concepts into truly simple ones—then, once more, between these simple concepts there can be no relations except those of identity and (mere) difference, and therefore no possibility of demonstrating any synthetic truths. For it is not clear how a genuinely simple concept can contain within itself the necessity for the coinherence with itself of other and distinct concepts, or even any special or preferential repugnancies towards any particular other concepts. If the fundamental concepts were really simple in their connotative content, they would be a sort of logical atoms, or windowless monads, capable, perhaps, of entering casually and contingently into any kind of intellectual combination, but not necessitated by their own nature to enter into (or to refuse) any. And so we could discover no really instructive logical relations between distinct ideas, could find in a given subject no necessary coinherence with any predicate except its own simple and unanalysable self. And so, once more, no truly synthetic judgments *a priori* would be possible anywhere,

even in mathematics ; and metaphysics, possessing no means of demonstration except the Principle of Contradiction, would indeed be condemned to perpetual sterility.

We must, then, recognise this blunder in Leibniz's treatment of the Principle of Contradiction. By describing the judgments based upon that principle as "identical"—by regarding the relation between subject and predicate in such judgments as purely analytical, and then further treating both concepts as ultimately "simple" notions—he undeniably destroys by implication the possibility of constructive metaphysics ; and by his confused thinking upon the point he is, unquestionably, largely responsible for Kant's aberrations in the matter of the distinction between synthetical and analytical judgments. But on the other hand, one must repeat that Leibniz intended no such result. He fully meant his Principle of Contradiction to be a positive and constructive principle ; and if he habitually employs the sort of language that I have quoted, implying that there are no necessary relations between any two distinct simple concepts except that of bare non-identity, it is also true that there is an essential and frequently reiterated point in the Leibnizian system which implies exactly the contrary. This is to be seen in Leibniz's doctrine of definition. Definition consists in forming a complex idea by the conjunction, in a single meaning, of several simple ideas—or of less complex ideas which are ultimately resolvable into simple ones. The contrary process, as we have already seen, is analysis—the taking apart of the complex which definition puts together, and so the eventual discovery of the simple conceptual elements of which it is composed. Leibniz, now, on the one hand, always insists that the analysis of a definition must bring us to such simple and indefinable concepts ; but on the other hand, he constantly insists that definition is not an arbitrary process but is always (when legitimately performed) limited from the outset by the requirement that the notions united shall be "compossible," compatible with one another.¹ But these two contentions taken together are equivalent to the assertion that there may subsist, even between ultimately simple and indefinable concepts, relations of incompatibility. For if there were no such relations of ultimate incompatibility, definitions *would* be arbitrary, and any conjunction of *positive*

¹ Gerhardt iii., 448 : "Les définitions ne sont point arbitraires, et on ne peut point former les idées comme l'on veut. Car il faut que ces idées qu'on prétend former soient véritables, c'est-à-dire, possibles, et que les ingrédients qu'on y met soient compatibles entre eux." So, frequently elsewhere.

simple concepts into a single notion would be possible and legitimate. In such a case, though you would not be entitled to say that a triangle is a non-triangle, there would be nothing to prevent your saying that a triangle is a parallelogram. For if some one urged that a triangle is definable as a three-sided figure while a parallelogram has four sides, and that three-sidedness and four-sidedness are incompatible, one would have to ask: How, unless "simple" concepts have relations of fixed incompatibility *inter se*, can I know that what has three sides cannot have four sides? It could not be merely because the two concepts *are* two, *i.e.*, merely distinct; for three-sidedness and whiteness are also distinct, yet no objection arises when I define a figure as a white triangle. If there are incompatibilities anywhere in definitions, they must inhere in the original elements, the primary concepts, of which the definition is made up; and if there were, contrariwise, no such original incompatibilities—self-evident, not capable of being demonstrated by further definition, and not to be confused with mere non-identity—everything under heaven in the way of a definition would be permissible. In asserting, then, that definitions are not arbitrary, Leibniz plainly points to the affirmation of ultimate repugnancies to coinherence between distinct and positive concepts; and thus to the affirmation that *synthetic* relations of impossibility, on the one hand, of necessary coexistence, on the other—are to be found, in some cases, between the ultimate and irreducible ideas upon which our thinking finally depends.¹

As regards Leibniz, then, we must sum up the case thus: He sought to give definiteness and self-evidence to the method to be used in philosophical construction, by reducing the grounds of all *a priori* reasoning to a single principle. But in his treatment of this principle he fell into a twofold and inconsistent doctrine. On the one hand, in the pursuit of extreme rigour and simplicity in the definition of his ultimate criterion of truth, he tended to reduce it to the useless and trivial principle of the mere self-identity of concepts. But on the other hand, in another part of his imperfectly concatenated system, he plainly implied that there exist *synthetic* relations of compatibility and incompatibility between several distinct concepts, and that by the elucidation of these relations, important and significant truths *a priori* may be discovered. And in the form of this open choice between

¹ This point has already been clearly set forth by Mr. Russell (*Philosophy of Leibniz, loc. cit.*).

unharmonisable alternatives Leibniz left the problem of metaphysical method to his successors.

What has rarely been remarked is that those successors—the immediate predecessors of Kant—took up the problem and gave a reasonably clear answer to it; that to the fundamental Leibnitian principle they gave an enlarged but an explicitly defined meaning, corresponding to the second and sounder of the alternatives suggested by Leibniz; that between this enlarged meaning and the narrower one from which Leibniz had not fully distinguished it, they drew an unequivocal distinction, corresponding to Kant's distinction between synthetic and analytic judgments; that they thus answered in advance Kant's question: "How are synthetic judgments *a priori* possible?"—and answered it in a sense to which Kant could not consistently have made objection.

It was, of course, Wolff who accomplished this advance upon the position of Leibniz; Baumgarten, and Kant's contemporary and critic, Eberhard, did little more than rearrange or expand Wolff's ideas. What Wolff did was, in the first place, distinctly to abandon the theory that the only thing that you can logically discover *a priori* about any concept is that it must always mean whatever it happens to mean. On the contrary, he remarks in an instructive passage of the *Horæ Subsecivæ* (1730, vol. i, p. 154), we ought to recognise that there are such things as *notiones fecundæ*—"pregnant concepts"—of which the peculiarity is that they contain *determinationes rei, per quas cetera quæ rei conveniunt, colligi possunt*; in other words, they are such that *ex iis, quæ in iisdem continentur, certa ratiocinandi lege colliguntur alia quæ in iisdem non continentur*. It is because it is a fact of psychology that there are such pregnant notions, that we are able to frame a number of propositions *quarum prædicatis positis, ponuntur alia ejusdem rei prædicata*. Here, then, we find Wolff asserting that some ideas contain within themselves—inseparable from, yet not expressed in, their formally defined essence—necessary implications as to their relations of co-predicability or incompatibility with other ideas; and that meanings are thus organically interconnected.

Now in the technical logical and metaphysical treatises of Wolff and his school, the theory here implied as to the grounds of the legitimacy of synthetic judgments *a priori* is set forth with great fulness and definiteness—and copious iteration. In summarising the doctrine I shall quote in part from the *Acroasis Logica* of Baumgarten, which, while following Wolff's expressions without significant deviation, is sometimes more concise and compact. Logic, says Baumgarten,

taken in the strictest sense, is precisely the science which shows how knowledge *a priori* is to be had (*scientia cognoscendi a priori*). Now "whatever is known *a priori* is known *ex internis veritatis characteribus*"; by this is meant, in modern language, that the presence of a *a priori* knowledge is to be verified essentially by a *psychological* fact, namely, the actual inability of the mind to divorce certain predicates from one another. There are two kinds of universal judgment, and only two, which are characterised by this inward compulsiveness or necessity. Whereas in all other judgments predication is justified only *a posteriori*, since the subject is, as such, found to be thinkable as a single coherent notion without the implication of the given predicate—in these two cases predication is necessary, and therefore valid universally and *a priori*, for the reason that the denial of the predicate carries with it for the mind the disappearance of the subject as a consistently definable and thinkable notion.¹ These two sorts of judgment *a priori* are distinguished from one another with respect to the manner in which the inseparability of predicate from subject is grounded. The first class is that of identical propositions, in which the predicate is merely the whole (*essentia*) or a part (*essentiale*) of the attributes included in the definition of the subject. Such propositions are, evidently enough, axiomatic, that is to say, necessary yet indemonstrable truths; but they are purely tautological and add nothing to our knowledge. The second class of axioms is the one which is made possible by the existence of *notiones fecundæ*, and yields us, therefore, pregnant and instructive truths. Its logical character consists in this, that the predicate in such propositions is a "property" (*attributum, Eigenschaft*) of the subject. Whereas in the merely identical proposition, or definition, the several predicates are merely *put* together by the mind to make the chosen meaning, and do not co-determine the presence of one another, two "properties," on the other hand, *stick* together as inseparable "*joint-determinations*" of any subject into the definition of which either of them is introduced—even though the framer of the definition may have meant to admit only one of them into his proposed meaning.² The test of a "property," once more, lies in the

¹ "Notæ entis sunt vel necessariæ et immutabiles, quibus sublati tollitur ens; vel contingentes et mutabiles, quæ possunt adesse et abesse salvo ente. Ad priores essentia, essentialia et attributa pertinent." From *Acroasis Logica* in Toellner's edition (1778), § 171. The preceding citations are from other sections of the same.

² Wolff, *Philosophia rationalis sive Logica*, 1728, §§ 64, 65: "Ea quæ constanter enti cuidam insunt, quorum tamen unum per alterum non determinatur essentialia appello. . . . Ea quæ constanter insunt, sed per essentialia simul determinantur, attributa dico."

subjective necessity of thinking the predicates together; no other test can be either had or imagined.¹

Wolff, then, on the basis of this distinction between judgments *a priori per essentialia* and judgments *per attributa*, adds to the enumeration of the axioms (underlying mathematics and metaphysics) that are purely identical, another class, not clearly recognised by Leibniz of a 'pregnant' or synthetical character. "Si definitum sumitur ut subjectum, et de eo prædicatur quidpiam, quod notis ad definitionem spectantibus, in ejus notione animo præsentē, indivulso nexu cohæret: propositio axioma est" (*Philosophia rationalis sive logica*, § 273).

In view of all this we may well ask, as Eberhard asked, to Kant's great irritation, shortly after the promulgation of the critical philosophy: How can one say that the so-called 'dogmatists' neglected to undertake a preliminary *Vernunftkritik*, or neglected to distinguish between analytic and synthetic judgments *a priori*, or neglected to show the logical justification of judgments of the latter sort? And if one accepts the principle upon which this last-mentioned justification rests, how is one entitled to reproach those who professed to found their metaphysics upon no other principle, for uncritical dogmatists?

These questions bring us to the essential issue upon the settlement of which must depend one's estimate of Kant's genuine originality and historic importance as an epistemologist. Metaphysical methodology had culminated just before his time in an explicit limitation of all *a priori* philosophising within the range where the testing of propositions by the principle of contradiction,² in an enlarged sense, is possible, and in an equally explicit indication of just what that enlarged sense was to mean. It is, therefore, impossible for any one

¹ Wolff puts it thus in his German logical treatise: "Wenn nun zwei Gedanken so beschaffen sind, dass der andere notwendig statt findet, wenn man den ersten heget, oder dass ich mir das andere notwendig gedenken muss, wenn ich von einem Dinge das erste gedenke, indem nämlich durch das erstere das andere mit determiniret wird; so stimmen die Gedanken mit einander überein. Kann ich aber das andere von einem Dinge unmöglich gedenken, wenn ich mir das erste von ihm gedenke: so streiten meine Gedanken wider einander, oder einer widerspricht dem andern" (*Vernünfftige Gedanken von den Kräften des menschlichen Verstandes*, 6te Aufl., 1731).

² I refer both forms of the *a priori* judgment, in the Wolfian classification, to the principle of contradiction, although the phraseology of different members of the school appears to be inconsistent upon this point. Eberhard, for example, prefers to label judgments *a priori per attributa* as examples of the "principle of sufficient reason". The question, however, is merely one of nomenclature; and Wolff himself certainly appears to me to intend the subsumption of both forms of *a priori* reasoning under the principle of contradiction.

to judge Kant intelligently, or to know where he stands historically, who has not determined the precise attitude which Kant took towards this Wolffian theory of knowledge. There are three possible positions which Kant might have assumed, in order to maintain, in some fashion, his charge of 'dogmatism' against his forerunners; and it is essential to determine which of the three he adopted—or whether he wavered between two or more of them. He might, in the first place, have held that the principle of contradiction, even in its narrowest Leibnitian sense, is not applicable to reality as such, but only to the phenomena of experience; in this case the contrast between the 'dogmatic' systems and the Kantian criticism would undeniably be radical. Kant might, again, have held that the principle is valid *a priori* for all Being, noumenal as well as phenomenal, but only in so far as it is purely analytical; that judgments based, not upon formal tautology or formal contradiction, but upon relations of coherency or incompatibility between distinct and positive ideas are (as Wolff's language had suggested) synthetical; and that as synthetical, such judgments can have no *a priori* validity for *either* phenomena or noumena. In this case, also, he would have presented a fairly definite and significant, though somewhat paradoxical, antagonism to the method of Wolff and his school. Or, finally, Kant might have held that the principle is, in its fullest sense, valid *a priori*; that a judgment based upon the discovery of implicit incompatibilities between the subject and predicate of the contrary proposition, no less than one based upon explicit and verbal inconsistencies between them, is legitimate, and applicable to reality *überhaupt*; but that certain of the special conclusions concerning God, the soul, etc., which his predecessors had sought to justify by appealing to the principle, are not really inferrible by means of it. In this last case Kant could not properly have charged his predecessors with a radical error of method; he could fairly have charged them only with errors of formal logic, in the application of a valid method to certain special problems. And he could not in consistency have maintained that an *a priori* science of metaphysics is impossible; for he would virtually have admitted that metaphysical conclusions are possible wherever the principle of contradiction can be carried—wherever incompatibilities or necessary implications between ultimate concepts can be made out. Such are the issues, in the interpretation and criticism of Kant, which depend upon our answer to the question: Which of these three positions did he actually assume?

Laas has already raised the inquiry whether Kant regarded the principle of contradiction in general as a valid criterion of the nature of reality *an sich*; and he has justly insisted that the point is one of capital importance.¹ "Upon a philosopher," Laas observes, "who places between our world of time and space and the world of reality as such a chasm so wide and deep that for the latter the most conflicting possibilities remain open, it is decidedly incumbent to give a definite answer to such questions as these: Is the formula (of the impossibility of the self-contradictory) valid 'only in relation to a sensuous perception'? Is its extension to things in themselves inadmissible? Does it apply only to phenomenal existence? For who would venture to declare that there are other forms of being besides those known to us, and then deduce from the mere concept of Being the conclusion that all Being must be free from self-contradiction?" Important these questions certainly are; but there can be no doubt about Kant's answer to them. His declaration on the subject is precisely the declaration of which Laas speaks. In both the earlier and the later period of his thinking, Kant adheres consistently to the view that an object in which self-contradictory predicates are said to be united is not truly an object of thought at all, but a mere *nihil negativum irrepraesentabile*. In his earliest philosophical writing, the *Dilucidatio Nova*, Kant, in criticising the customary Wolffian way of formulating the principle of contradiction expresses only the more clearly his recognition of the importance of that principle in metaphysics. Under the name of a single formula, he maintains, philosophers have really been making use of two distinct principles, namely, *impossibile est idem esse ac non esse* and *cujuscumque oppositum est falsum, illud est verum*. These two are not, Kant thought, reducible to one another; but they are equally and independently valid. As an instrument of philosophical proof the latter is the more important. In the essay on the *Idea of Negative Magnitude* Kant declares that the self-contradictory is *gar nichts*; and in the paper on "The Only Possible Ground for a Demonstration of the Existence of God" he writes: "All that is self-contradictory is inherently impossible. . . . This logical repugnancy I call the formal character of inconceivability (*Undenklichkeit*) or impossibility." Similar expressions are abundant in the writings of the so-called critical period; e.g., from the *Reply to Eberhard*: "what-ever does not agree with this principle (of contradiction) is

¹ Kant's *Analogien der Erfahrung*, p. 83.

obviously nothing at all; for it is not even an idea (*Gedanke*);" and from the *Progress of Metaphysics*: "anything of which the idea is unthinkable, i.e., anything of which the concept contradicts itself, is an impossibility". The passage in the *Kr. d. r. V.* (first ed., p. 150) should be familiar: "Whatever the object of our knowledge may be, and whatever the relation between our knowledge and its object, it must always be subject to that universal, though merely negative, condition of all our judgments, that they do not contradict themselves. . . . The Principle of Contradiction is a general though negative criterion of all truth. . . . No cognition can run counter to that principle without destroying itself."

Kant's general recognition of the *a priori* validity and importance of the principle of contradiction as an absolute criterion of the nature of reality is thus unmistakable. Did he, however, accept the principle in one of those modified and restricted senses which I have indicated as open to him?

The answer must be that Kant's attempts, in the writings of the critical period, to tell what he takes the principle of contradiction to mean, are characterised, not only by a curious vagueness and confusion of ideas, but also by a persistent ignoring of just that distinction between the two kinds of judgment *a priori* which Wolff and Baumgarten had made so essential. One point, indeed, is clear: Kant always speaks of judgments resulting from the principle of contradiction as purely "analytical". This, however, does not settle much more than a question of nomenclature; the usage of Wolff's own disciples was not well settled upon this point. The important thing is not so much to determine whether the relation of predicate to subject in judgments *per attributa* can best be called analytical or synthetical—there are intelligible reasons for calling it either—but whether such judgments are legitimate at all, and what their logical nature is. And here Kant writes as if he had read nothing in German philosophy since Leibniz—and only a part of Leibniz.

For, in the largest class of passages on the subject, Kant goes on as if nobody had ever suggested the possibility of finding in judgments *per impossibilitatem contrarii* anything more than the *coccysmus inutilis* which even Leibniz had declared that they were not. In "analytical judgments," we are told, the connexion of predicate with subject *durch Identität gedacht wird*; and hence "our knowledge is in no way extended by them," their only service being "to put the concepts that I already possess into better order, and to

make them more intelligible to myself" (*Kr. d. r. V.*, first ed., pp. 7, 8). In the *Prolegomena* Kant goes so far as to say that the notion which serves as the predicate of such a judgment is actually always expressly present to the mind when the subject is thought; the judgment "expresses nothing in the predicate but what has already been *wirklich gedacht* (though not *ausdrücklich gesagt*) in the subject". Leibniz, in his narrowest definitions, would have avoided such language; for he at least placed judgments *virtualiter identicae* side by side with the purely tautological ones. And occasionally Kant himself remembers that concepts sometimes implicitly involve more than one happens, at any given moment, consciously to think in them. He then adds that the predicate of an analytical judgment may be contained in the subject "in a confused manner," or "without full consciousness". What this vague qualification precisely means Kant does not further explain. It apparently refers, not to the implicit interconnexion of "properties" in the connotation of an idea, but merely to the fact that people sometimes forget just what some of the *essentialia* are that they are accustomed to signify by a term. The qualification cannot, therefore, be construed as equivalent to the admission of the distinctness and the legitimacy of *a priori* judgments *per attributa*.

So far, then, and considering only Kant's principal writings, we must say, not that Kant rejects the position of the 'dogmatists,' but that he neglects to face or to oppose it at all. With a degree of obtuseness rare in history, he entirely failed to apprehend the distinction that had been the principal result of the previous half-century of reflexion upon the criteria of truth in mathematics and metaphysics—the distinction, namely, between *a priori* judgments *per essentialia* and *a priori* judgments *per attributa*—even though this distinction contained an answer to just the question which he himself declared to be the fundamental one in all philosophy. His attacks upon his predecessors implied that, having no criterion of truth *a priori* save the principle of contradiction in its narrowest analytical sense, they proceeded none the less (in their ignorance of Hume) to construct an *a priori* system of metaphysics. But since the criterion which they used was quite other, and since their reasons for accepting it had been carefully explained, Kant cannot be said to have brought any pertinent criticism to bear upon their position at all. The longer treatises nowhere make it certain that, if Kant had grasped the Wolffian distinction, he would not have accepted the Wolffian method.

Fortunately, however, Kant was reminded of this dis-

tion by one of his contemporary critics; and in his reply to that criticism we find him at last brought to face the real issue. Eberhard's *Philosophisches Magazin*, during the brief period of its issue (1789-90), was devoted chiefly to proving that Kant had not rendered Leibniz and Wolff obsolete, and that he even did not depart so widely from their doctrines as he appeared to suppose. It was in the execution of this task that Eberhard pointed out those obvious facts to which the present paper has again called attention. Long before Kant's *Kritik*, Eberhard insisted, a distinction equivalent to that between analytical and synthetical judgments had been familiar in the Wolffian school. "Analytical judgments are those whose predicates express the essence, or a part of the essence, of the subject (*das Wesen, oder einige von den wesentlichen Stücke, des Subjekts*); those of which the predicates express qualities that do not belong to the essence are synthetic." Now synthetic judgments are valid *a priori* when (and only when) "their predicates are 'properties' (*attributa*) of the subject, that is, determinations which do not belong to the essence of the subject, yet have their sufficient ground in that essence". When, now, this and much more of a similar sort had been publicly pointed out, it was manifestly incumbent upon Kant to define plainly his position with respect to the central epistemological doctrine of the Wolffians, which he had previously ignored.

Plain and unequivocal his answer¹ is not; yet in the end it amounts to an abandonment of his case against the 'dogmatists'. Here was Kant's opportunity, if he really wished to set his theory of *a priori* knowledge in sharp contrast with that of the older school, to say, in so many words: 'I deny that the principle of contradiction is susceptible of the extension which Wolff has given to it; I do not recognise the existence of any such necessary relations of coinherence between distinct concepts, going beyond the purely formal necessity that a concept shall be identical with itself'. But so far from doing anything of the sort, Kant readily accepts Eberhard's (that is, Wolff's and Baumgarten's) distinction between *essentialia* and *attributa*, and acknowledges that the latter are no less necessarily, though they are less directly, connected with their subjects, than are the former. In repeat-

¹ *Ueber eine neue Entdeckung, nach der alle Kritik der reinen Vernunft entbehrlich werden soll* (1790). To any who wish to understand Kant's relation to earlier logic and metaphysics, and so to determine his place in the history of those sciences, this *Reply to Eberhard* is one of the most important of his writings—for reasons that are made apparent in the text. It is, however, full of flounderings and self-contradictions.

ing and making his own Eberhard's classification of the ways in which predicates may be related to subjects *a priori* Kant even proposes an emendation of the technical phraseology, which has the effect of bringing out all the more clearly the principle that, in *attributa*, we have predicates which do not belong to the definition of a concept, and yet cannot be negated of it without destroying its logical possibility. The passage runs as follows: "A predicate which is ascribed to any subject by an *a priori* judgment is thereby declared necessarily to belong to that subject, or to be inseparable from it. Such predicates are said to belong to the essence, or the inner possibility, of the concept (*ad internam possibilitatem pertinentia*). Consequently all propositions that profess *a priori* validity must have predicates of this character. All other predicates (those, namely, which are separable from the concept without destroying it) are called extra-essential marks of the subject (*ausserwesentliche Merkmale, extraessentialia*). Now predicates of the first sort may belong to the essence in two ways, either as constitutive elements of it (*Bestandstücke, constitutiva*), or as consequences of the essence that have in it their sufficient ground (*ut rationata*). The former are called essential elements (*wesentliche Stücke, essentialia*), and, as such, contain no predicate that could be deduced from any other predicate contained in the same concept; and in their totality they make up the logical essence. The latter are called properties (*Eigenschaften, attributa*)." Kant, then, here grants that there may be predicates, technically to be named *attributa rationata*, which form no part of the *essentialia* of a concept, as it is defined, but yet are indispensable to the *interna possibilitas* of it. This is merely another way of saying—which is the substance of the Wolffian theory—that not only tautological judgments but also judgments *per attributa*, are legitimate sources of *a priori* knowledge. And the whole realm of metaphysics, according to Wolff and (in his real intention) according to Leibniz, lay within the limits of this last-mentioned class of judgments, the possibility, validity and potential fruitfulness of which Kant now admits.¹

¹ Paulsen has summarised this rather important part of the *Reply to Eberhard* in a footnote in his volume on Kant in the *Klassiker der Philosophie* (translation of Creighton and Lefevre, p. 143). Since the book is widely read, it is perhaps worth while to point out that here, as in several other instances, Paulsen goes somewhat seriously astray in his exposition. For he represents Kant as classifying predicables of the sort called *attributa* or *rationata*, among the "*extraessentialia*, which can be separated from the concept without affecting its nature". But Kant plainly and repeatedly classifies *attributa* as one of the two kinds of predicates that are *ad internam possibilitatem pertinentia*, inseparable from

Kant, however, neither fully grasps nor long remembers the significance and bearings of his own admissions; and he attempts, furthermore, to save the originality of his doctrine by insisting upon two additional points in regard to these "judgments in which the predicates are inseparably connected with the subject, though not a part of its logical essence". To these two points the whole distinction between the 'dogmatic' and the 'critical' method now reduces itself.

(1) In the first place, Kant contends, Eberhard was wrong in regarding all judgments *per attributa* as synthetical. They may, he urges, be analytical; the distinction between 'analytic' and 'synthetic' runs, so to say, crosswise through them. Eberhard had supposed that any *a priori* judgment of which the predicate is an *attributum*—expressing, in Kant's words, something necessarily belonging to the subject, "yet only as a *rationatum* of the essence, not the essence itself nor any part of it"—is *ipso facto* shown to be synthetical in character. But in reality, Kant declares, "this shows nothing more than that the predicate (mediately, it is true, yet still as a consequence of the principle of contradiction) is drawn out from (*hergeleitet aus*) the concept of the subject; so that the proposition, notwithstanding the fact that it expresses an *attributum*, may still be analytic, and therefore lacks the distinguishing mark of a synthetical proposition". In thus arguing that some judgments of this sort are analytical, and are authorised by nothing less than the principle of contradiction, Kant commits himself to a still more thorough-going admission. He succeeds, indeed, in establishing a point of verbal opposition to Eberhard; but he at the same time gives up all grounds of real opposition to the substance of the Wolffian theory of *a priori* knowledge. For it now turns out that judgments in which, by virtue of some necessary connexion between the concepts, predicates (as Kant elsewhere puts it) are "developed out of" (*entwickelt aus*) the subject may be analytical, and have the sanction of "the highest principle of all analytical judgments". But there is, as we have seen, nothing that Kant asserts more emphatically and more unequivocally than that all analytical judgments, involving the principle of contradiction, are valid *a*

the concept (*vom Begriffe unabtrennlich*), and capable of being deduced from the essence of the concept as a necessary consequence thereof. Paulsen's error, however, is doubtless chiefly due to a characteristic awkwardness in Kant's own use of these technical terms. As Kant employs it, the term *essentia* is not, as one would expect, the antonym to *extra-essentia*, and the equivalent of *ad essentiam pertinentia*; but is merely a species under the latter genus, the other species consisting of *attributa*.

a priori of all possible reality, and in need of no further justification or explanation. Kant, in short, for once abandons (though only to resume it on the next page) his usual language about analytical propositions; and includes within their range some judgments *per attributa*, which include distinctly more than need be *wirklich gedacht* in the original conception of their subject. As for the mere question of phraseology, we need not further discuss whether Kant or Eberhard is right. Eberhard had sensibly remarked—what Kant could never be brought to recognise—that “the controversy as to whether a proposition is analytical or synthetical is a controversy of no importance for the determination of the logical truth of the proposition”.¹ What is important is the determination of the question whether or not there really subsists between two given concepts, not defined as identical in essence, such a relation that, if the first is negated of the second, the latter becomes unthinkable within the terms of its *own* essence. When this is admitted—and Kant now admits that such a relation is possible—the rest is merely a dispute as to the sort of metaphor which may most felicitously express this logical fact.

(2) Thus far Kant has committed himself to the admissions (a) that some propositions in which the predicates are *attributa rationalata* of the subject, are analytical; (b) that all analytical propositions are true *a priori* of reality in general. He further urges, however, that some propositions containing *attributa* as predicates are synthetical; and he insists that none of his precursors had shown—as he had done—how, in this case, such propositions can be known to be valid. Here Kant evidently has in mind the theorems of mathematics. These, he was sure, could only be called synthetical propositions; and if synthetical, they required some justification other than what Baumgarten would have called “the internal marks of truth,” their actual coinherence in the mind. This justification Kant believed that he alone had discovered, in his celebrated doctrine of the *a priori* percepts. The reason why synthetical judgments are possible *a priori* is that they are mediated through a *reine Anschauung*. Here is where Kant finally endeavours to come to a really significant issue with his critic; and it is desirable to hear his own words, which, in part, are not susceptible of adequate translation: “Wenn gesagt wird, dass ich sie über die gegebenen Begriffe hinaus, auch ohne Erfahrung, vermehren, d. i. *a priori* synthetisch urteilen könne, und man setzte hinzu,

¹ *Philosophisches Magazin*, 1789, p. 331.

„dass hierzu notwendig etwas mehr erfordert werde, als diese Begriffe zu haben, es gehöre noch ein Grund dazu, um mehr, als ich in jenen schon denke, mit Wahrheit hinzutun . . . so will ich wissen, was denn das für Grund sei, der mich, ausser dem, was meinem Begriffe wesentlich eigen ist und was ich schon wusste, mit mehrerem und zwar notwendig als Attribut zu einem Dinge Gehörigen, aber doch nicht im Begriffe desselben Enthaltenen bekannt macht.“¹ In so far as they are synthetic, then, we must look farther for a “ground of the possibility” of these judgments containing *attributa* as predicates. But, now, “any one may see that, in what I have already set forth as the summary result of the whole analytical part of the *Kritik* of the Understanding, I have therein explained, with all needful explicitness, the principle of synthetic judgments in general, namely: that they are not possible except under the condition of a perception underlying their subject—one which, when they are *a posteriori* judgments, is empirical, and when they are synthetic judgments *a priori* is a pure *a priori* percept. . . . Compare now with this the pretended principle which is presented in Eberhard’s account of the nature of synthetic judgments *a priori*: ‘They are judgments which affirm of the subject one of its *attributa*—that is to say, a predicate which necessarily but only derivatively (*nur als Folge*) belongs to the subject.’ . . . Now one is justified in asking whether the ground for the affirmation of the predicate is to be sought for in the subject, according to the principle of contradiction—in which case the judgment would still be merely analytical; or whether the predicate is incapable of being deduced from the concept of the subject by the principle of contradiction—in which case the *attributum* is purely synthetic. Thus neither the name ‘attributum,’ nor the principle of sufficient reason, serves to distinguish synthetical from analytical propositions; if the former are to be affirmed *a priori*, one could say no more of them (according to this phraseology) than that their predicate is somehow or other grounded in the essence of the concept of the subject—and is therefore a ‘property’—but not simply in consequence of the principle of contradiction. But how, as a synthetic property, this predicate comes to be bound up with the concept of the subject—when it cannot be *drawn out* of the subject by analysis—cannot be explained by the concept of a ‘property,’ so that Herr Eberhard’s account of the matter is wholly barren. But the *Kritik* clearly sets

¹ Kant appears to have forgotten that, a few pages earlier, he had explained to us how predicates not contained in the essence may, by the principle of contradiction, be ‘developed out’ of a concept analytically.

forth this ground of the possibility of such propositions, showing that it can be nothing but the pure percept underlying the concept of the subject. Only in such a pure percept is it possible to connect a synthetic predicate with a concept *a priori*."

Thus the theory of the *reine Anschauung* constitutes the last trench into which Kant retires to defend his antithesis of dogmatism and criticism. About this theory three things may be said, of which only the two last are indispensable to our present inquiry. First, the whole idea of a 'pure' percept, which we are under no conditions to be allowed to think as a concept, and which gets some peculiar demonstrative efficacy from its perceptual character—is a logical chimera that belongs with the other hybrid monsters of antiquity. But this is unimportant. Second, and what is more to the point, the theory, though it were true, is, by Kant's own showing, not essential to the proof of the logical validity of the *a priori* judgments in question; and it is therefore irrelevant to the issue. Wolff and Baumgarten had, in effect, declared that, when you have analysed your concepts to the uttermost and still find that two of them, not defined as possessing the same essence, coinhere *indivulso nexu*, you have reached the ultimate point of verification; beyond this *de facto* psychological necessity, this "internal mark of truth," it is both needless and impossible to go.¹ Now even if it be a fact that a *reine Anschauung* 'underlies' our mathematical judgments, a knowledge of this fact is not necessary in order to establish the truth of those propositions *a priori* (in so far as they are true *a priori*); nor does ignorance of the fact subtract anything from the evidence of their truth. The fact would be an interesting piece of psychological information; but the truth of the propositions, as propositions *a priori*, would still require to be tested by inquiring whether, when the meaning of the concepts involved, as concepts, is fully understood, the contraries of the propositions prove to be inconceivable. All of which is admirably illustrated by Kant's own procedure when, in the *Kritik*, he

¹ This must not be understood as implying that there is anything in common between the Wolffian theory of knowledge and the uncritical affirmation of anything of which one has "clear and distinct ideas," or a strong "emotion of conviction". The prior analysis of concepts is presupposed, the careful framing of definitions, the clear discrimination of the several sorts of predicables, and the testing of *attributa* by the attempt to think the given definition with the given *attributum* negated. But the Wolffian logicians had rightly maintained that the touchstone in this final test can be nothing but the ultimate and inexplicable mental fact that the proposed negation is actually unthinkable.

undertakes to prove that Space and Time *are* pure percepts underlying the concepts of mathematics. He does it by showing that in mathematical judgments the predicates are "necessarily and universally" connected with the subjects *a priori*, and yet are not discoverable by a mere analysis of the definitions of the subjects. Geometry, for example, "is a science which determines the properties of Space synthetically and yet *a priori*. What, then, must the idea of Space be, in order that such a knowledge of it should be possible? It must, primarily, be a perception; for out of a mere concept no propositions can be drawn which go beyond the concept itself¹—as do the propositions of geometry. But this perception must be found in us *a priori*, and hence, must be a pure, non-empirical perception. For geometrical propositions are all apodictic, that is, they involve the consciousness of their own necessity; and such propositions cannot be empirical" (second ed., p. 41). Evidently, however, since the supposed fact that Space is a *reine Anschauung* is inferred from the fact that geometrical theorems are necessary *a priori*, the necessity and apriority of those theorems cannot in turn depend upon a proof that Space is a *reine Anschauung*. Kant here, in a word, not only accepts the logical method of the 'dogmatists,' but even uses it to establish that principle which, so far as mathematical reasonings are concerned, is in the same sentence supposed to show the illegitimacy of their logical method. His own language exhibits better than any commentary how irrelevant is the doctrine of the pure percepts to the epistemological questions concerning the criteria of *a priori* knowledge, which are the only questions at issue between himself and the Wolffians. And now, in the third place, the theory that judgments *a priori* presuppose a pure percept, refers only to mathematical judgments; and it therefore does not affect Kant's admission, already noted, that there may be valid *a priori* judgments of which the predicates are (like those in mathematics) *attributa rationata*, but which—being sufficiently explained by the principle of contradiction—do not require the mediation of any such pure percept.

Only one point more needs to be touched upon. It may be urged, in Kant's behalf, that he at least is distinguished from his predecessors—and is more 'critical' than they—in that he limits the scope even of our valid *a priori* judgments to "objects of possible experience," and professes no knowledge of the transcendent. Upon this much might be said, if

¹ Note again that this is inconsistent with the admissions which Kant makes in the *Reply to Eberhard*.

space permitted; but I must limit myself to two remarks. One is that, in Kant's own eyes, it is not upon this consideration that his distinction of 'criticism' from 'dogmatism' turns, but upon the question how, even within the narrower range, non-identical judgments may be justified *a priori*. The other remark is that Kant himself, as we have already seen, affirmed that no reality whatever "can possess the formal character of *Undenklichkeit*," that is, can correspond to a logically 'impossible' and self-contradictory concept. And inasmuch as he at first fails to deny, and in the end somewhat confusedly admits, that other predicates besides those contained in the definition of a concept may be involved in its *interna possibilitas*, and that other propositions besides tautological ones may be tested by the criterion of the inconceivability of their opposites—it must be said that, even on this point, Kant did not successfully differentiate his position from that of Leibniz and of Wolff.

And thus the whole distinction between 'criticism' and 'dogmatism'—in so far as it is intended to correspond to an historical contrast between Kant and his German predecessors—falls to the ground. The 'dogmatists' were not, in Kant's sense, dogmatic; Kant, in his principal writings, did not refute or even attack their real doctrine of the grounds of the legitimacy of non-identical propositions *a priori*; when eventually compelled by Eberhard to define his attitude to that doctrine, he accepted—though evidently without quite knowing what he was about—the essential principle of it; and he was himself unable to formulate any different doctrine of the grounds of the validity of such propositions—since the theory of the *reine Anschauung*, even in the restricted field where it applies, expressly presupposes the *a priori* legitimacy of synthetic judgments in mathematics, and so cannot be regarded as the logical ground of their legitimacy. Finally, by his inability to deny the general applicability to all reality of the principle of contradiction, in its wider as well as in its more literal use, Kant undermined in advance his professedly negative and agnostic position with respect to the possibility of metaphysics as a theoretical science.