stehungsart involves not just the causal origination of something, but also its conceptual underpinnings: to explain a manner of origination, we need to say not only from what it arose, but also *how* such origination is possible. In order to prove the "fact . . . that such a thing can be actually thought, one must in the bargain also prove the *manner* [*Art*] in which it is possible, or its '*Manner of Origination*', as for example, Euclid proved the possibility of parallel lines, or an equilateral triangle" (*GW* III, 47).

The invocation of Euclid here is not coincidental, since Maimon thinks that at least in the case of some mathematical propositions, the conditions imposed by the *Entstehungsarten* are met. In mathematics, content is *constructed* according to conceptual rules, and in this respect, we can be compared to God, who,

> as an infinite power of representation, thinks himself from all eternity as all possible essence, that is, he thinks himself as qualified in all possible ways. He does not think discursively, as we do, but rather his thoughts are simultaneously presentations. If one were to object, that we have no concept of such a manner of thinking, I would answer: we certainly do have a concept of it, in that we possess it, at least in part. All concepts of mathematics are thought by us, and at the same time are presented as real objects through a priori construction. We are, in this respect, similar to God. (*GW* IV, 42)[9]

Here, it is worth noting the description of God in suggestively Spinozistic terms—God is 'qualified in all possible ways'—as well as the emphasis on a priori construction. Mathematics provides us wholly determinate knowledge because its objects are constructed in intuition according to concepts.[10] In so doing, we discover the grounds of real thought, which Maimon distinguishes from its merely discursive counterpart: while the discursive concept of a regular ten-sided figure, for example, contains no contradiction, the impossibility of constructing it in pure intuition reveals that it is not the object of real thought (*GW* IV, 42).

But while mathematics holds out the promise of certainty, it also stands alone, since these conditions are *not* met in the case of empirical knowledge, where intuitive content is encountered rather than constructed. In the case of mathematics, construction guarantees the completeness of concepts, but

> empirical concepts, which do not determine objects a priori, but rather are themselves determined by objects given in experience, can never be complete, because experience can never assure us of the completeness of the object and its corresponding marks. We can merely get closer to this completeness, but can never fully reach it. (*GW* V, 190)

This leads directly to Maimon's skepticism, since he doubts that there can be any answer to the question of how "the understanding subsume something that is not in its power (the given object) to something that is (its rules)" (*GW*