

TRANSCENDENTAL CONDITIONS OF THINKING, SCHEMATISM, AND NATURALIZING KANT'S 'I THINK'

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1. PREMISE: ON THE APPERCEPTIVE 'I THINK'

As is well known, Kant's transcendental unity of apperception, as it is developed in the B-Edition of the Transcendental Deduction (i.e., the "B-Deduction"), provides us with the apperceptive 'I think' that is *able* to accompany all our representations (B131-3). We are told that this apperceptive 'I think' expresses the transcendental unity of apperception and can only be attained on the basis of the synthetic unity of apperception, namely: the successful integration of sensations into perceptual episodes of experiencing particulars within our surroundings. In turn, this synthetic unity of apperception is possible for us only if we succeed in using our conceptual categories, specified as the principles of cognitive judgment, to sort and discriminate between *the aspects of appearances* that are due to our own perceptual-motor (corporeal) behavior and, thereby, the existence, structure, and interactions amongst perceptible substances surrounding us.

Kant's Transcendental Deduction proffers a number of "unities," including: the *original-synthetic unity of apperception*, the *analytic unity of apperception* (viz. the identity of the subject), the *objective unity of apperception* (viz. the unity of object), and the *empirical unity of apperception* (viz. the determination of inner sense). The original-synthetic unity of apperception indexes the "highest condition" of our capacity to represent significant content in consciousness, thereby signifying our cognitive capacity to represent objects and our coeval capacity to represent ourselves. As such, the original-synthetic unity of apperception

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defines the “original and transcendental condition” (A106), i.e. the “supreme principle” of cognition in general (B136). Furthermore, the ability for a subject to represent themselves as an empirical self can thereby be “derived” from the objective unity of apperception “under given conditions *in concreto*” (B140). All resulting unities can be illustrated by a “triadic structure,” where the original-synthetic unity of apperception is the highest and most general condition of significant representation in general. From the original-synthetic unity of apperception, both the analytic unity of apperception, a *condition* of self-representation, and the objective unity of apperception, a condition of object-representation, flow.²

Following the A-Deduction, we know that all concepts are supposed to have a certain logical form: universality (A106). Insofar as the analytic unity of apperception is concerned, we can say that the nature of thinking as self-activity is the ultimate source of thinking’s logical structure (B133-4). To say a concept is “universal” in its form means that it is the very *same* thought even if it is entertained *about* by different thinkers (Laywine 2020: 123). Thereby, the apperceptive ‘I think’ indicates a thought that remains the same no matter how many different representations we make it accompany/express; it is the same ‘I think’ regardless of what one is thinking about and, thus, has *analytic unity*. Concepts can have analytic unity by virtue of their logical form, wherein the analytic unity of concepts gives specific determination to the ‘I think’ that would otherwise be indeterminate. The analytic unity of the apperceptive ‘I think’ thereby speaks to the fact that the thought which is expressed by it remains one and the same no matter what it accompanies. It is therefore equivalent to the numerical identity of the ‘I think’.

Kant stakes that I can become conscious of the numerical identity of the ‘I think’ solely under the condition that I synthesize a given manifold. All synthesis presupposes the synthetic unity of apperception (c.f. §16; B133-134). In turn, the analytic unity of apperception, *expressed* by the ‘I think’, requires for its possibility the synthetic unity of apperception through which a plurality of sensory states are integrated and recognized as one’s own whilst perceiving and identifying something within one’s surroundings (B131-9). A detectable degree of regularity and variety amongst the contents which we sense is the minimum condition for the possibility of any synthetic unity of apperception. This minimal condition is the “transcendental affinity” (A114) of the sensory manifold, and is a condition required for our understanding to function and also required for us to develop or use concepts at all, including using concepts in ascribing to ourselves apparent sensory experiences (c.f. Westphal 2020: 37, 55).

These are some of the “rules” for making sense of what I represent when “I think *p*.” What does the ‘I think’ teach us about what is *not* represented? In the Paralogisms of Pure Reason, Kant focuses on rational psychology—the Paralogisms are meant to proffer a pure doctrine of the “soul” elaborated by reason, without appeal to experience and solely from the thought that ‘I think.’ Here we get a conception of the ‘I’ in ‘I think’ as it serves to distinguish myself as an object of inner sense; for Kant the “soul” (*Seele*) is the object of a physiology of “inner sense,” distinct from bodies as objects of “outer sense” (A342/B400). With “inner sense,” we have no subsisting entity as we do in outer sense, because the object of inner sense is not presented in space. An analogous sensible explication of substance cannot be found for that which is exclusively given via inner sense; Kant remarks that, contra a spatially extended

physical distribution of matter, “that which is considered an object of inner sense can have a magnitude, as substance, which does not consist of *parts* external to one another; and its *parts*, therefore, are not substances” (MFNS 4:452, emphasis added). Those “parts” Kant refers to here are understood as the “representations in my soul,” i.e., my inner appearances (MFNS 4:452). These “parts” cannot be determined as separable extensive magnitudes. As “parts” of *one and the same* consciousness, they contain solely intensive magnitudes and augment or diminish by degrees. Distribution of a purely intensive reality independent of spatial extension simply cannot satisfy the condition of a substratum that persists in time. Kant therefore states that “the very substance of the soul” and its “parts” cannot be shown to persist in time, because they could (gradually) perish and therein violate the conservation of quantity of substance (MFNS 4:542). All of this is to say that, albeit mental phenomena are intensive magnitudes, they lack objective persistence. All we have in inner sense is the temporal succession of mental states that we take to be our own. We have no empirical object of inner sense in the way that we have an empirical object of outer sense. Hence, the ‘I’ of Kant’s apperceptive ‘I think’ is not to be identified with the empirical body of the thinker—that is, the ‘I’ of the apperceptive ‘I think’ does not refer to a spatially extended object.

As it services rational psychology, Kant thinks that this ‘I think’ *can* accompany *all* our (other) thoughts about some *p*, and therefore assumes that this ‘I think’ can reveal truths about the thing(s) that it thinks. Under critical scrutiny, however, this ‘I think’ proves empty when it reflects on itself. Any effort to reflect on itself by thinking the ‘I think’ reveals that what this thought references is out of reach; the higher-order ‘I think that *I am thinking*’ describes an activity (viz. introspection), but not a thing that thinks. This is because thinking ‘I think’ forces one to affix another ‘I think’ to whatever conclusion one draws (B404). We cannot untie ourselves from the operation behind the ‘I think’ because this thought is necessary for thinking. This is precisely why the ‘I’ of the ‘I think’ is “a mere consciousness that accompanies every concept” (A346/B404); such “consciousness in itself is not even a representation distinguishing a particular object, but rather a *form* of representation in general” (A346/B404, emphasis added).

In R4674 of the *Duisburg Nachlaß*, Kant makes the related critical claim that “I am the original of all objects” (17.646.5-1438). That is, I am the object of that representation which accompanies the ‘I think,’ and which is itself constitutive of the object of my representation. Does this mean the representation, formed by the thinking subject, is itself the object of the ‘I think,’ which is itself not-representable? Or does this mean that the thinking subject is the very thing represented by this representation? All of this is to ask: what are the rules of the ‘I think’? Kant further remarks that “[t]he I constitutes the substratum for a rule as such, and apprehension relates every appearance to it” (R4676); furthermore, Kant writes in R4676 that “I am, I think, thoughts are in me [...] all appearance is represented as contained under rules” (17.656.3-6).

Indeed, there are objects in space and time with properties which we cognize. But we cannot know anything about these objects independently from our forms of knowing. Thinking has rules for Kant that are distinct from their representations, and these rules are not objects.

To identify the rules and objects would be a category error. For Kant, the things we ordinarily call “empirical objects” are but appearances. What those appearances might be beyond being appearances, and independent of our cognitive framework, is something we simply cannot talk about. However, we *can* talk about the rules that makes appearances into cognitions. In the B-Deduction, Kant states that the rules governing our associations are themselves dependent on the mind’s fundamental principles. But we cannot identify this with the object of the ‘I think,’ for it is not an appearance. Can we learn anything about the thought-object of the ‘I think,’ independent from the form of cognition, by learning about the representations to which it refers? Kant indicates that our associations should not be taken to be the habits of thinking imposed on the mind by patterns of behavior among things and objects independent of the mind. In his famous passage(s) on rule-governance, Kant states that appearances are not things in themselves “but rather the mere play of our *Vorstellungen* that, in the end, amount to determinations of inner sense” (A101). Things in themselves are not conditioned by these rules and regularities—only the appearances are. But the neither the ‘I’ of the ‘I think’ nor the ‘I think’ itself is a thing in itself: such an identification would be equivalent to those moves espoused by traditional rationalist metaphysicians who identified the ‘I’ with an entity that exists over and above the representational activities as their real ground.

Nevertheless, in the Paralogisms Kant also elaborates on the soul in a purely negative and regulative sense. Kant shows that the ‘I think’ is purely formal: it conveys no information about any object and has no special content of its own distinct from that of the representations it accompanies. The apperceptive ‘I think’ is simply an *expression* of the reflexivity of consciousness, and not a judgment predicating something of oneself. Indeed, the apperceptive ‘I think,’ when attached to a representation in thought, expresses the presence of a thinking subject, without determining any objective or subjective features of the thinker. As such, the apperceptive ‘I think’ cannot be understood as a judgment or any other kind of representation that is *about* something—neither as about an individual empirical thinker, nor a logical subject. It is a mistake to think we may use the ‘I think’ to *learn* about any object, much less about the single, simple, thinking substance alleged to be our soul by the rationalists whom Kant takes to task in the Paralogisms.

Kant’s *KrV* departs from the pre-critical works on what, exactly, is serviced by the soul. For instance, in the *Duisburg Nachlaß* Kant holds the on to the idea that the categories can apply to, and yield knowledge of, the human rational soul as an immaterial thinking substance. This is explicitly rejected in the *KrV*’s Paralogisms.³ The *Duisburg Nachlaß* does not treat apperception as some purely formal condition of all thoughts expressed by an empty ‘I think’ but instead as the consciousness that reveals the mind to itself as a thing that thinks. For the pre-critical Kant, apperception allows the mind to apply to itself and its representations the three relational concepts of substance, cause, and whole. In elaborating a metaphysics of the thinking subject just by reflecting on the ‘I think,’ the *Duisburg Nachlaß* assumes what is deemed impossible by the critical Kant.

For the critical Kant, if the ‘I think’ has anything to say about our soul by it is only by telling us what it cannot say. But what if we do away with the soul and naturalize the ‘I think’?

Can we learn anything then of the thought of the ‘I think’ and the relevant consciousness in question? Can we learn any rules about representing or “picturing”. For this to be the case, one must understand themselves to be thinking the ‘I think,’ for as Sebastian Rödl says, “[i]n order for someone to follow a rule, it does not suffice that what he is doing fall under this description; he must understand himself to conform to this description in doing what he is doing. The rule must be inside him, in his thought; he must act with it, or from it” (2018: 33). Kant already gives us a rule about the ‘I think’: we cannot shed it when we perceive, and we also cannot shed perception. Thus, thinking is doing—the ‘I think’ is not passive but active, for it is engenders what Kant calls “synthesis” (*Verbindung*).

This can be naturalized, and Longuenesse points at one such possible direction by way of what is called the “binding problem”, which she formalizes as the $I \rightarrow SY$ principle (2017: 41).⁴ Synthesizing representations and binding individual percepts is a necessary condition for having available the use of the concept ‘I’ in ‘I think’ and conversely, having available the use of the concept ‘I’ in ‘I think’ is a necessary condition for the kind of binding necessary for thinking. As Kant says in regards to the first conditioning relation, binding is a necessary condition for *access* to ‘I’. There would be no representation of ‘I’ were it not for the activity of binding representations which leads to their being thinkable, i.e., recognizable under a common concept (B135). This is one possible strategy of naturalizing the ‘I think’ and deriving rules out of it—but there is another option that deals with representation qua schemata. In stating that experience “makes claims,” Wilfrid Sellars takes perceptually experiencing something to always already be concept-laden, theorizing conceptuality along the developmental register by formalizing the rules of perception bottom-up. Thus we will seek to take Sellars’ insights from his Rylean Myth, the Myth of Jones and connect them to Sellars’ work on Kant’s Schematism. In doing so, we will then be able to consider how, advancing Sellars’ insights, we can naturalize Kant’s ‘I think’ by providing not only rules relevant for perceptual experience but also language use. We will thus prod the transcendental unity of apperception into naturalist and realist territory while avoiding metaphysical dogmatism, keeping Kant’s rejoinder close at hand.

2. THE TRANSCENDENTAL POWER OF THE IMAGINATION

In the broadest possible sense, the “common-sense” picture of “empiricist realism” (McDowell 1995: 140) can be understood as the metaphysical thesis according to which there exists a world independently of our feelings, sensings, thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes. However, realism can also be formulated in epistemological terms, as the thesis according to which the structure of such a mind-independent world, granting its existence, is knowable to some extent or other. In its local or restrictive uses, metaphysical and epistemological realism are relative determinations concerning the existence or knowability of a given entity or class of entities, and not a general appraisal concerning mind-independent reality as a whole. For example, one is a *metaphysical realist* about minds iff one holds that minds exist, and one is an *epistemological realist* about minds iff minds are knowable. When used in this restricted way, one can be a metaphysical or epistemological realist about mind-dependent entities *or* properties.

Framed in this way, *epistemological empiricist realism* presupposes *metaphysical realism*, but not vice versa. For one may claim that although we can minimally stipulate that there is a mind-independent world, we cannot know how this world is constituted to any degree. Following Sellars, Kant's position is paradigmatic in this regard. Common to both editions of the *KrV* is the thesis that beyond the phenomenal world that organizes our cognition of objects in space and time one must postulate "things-in-themselves" as the ground of appearances (cf A251). That is, if there are appearances, then there is also some way things are in themselves are, where things-in-themselves ground appearances. Insofar as causality's remit is confined to appearances, Sellars's "two worlds" view argues that things-in-themselves should be understood as *grounds*, rather than as causes of appearances (SM).⁵ For Sellars, the unschematized category of ground-consequent has a noumenal purchase that causation lacks. Kant distinguishes between objects as they appear to us in empirical intuition, and things conceived transcendently by the pure understanding (A238/B298). To apply the categories of the pure understanding and transpose the forms of our sensible intuition to "things-in-themselves" is to unwarrantedly extrapolate from the constraints that structure possible experience to what is outside of it (A49/B66). Any representation is "merely subjective" insofar as it indicates some lack of objective validity (A49/B66, B140). Kant's transcendental idealism about space and time stakes that the non-spatiality and non-temporality of things-in-themselves is a condition of our a priori knowledge of the applicability to all appearances of the mathematics that describes the structure of space and time. Kant denies the spatiality and temporality of things-in-themselves so as to guarantee our a priori knowledge of the mathematical structure of appearances.

Insofar as it remains a necessary "postulate of reason" subject to purely logical constraints, the in-itself is understood to be, for us, but a "thing of thought" of which no positive knowledge can be had. That is, it functions as a "boundary concept" without an object (*ens rationis*), having only a negative or regulative use in relation to the realm of possible experience (A337/B394). Because the "noumenon in the negative sense" is not a contradictory concept, it is understood to be a "boundary concept, in order to limit the pretension of sensibility [and the understanding]" (B311). On the other hand, the "noumenon in a positive sense" is understood to be an "object of a non-sensible" and "special kind of intuition, namely intellectual intuition, which, however, is not our own, and the possibility of which we cannot understand" (B307). Such objects are those of traditional metaphysics: God, unextended simple parts, the spiritual soul, and monads. Following Kant's transcendental idealism, however, our intuition is a *sensible*, and not intellectual intuition. Therefore, we cannot cognize these objects. However, our not being able to cognize them does not entail that we cannot reasonably conceive of them, or that they are conceptually contradictory. "Noumenon in the negative sense" means the thing insofar as the thing is not an object of our sensible intuition: that is, a thing "the understanding must think without this relation to our kind of intuition" (B307). Therefore, it is the case that when we abstract "from space and time as forms of intuition we, likewise, cannot cognize such an object, for our intuition is spatio-temporal" (Heidemann 2010: 41). Therefore, Kant breaks the concept of the thing-in-itself into the empirical sense and non-empirical sense. Nevertheless, we have no insight into the possibility of such 'noumena' and the domain outside of the sphere of appearances is empty (for us), i.e., we have an understanding

that extends farther than sensibility problematically, but no intuition, indeed not even the concept of a possible intuition, through which objects outside of the field of sensibility could be given, and about which the understanding could be employed assertorically. The concept of a noumenon is therefore merely a boundary concept, in order to limit the pretension of sensibility, and therefore only of negative use. But it is nevertheless not invented arbitrarily, but is rather connected with the limitation of sensibility, yet without being able to posit anything positive outside the domain of the latter (A254-255/B310-311).

Furthermore, both versions of the Deduction appeal to the original-synthetic unity of pure apperception—the source of the law of connection of all appearances—as the principle underlying the possibility of knowledge *and* the object of knowledge as such. However, there are pertinent differences that develop in between the two Deductions; one such difference can be located in §17 of the B-Deduction, “The principle of the synthetic unity of apperception is the supreme principle of all use of the understanding,” where Kant calls attention to the significance of the self-active nature of synthesis. An intuition becomes an “intuition for me” only to the extent that I have *effected* the synthesis as an act of self-activity and, in turn, nothing can become an object of knowledge unless it becomes an object *for me* (B137-8). There is also a second significant difference in the B-Deduction, as Kant points out the space is not yet any knowledge at all but is “merely” (*bloß*) the *pure form* of “outer intuition”—space yields a manifold *a priori* for knowledge, but not the synthesis of the manifold that is constitutive of knowledge. By the end of §17 we see that the principle of original-synthetic unity of pure apperception is the formal principle of the understanding just as space and time are the formal principles of sensibility. Space and time do not count as knowledge, even *of* things in space and time—rather, they are nothing more than the pure forms of inner and outer intuition, respectively. However, this does not mean that space and time do not contribute something to our knowledge—indeed, space and time contribute a manifold *a priori*. Yet this contribution, does not come to fruition unless this manifold is subject to the highest principle of the understanding. Just like the manifold of any empirical intuition, space and time must also be subject to the original-synthetic unity of apperception and, until this happens, one does not have any knowledge.

In the A-Deduction, Kant makes the case that while transcendental concepts specify the *a priori* conditions for the “outer intuition” of objects in space and time, these remain relative to the realm of possible experience (A393). In the B-Deduction, Kant develops the original-synthetic unity of apperception as the ‘I think’ which accompanies all our representations—that is, the ‘I think’ is grafted as the first pure knowledge of understanding upon which rests all further understanding, including first-person reference (Longuenesse 2017). In turn, the principle of the original-synthetic unity of apperception is independent of all conditions of sensible intuition. Consequently, space, as the “mere” form of outer intuition, does not *itself* count as knowledge, but, instead, gives us the manifold of intuition *a priori*, without which knowledge would be impossible (B137). According to Kant’s account, we need something in addition to the “pure” form of outer intuition to have knowledge of objects in space. That is, we need original-synthetic unity of apperception to have knowledge of objects in space.

In Kant's account of synthesis, the syntheses of recognition under the concept thus complete the unifying labor of representation under the concept: the correspondence between the 'I think' and the transcendental object ("X") that constitutes the transcendental unity of apperception. Under this correlation the harmony of the faculties is grounded in the universal thinking subject and exercised upon the unspecified object. Kant characterizes the concordance of the faculties under the model of recognition by directly extrapolating from empirical instances: the transcendental apprehension, reproduction, and finally apperception of unified objects as *a priori* operations in relation to a subject are all modeled on empirical instances of perception, association, and recognition. In doing so, representation at once extrapolates a feature of thought and restricts the latter's primarily productive, rather than recognitive, nature. But while apprehension conditions the formation of a discrete representation, the imagination seems to condition the possible objectivation of appearances as subsisting in time. Without the unifying power of the imagination to bind representations across temporal changes, we would not only lose our capacity to recollect formerly experienced objects or project new ones on the basis of previous intuitions. More radically, our intuitions would yield no unity *as representations* (A101). The syntheses of apprehension must thus be considered indissociable from those of the imagination, and must indeed in a deeper sense *presuppose* the latter. For insofar as the imagination provides the conditions for the representation of objects in time, the imagination in a way conditions even the *possibility* of any empirical perception of images/percepts. This is the precisely transcendental role of the productive imagination which underwrites its empirical, reproductive use. The imagination is the primary spontaneity of thinking which guides the articulation of intuition and which therefore conditions the associations drawn by the reproductive imagination. Kant therefore describes the productive imagination as "the origin of all synthesis," since it is the "pure transcendental synthesis of this power which grounds even the possibility of all experience." In this way, the imagination conceals "the ultimate source of the mystery of synthetic a priori judgments" (A110), and so is "a faculty of synthesis a priori" (A123). Following Sellars, "[a]n association of objects [in the reproductive imagination] presupposes the constitution of objects by the productive imagination" (IKTE 140). For Sellars, the Kantian productive imagination deals with the *matter* of intuition, and this is made pellucid by the fact that Kant applies the term 'intuition' to both the representations which are formed by the synthesizing activity of the productive imagination and the purely passive representations of receptivity which *are* the "matter" (A86; B108), and which the productive imagination takes into account.

Insofar as it is the a priori condition to speak of a representation of anything whatsoever, the transcendental imagination must be the ultimate source for the third synthesis of recognition, not only in the empirical identification of discrete objects by a subject, but as the articulation of objective representings as part of a single consciousness. Kant calls the consciousness of pure apperception the consciousness of "reflection" (Anth 7:134n). Pure apperception guarantees that the orderly connection between empirical representations correspond to the temporal experience of a unified self, understood as a universal medium of representation. This is the function of the transcendental unity of apperception—it annexes a combination of objective representings to a single temporal consciousness, securing the

correlation between the ‘I think’ and the object (“X”) (A117-8). The faculty for apperception is thereby contrasted with inner sense (A107, B152-B153; Anth 7:134n) and understood as a spontaneous faculty (B689, B132, B150, B278). Transcendental apperception, i.e., pure apperception (A116, A123, B132, B138), is contrasted with empirical apperception, insofar as the latter is the capacity to be conscious of oneself through inner sense (A107, B132; Anth 7:134n, 141, 161). Indeed, transcendental apperception is a faculty which exercises a characteristic act of synthesis (viz., the “actus of spontaneity”) by way of which representations are combined into a unity (B132, B137). In the A-Deduction, transcendental apperception is not characterized as an independent act of synthesis, but as the “original and transcendental condition” of the synthesis of recognition (A106). And it is this apperceptive act that results in the “original-synthetic unity of apperception” (B133n, B135, B136, B150, B167; Anth 7:134n), which is also identified as the “transcendental unity of self-consciousness” (B132), or as the “pure, original, and unchanging consciousness” of oneself (A107, A117n). Therefore, it is transcendental apperception that produces a characteristic representation—”[t]he **I think** [that] must **be able** to accompany all my representations “ (B131, emphasis added).

Kant appeals to the “empirical rule of association” (A112) in A-deduction, attributing it to the imagination. Kant makes the case that a merely subjective association of sensory impressions cannot lead to objectively valid judgments concerning objects. Similarly, the empirical principle of associations cannot be proven to be necessarily and universally valid. If a sensible manifold is to underwrite experience, its synthesis simply cannot be “at pleasure or arbitrarily” but must be “determined a priori” (A104). That is, for a synthesis to establish a necessary unity this synthesis needs to have a “transcendental condition as its ground” (A106). The (ultimate) transcendental condition of unity is “transcendental apperception” (A107), where apperception yields the unity of consciousness by way of which all representations are unified as belonging to one and same subject. The transcendental condition of apperception is what guarantees, a priori, the identity of the subject across (all) consciousness; this is precisely why it is an *a priori* condition of cognition (A118). If the synthesis of apprehension, as exercised by the imagination, is to yield perceptions which can underwrite cognition, then this synthesis has to be subject to the transcendental unity of apperception. In turn, the a priori condition of self-consciousness which guarantees the identity of the subject “must necessarily enter into the synthesis of all the manifold of appearances” (A113).

Just like the associative powers of the reproductive imagination suppose that appearances themselves exhibit an orderly connection, so their combination into causal relations across temporal instances supposes an “affinity” between representations proper to “original apperception,” wherein appearances relate to each other as a unified nature that corresponds to the possible experience of a singular consciousness. Accordingly, the organization of appearances in intuition exhibits an orderly connection in accordance with the categories of the understanding, which the latter make explicit. That is, the alethic modal relations that organize causal descriptions and explanations in the conceptual order correspond to real modal relations between appearances in space and time (A112). This means that transcendental apperception guarantees not only the compossibility of appearances within a singular experiential field, but the *isomorphy* between concepts and sensory intuitions, i.e., between inferential relations

in the *logical order* and *lawful correlations* between appearances in the material order. Such empirical correspondences suppose the transcendental correlation between the ‘I think’ and the object (“X”) that grounds the unity of apperception. Thus, objects and their relations can be represented diachronically in experience. Yet it is the binding power of the transcendental imagination, suspended between sensibility and the understanding, that forms objective representations from appearances as formed “images.”

The two extremes, namely sensibility and understanding, must stand in necessary connection with each other through the mediation of this transcendental” function of imagination, because otherwise the former, though indeed yielding appearances, would supply no objects of empirical knowledge, and consequently no experience. (A124)

Having outlined the transcendental unity of apperception vis-à-vis the transcendental imagination, we can more directly consider Sellars’ account. Within a few pages of Sellars’ *Science and Metaphysics: Variations on Kantian Themes*, we find ourselves immersed in the problematic coordination between the receptivity and spontaneity of the faculties. Just as sensible intuition turns out to have its own mode of productivity, Sellars notes, so the understanding has its own mode of receptivity, as it synthesizes the endowments of sensibility (SM 2). Sellars here underscores Kant’s attempt to negotiate between the faculties, never losing from sight how intuition is to provide the point of contact between mind and world (SM 4). Sellars notes a danger in the B-Deduction where, assimilating the imagination to the understanding, Kant transfers an obscurity to the relation that space holds to sensibility. The “form of outer sense,” which individuates the sensible qua space, would belong squarely to the spontaneity of thought, leading to the unwelcome conclusion that “[s]pace would seem to disappear from receptivity as such” (SM 8). As a result, the “intensive magnitudes” that compose the pre-individuated sensory manifold are amputated from spatial being, leading to the unwelcome conclusion that the material contents of our intuitions are no longer understood as having a physical nature, but seem to instead enjoy a purely psychological ontological status.

Kant’s treatment of sensation is notoriously inadequate and inept. From the premise that sense impressions as mental states are neither literally extended nor in physical space he infers that they are in no sense spatial, i.e., that they in no way have a structure which conforms to a geometrical axiomatics. The idea that sensations are “purely intensive magnitudes” has always made it difficult to understand how sense impressions could have a meaningful connection with physical states of affairs. (IKTE 269).

Given Kant’s transcendental idealism, space and time are therein pure forms of our intuition or representation of particular objects—specifically, external objects in the case of space and internal states in the case of time, which makes possible our a priori knowledge of geometry and arithmetic, but which do not represent the objects of our knowledge as they are in themselves. As delineated by the transcendental exposition, intuition does not play the role of verification, for there must always be something physically consulted that corresponds to intuition (B16).⁶ On a related point, Kant’s philosophy of mathematics emphasizes and draws on intuition to demonstrate that mathematics is not unlike metaphysics, in that both traffic in

synthetic a priori propositions (Brittan 2006; Westphal 2020). According to Kant's two-stem theory of cognition, what lies beyond the concept is sensation, yet we will never be able to establish universality and necessity by way of the empirical grounding of mathematics—thus the formal features of sensibility must be consulted (Anderson 2014). These formal features are the a priori intuition forms of space and time. This neatly obtains vis-a-vis geometry, for one might say that geometrical truths can be established in thought. But this thought is not *conceptual* thought, it is *construction in intuition*—given concept analyticity, concepts alone cannot establish the identity of discernible, which is the bedrock of mathematics. Thus we must consult the formal intuitions of space and time.

Sellars claim makes this clear, as he draws out that Kant's account preemptively rules out the possibility that sensations could be in any sense spatially extended, obscuring the connection between intuition as an act and intuited individuals as the product of this act (IKTE 269). In other words, in making space a *byproduct* of the productive imagination—which is a case of the understanding's functioning “in a special way” (SM 4)—the relation of space to the sensible realm, where the latter serves as the “brute fact or constraining element of perceptual experience,” becomes plainly unintelligible (SM 9). Sellars refers to Kant conception of a “blind but indispensable function of the soul” (A78/B103), whereby “the same function which gives unity to the various representations in a judgment also give unity to the mere synthesis of various representations in an intuition” concluding that “this imagination, under the name ‘productive imagination’, is the understanding functioning in a special way” (SM 4). With this said, if Sellars credits Kant for distinguishing the dimension of receptivity in the “radically non-conceptual character of sense,” it is because in doing so Sellars thinks Kant likewise avoids assimilating the non-conceptual character of sensing to the conceptually mediated intuition of individuals, resisting in this way the path to absolute idealism:

Indeed, it is only if Kant distinguishes the radically non-conceptual character of sense from the conceptual character of the synthesis of apprehension in intuition (which is, of course, to be distinguished from the conceptual synthesis of recognition in a concept, in which the concept occupies a predicative position) and accordingly, the receptivity of sense from the guidedness of intuition that he can avoid the dialectic which leads from Hegel's *Phenomenology* to nineteenth-century idealism. (SM 16)⁷

Sellars' implicit rejoinder to the Hegelian solution, and his ultimate fidelity to Kant, consists in accepting that the intuition of individuals involves both a *conceptual* and a more primitively a *proto-conceptual* dimension that is prior to the subordination of particulars under universals in judgment. At the same time, this is not to deny that there is an element of givenness in intuition that is resolutely not conceptual: the difficulty becomes how to negotiate between these different non-conceptual and conceptual aspects which guide the determination of the forms of intuition and individuals within and through them. Tracing these different levels, in *IKTE* Sellars goes on to make a series of distinctions, in which the transcendental imagination, suspended between sensibility and the understanding, becomes progressively localized as it “guides” the determination of the contents of sensibility in intuition. In order to understand this, we must turn to the Schematism.

3. SCHEMATISM, SELLARS, AND ‘THIS-SUCHES’

In the Schematism of the Categories, Kant specifies schemata to link pure judgmental-cum-conceptual significance that the categories enjoy with the specific configurations held by sensory manifolds. It is precisely because the categories antecedently have logical significance that they can be schematized at all. For Kant, schemata are *more* fundamental than corresponding concepts; corresponding concepts are derived from schemata vis-à-vis abstraction.⁹ Schemata are intellectual and sensible, and thus tethered to those intuitions whose construction-rules they represent. We cannot have the schema of any given concept unless we have the intuition which is constructed. This construction is accomplished by following the rule represented in the schema, which represents an *instance* of the concept. Thus, we can say that schemata of Euclidean concepts are logically prior to them. There cannot *be* any Euclidean concepts (viz. concepts that are determined by the a priori intuition of space such that they present their objects as being Euclidean) without there also being outer intuitions of finite objects which are determined by the *a priori* intuition of space in such a way that these outer intuitions present their objects *as* being Euclidean.

Following Kant, in order for any concept to intentionally relate to objects they must be schematized, as objects’ schemata first provide a “translation” of their content into pictorial format, with this forming an intermediary between them and objects (Jauernig 2021: 79; cf B179–181/A140–142).⁸ Kant states that “[i]n all subsumptions of an object under a concept the representations of the former must be homogeneous with the latter, i.e., the concept must contain that which is represented in the object that is to be subsumed under it, for that is just what is meant by the expression “an object is contained under a concept” (A138/B177). Schemata can mediate between pure intellectual concepts and sensibly given objects—they are “homogenous” with sensibly given objects because “time is contained in every empirical representation of the manifold” (A139/B178).

Schemata, understood as transcendental time-determinations, elucidate the possibility of determinately representing a sensibly given object under a category by representing the specifically temporal features of objects. A schema will be “homogenous” with sensible objects iff the temporal relations determinately represented in the schema are specifications of the relevant *form* of intuition itself: *time* (cf Stang forthcoming 20-22).⁹ It then follows that the content of the schema will stand to intuitable features in the same unproblematic relation that <round> stands to roundness in objects. If I am to cognize an object as “this one thing,” “this portion of it,” or as a variety of things/totality of things, the temporal nature of my representations is already implicated (B178/A139). Any thought contains a determination of the target-cognition vis-a-vis other cognitions that either *must* have or *can* have occurred prior to it and that must or will occur after it. I would not be able to have an isolated thought if it were not in the context of other thoughts. Relatedly, I could not have an isolated representation unless it was in the context of other representations. Hence, time-determination is the bedrock of schematism, which necessarily involves recognizing representations as time-determined:

the image is a product of the empirical faculty of productive imagination, the schema of sensible concepts (such as figures in space) is a product and as it were a monogram of pure a priori imagination, through which and in accordance with which the images first become possible, but which must be connected with the concept, to which they are in themselves never fully congruent, always only by means of the schema that they designate. (B181/A142)

A monogram is a set of letters (e.g., initials) that have to be overlaid/interlaced/interwoven upon something else. That is, they have to be *graphically connected*. This spatial image of overlaid letters that are graphically/spatially connected underscores the binding role of schemata. Kant's metaphor of the monogram underscores that spatial connection is what actually signifies a temporal connection, as time is the form of our intuitions. For my intuitions are temporally structured—I do not perceive time, rather perceptions are given in time. Similarly, categorial cognitions are “stretched out” in time as they have a contextual-temporal structure. Again, the temporal dimension to inner sense is crucial here. According to the doctrine of schematism qua concepts (A137–47/B176–87), every concept has an implicit, sensibility-involving schema which provides a pattern/monogram (A142/B181). This pattern/monogram should *not* be understood as a *genitive process*, as it specifies the general sensible form of all instances of the concept in serving as a rule for the providing of a concept *with an image*. Vis-à-vis this schema, we represent the action of concept-construction. This representation carries general information about the rule-governing of the construction alongside specified singular information regarding the particular form which constructed images under the rule will have.

With mathematical concepts, e.g., the concept of a triangle, the schematism provides rules for constructing spatial images. With pure concepts—which are not derived from the senses, and have their source in the understanding—the schema produces/*is* a transcendental time-determination (A138/B177–8). For example, the schema for the pure concept of substance is “the persistence of the real in time,” “[t]he schema of actuality is existence at a determinate time.” and “[t]he schema of necessity is the existence of an object at all times” (A144–5/B183–4). In addition to dealing with how pure images are produced, the Schematism section also asks: how does the imagination carry out this synthesis? The imagination takes its instructions from the categories by interpreting them. The imagination has latitude to a great degree in doing this, for its interpretation takes the form of an image, while its instructions do not: thus, we have *heterogeneity*. Heterogeneity as such is not the problem for Kant, however. Rather, the problem is what is *required* for graphic interpretation of the categories—the latitude heterogeneity bestows on the imagination allows the imagination to offer multiple interpretations of the same thing from different perspectives (Laywine 2020: 250-251). We require different perspectives in our search for understanding, precisely because we are finite beings and no single image can capture every aspect of the object our interest may be fixed upon.

Now let us turn to Sellars' interpretation from *IKTE*. According to Sellars' account, the rule-bound formation of images by the transcendental imagination is what Kant calls “schematism,” which defines the constructability and localizability of all objects, whether

physical or mental, in relation to perceivers. Schematism specifies a set of “transformation rules” that condition every empirical instance of objective apprehension, reproduction, and recognition. These transformation rules determine the concept of the object in question, and in general—they are algorithmic “recipes” on whose basis a system navigates and orient itself within its environment, representing objects across perspectival changes in a rule-governed manner. Such schemata are thereby already operative in the mind that navigates the world and correspond to a set of conceptual rules, even before someone is in a position to make these conceptually explicit through discursive cognition. Accordingly, Kant distinguishes between *sensory schemata*, corresponding to the concepts for empirical objects (“dog,” “triangle”), and *pure schemata*, corresponding to the categories that condition all empirical objectivation (“quantity,” “quality”), which concern the structuring of all representations in time qua form of inner sense.

[T]he image is a product of the empirical faculty of reproductive imagination; the schema of sensible concepts, such as of figures in space, is a product and, as it were, a monogram, of pure a priori imagination, through which, and in accordance with which, images themselves first become possible. These images can be connected with the concept only by means of the schema to which they belong. In themselves they are never completely at one with the concept. On the other hand, the schema of a pure concept of understanding can never be reduced to any image whatsoever. It is simply the pure synthesis, determined by a rule of that unity, in accordance with concepts, to which the category gives expression. It is a transcendental product of imagination, a product which concerns the determination of inner sense in general according to conditions of its form (time), in respect of all representations, so far as these representations are to be connected a priori in one concept in conformity with the unity of apperception. (A142/B181)

Attesting to its unconscious nature, Sellars remarks on how Kant describes the schematism as a “blind” but indispensable and originary “function of the soul” that provides the world of representation its objective ground (A94/A97, B127). Following Sellars, the schematism is described as a “secret” art of the soul on whose basis the phenomenal world gives way to the sequential ordering of impressions in time, and their externalization in space. But as Kant’s descent into the synthetic powers of the imaginations excavates the primitive structuration of intuition before the activity of judgment, the resources available for the deduction of the pure concepts of the understanding, and space and time, becomes increasingly elusive. In unearthing the workings of the schematism by the imagination, Sellars argues, one must first distinguish between *perceptual takings* and *what is believed about what is perceptually taken* (IKTE 420). *Perceptual takings* specify the “individuals of experience” given in intuition, which correspond syntactically to those complex-demonstrative phrases that compose the “this-such” grammatical subjects of a complete ‘Mentalese’ sentences, e.g., “this-juicy-red-apple.” That is, Sellars’s proposal is that Kantian intuitions, the representational end-product of perceptual synthesis, are best understood as having the form “this-such.” The ‘this’ indicates the role that our forms of intuition play in perception: they allow us to locate demonstratively the objects of perception from our perspective on them in space and time. The ‘such’ indicates that intuitions represent their objects as falling under some concept—that they are essentially conceptually structured.

Sellars's thought here is that in order for the understanding to be able to unite a manifold of sensations into a representation of a complex state of affairs as complex, it must do so according to conceptual-inferential rules, and conceptual-inferential rules only apply to items already in the conceptual order. For example, intuitions are subject to rules of inference because they have the form this-such, the 'such' being a conceptual component that itself already locates intuitions within the inferential network formed by these rules. Since sensations do not have this conceptual component, they are the non-conceptual causal antecedents of intuitions, they cannot be part of an inferential structure, and thus they cannot be literal parts of conceptually structured intuitions. So, Sellars concludes that sensations merely "guide from without." (Landy 2015: 160)

In this sense, intuited individuals are already categorially specific, though they do not function by themselves as universals or general terms that subordinate particulars in judgment, lacking grammatical form.¹⁰ The second dimension of Sellars' interpretation comprises how the grammatical subject or complex-demonstrative phrase which designate intuited individuals becomes compounded with a predicate that *does* function as a universal, e.g. "is edible." In short, a perceptual episode of seeing a red juicy apple involves the synthesis between the perceptual taking of an intuited individual "This red juicy apple" (*grammatical subject*), and the believing that "[it] is edible" (*grammatical predicate*). These dimensions jointly enable the recognition of the object in empirical judgments, e.g. "This red juicy apple is edible."

Next, Sellars underscores the difference between the resolutely non-conceptual sensing of something as the occurrent quality of an object directly presented to consciousness (e.g. seeing of a red apple its "facing surface" in a visual episode), and perceiving something *as something*, which involves an interpretative act of awareness (e.g. seeing a red juicy apple as juicy). Yet between these dimensions lies the gulf wherein the activity of the imagination slowly reveals itself. While the "juiciness" of the apple may not directly be presented to the senses of the observer in an episode of perceptual awareness, it forms an "actuality" that is "not merely believed in" (IKTE, §21). That is, one sees the apple itself as pervasively juicy across varying sensory presentations before overt acts of judgment.

To explain this dimension, Sellars distinguishes between the two central roles identified by Kant that the imagination plays insofar as it "guides intuition." First, there is the formative labor of the productive imagination, producing "image-models" that objectivize the inputs given by the sensory manifold in relation to the perceiver. These have the general structure of "perceiver-confronting object," guiding the construction of a unified individual in intuition throughout varying sensory presentations. For Sellars, the productive imagination enables the subject to track discrete phenomena in the environment across varying perspectival changes, extracting complex patterns of sensory states that are constructed by the productive imagination. The empirical construction of these image-models specifies the schemas for localizing objects and can be understood in analogy with practical rule-following, allowing a representational system to navigate its environment by representing and tracking objects in relation to specific problems-tasks. Following Sellars, schemas are therefore understood in accordance with conceptual "recipes" that express an algorithmic structure, but no syntactic or grammatical structure, and as such they lack categorial and logical form.

Despite Sellars provides a genitive account,¹¹ the labor of schematism is understood thus to produce a dynamic, continuously updated model for the construction and localization of objects in space and time, in coordination to perceivers. This account illuminates how the objective correlates of those complex-demonstratives that specify what is perceptually taken in empirical cognition correspond dynamically to a representational system's navigational routines. But if this is the case, and if we are not to preemptively conflate the labor of the imagination with that of the understanding functioning "in a special way," then we must ask: which vocabulary, language, or theory provides the rule-book, "in accordance with which" the subject produces image-models of objects, carving the field of presentation and constructing the individual "this-suches" of perceptual takings? And how can we make use of such theory to characterize the organization of intuition without hypostasizing an empirical or formal register, avoiding gerrymandering problems concerning just which rule is at work? If Sellars is correct, what Kant describes as a secret "art of the soul" in the imagination becomes] "visible" to us through discursive means, and only with great difficulty.

Following Sellars further, it is Kant's imagination that preserves the rational ordering of appearances—for in folding the imagination into the understanding in the second edition, the workings of the soul are made commensurate to the designs of pure reason. As Sellars puts it, this leads Kant to postulate those absolutely basic and determinate "this-suches" that correspond to the image-models of objects. This essentialized correlation between our qualitatively specific categorial determinations and non-categorially formed image-models reveals how, at the most profound origin of synthesis that is the labor of the transcendental imagination, Kant subordinates the latter to the understanding. Furthermore, it models the transcendental application of the faculties on their empirical application, reifying historically contingent and discursive determinations as foundational. I.e., the schema for "perceiver confronting- apple" is modeled on "S perceives that there is a red apple over there." This is the point in which we, following Sellars, not only find a residual metaphysical essentialism in Kant's characterization of the forms of intuition, but also a residual epistemic foundationalism that enables the postulation of bare individuals, in continuity with the substance-metaphysical conception of being and the categorial conception of thought inherited from Aristotle as a "system of judgement."

Kant's thesis, like the Aristotelian, clearly requires the existence of perceptual this-suches which are limited in their content to what is 'perceptible' in a very tough sense of this term (the "proper sensibles"). It requires the existence of completely determinate 'basic' perceptual *this-suches*. (SM 7)

The blurring of the lines between the empirical and transcendental becomes more acutely visible in how intuition is said to be "guided" by the transcendental powers of the imagination, thus conceived as "effect" of the understanding on intuition. The schematization of image-models of external objects that structure the intuition of those "individuals of experience" is itself modeled in analogy with empirical judgment—those "absolutely determinate basic this-suches" that shape the categorially determined grammatical subjects of our perceptual takings. For Sellars, this places Kant in proximity to Aristotelian abstractionism, hiding an empiricist

excess and a residual essentialism affecting his account of perceptual consciousness. Exegetical issues aside, how might we formalize schematization without lapsing into such abstractionism?

4. ANALOGICAL POSTULATES AND THE MYTH OF JONES

Sellars's well-known critique of the myth of the given tells us that there is no "pre-theoretical" epistemological or phenomenological foundation to be retrieved once we have "bracketed" our naturalist or metaphysical commitments. But Sellars goes further than this anti-foundationalist gesture, arguing that insofar as the vocabulary of experience is a conceptual achievement, phenomenological-cum-intentional vocabularies are epistemologically dependent upon our capacity to describe the world and its constituents in an objective mode. This takes us to Sellars' famous dialectic between the manifest and scientific "images of Man" in the world—the conception of man as part of the "framework of persons" in which he is understood as bound to rational norms and as the vehicle of intentional attitudes, and the conception of man as a "complex physical system" as described by natural science. As Sellars argues, the manifest image is not some "pre-theoretical" ground, but itself a development of what he names "the original image," in which nature was conceived in broadly animistic and (analytical) behaviorist terms, while lacking the psychological or phenomenological vocabulary of experience proper. The emergence of the manifest image therefore coincides with a "de-personalization" of the rest of the world, at once a revision of the concept of nature and a restriction of its extension (PSIM in SPR 10-11). This dual operation is carried out as a new kind of postulate that comes to restrict the application of the concept of a person. Specifically, this operation proffers the postulation of internal episodes as mediating overt linguistic and non-linguistic behavior.¹²

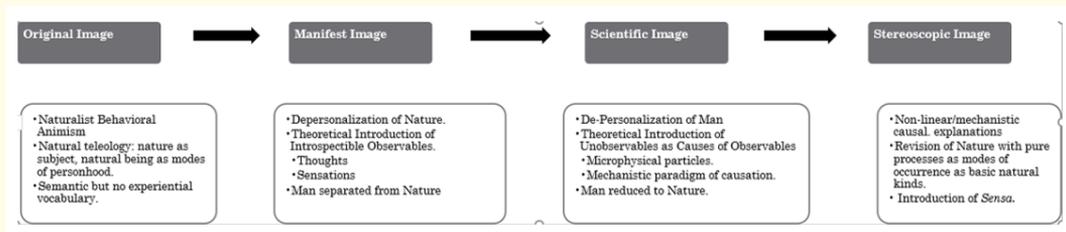
Such postulation is not arbitrary, however, but part of an explanatory heuristic: internal episodes are introduced to explain phenomena that the original image was incapable of handling—in particular, the kinds of representational and experiential modalities that we associate with sensory and discursive functioning. In this sense, Sellars tells us, "the manifest image" is already a kind of "scientific image," insofar as it introduces theoretical entities in the face of an explanatory insufficiency and ultimate desideratum. More precisely, the manifest image explains overt behavior by attending to the relations between two kinds of 'observables': extrospectible physical events and introspectible psychological episodes. While extrospectible physical events constitute the physical objects of reference of ordinary third-person perceptual reports, introspectible psychological episodes concern those internal episodes *modeled* on extrospectible observables. The asymmetry, yet also possible correspondence, between these two kinds of observables will then determine the possible realization, or failure, of the representational functioning proper to experience, through which subjects understand their behavior as part of a strategy to navigate the world by "mapping" its structure.

In contrast to the manifest image, the emergence of the scientific image departs from the theoretical postulation of unobservables as the cause(s) for the emergence of and the relations between both introspectible and extrospectible observables (PSIM in SPR 19). The scientific

image continues the vector of depersonalization initiated in the transition to the manifest image from the original image, only this time by depersonalizing man itself, assimilating persons to the objective framework of physical-causal explanations. The introduction of unobservables, however, generates a “clash” between the two images, since it is unclear how the framework of persons as such can continue within a scientific description of nature. Such a shift is not merely one within our self-understanding, but carries a dramatic consequence: while the scientific image emerges from the manifest image, Sellars claims, to the extent that the manifest image does not survive “man himself” does not survive (PSIM in SPR 18).

At this juncture, Sellars distinguishes between two kinds of “reduction” in terms of which the relation between the images can be conceived, offering an indication as to a possible resolution of their tension. While it is not possible to logically analyze the normative and intentional concepts which furnish the manifest framework of persons in terms of the mechanistic or causal concepts that furnish the scientific image, both vocabularies may nevertheless be referentially co-extensive. This is what James O’Shea has defined as Sellars’ account of the “*logical irreducibility cum causal reducibility*” (2009: 202, 204) of the manifest image in relation to the scientific image, accepting a *methodological* dualism rather than a metaphysical dualism. By the same token, just like the intentional concepts that furnish the manifest framework of persons should not be preemptively ontologized as an autonomous metaphysical domain just by virtue of being non-analyzable in the terms of the scientific image, so the terms of the current scientific image should not be reified beyond their current explanatory status. Doing so would preemptively foreclose possibilities for explanatory integration and revision in the future.

As Johanna Seibt (2016) argues, Sellars, himself, does not preclude in principle that a future stage in the development of the scientific image may be able to account for the qualitative nature of sensory episodes. Indeed, Sellars positively anticipated such an amplification of the scientific image, provisionally sketching a projective nominalist ontology of “pure process” capable of accounting for the sensory and cognitive phenomena associated with the emergence of life and thought in nature. For the “clash of the images” is also the product of the incompleteness and provisional status of the scientific image of one’s time, bound to what Sellars names the “particulate image” of microphysical particles, tethered to mechanistic causal relations. Given the inability of the particulate image to account for the qualitative homogeneity of sensations and the conceptual normativity of cognition, Sellars anticipates the advent of a future stage in the scientific image in which our concept of nature is once more transformed, essentially, by reconceiving of the world in terms of “pure processes” and no longer in terms of substances or relations between micro-physical particulars. In such a “stereoscopic image” that waits at the end of the dialectic of science and philosophy, the logical irreducibility of normativity would be overcome, as science would forge concepts adequate to explain a dynamic, qualitative, and non-mechanistic behaviors characteristic of sentient and sapient biopsychic systems. The following diagram encapsulates the Sellarsian dialectic of the images:



In short, the dialectical process described and anticipated by Sellars' account of the images tracks how the tasks of naturalist ontology become constrained by the historicity of empirical science, as part of an ongoing process of conceptual construction and revision that binds our theorization of nature as much as that of subjectivity. Within such historicized and realist conception of scientific and ontological theorization, the scientific and manifest images also become diachronically coordinated, such that the former appears as a theoretical elaboration of the latter:

[S]cience is continuous with common sense, and the ways in which the scientist seeks to explain empirical phenomena are refinements of the ways in which plain men, however crudely and schematically, have attempted to understand their environment and their fellow men since the dawn of intelligence (EPM §51)

Explicating the operations through which the emergence of the scientific image from the manifest image—and the emergence of the manifest image from the original image—takes place, Sellars, in *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind*, famously proposes a fable of “speculative anthropology,” which he titles the Myth of Jones. Sellars imagines a community whose members he names our “Rylean ancestors” who describe their world and themselves while lacking the Mentalese vocabulary of private episodes. The members of this community are capable not only of describing causal regularities in nature or behavioral patterns pertaining to their own doings, but also engage in “semantic talk.” Semantic talk involves, for instance, the saying of verbal performances that they mean thus-and-so, or that they are true or false (EPM §50). But while the Ryleans already exhibit the capacity to undertake propositional attitudes and use semantic vocabulary, they nevertheless lack the intentional vocabulary required for making explicit propositional-attitude ascription as experiential states, such that terms like “meaning” and “truth” are understood as part of a “behavioristic psychology” pertaining to observable objects and events.

But genius Jones is on the brink of a decisive theoretical breakthrough, leading to the birth of the manifest image of man in the world. Jones realizes that by postulating internal episodes as the mediating causes of overt action he can explain human behavior more robustly. These psychological, internal episodes are introduced as introspectible psychological episodes that nevertheless remain observable to the agents that bear them, understood analogically to extrospectible perceptual events. Such introspectible episodes are introduced by analogy

with observables and of two fundamental kinds: *thoughts* and *sensations*. First, thoughts are introduced as internal episodes in analogy with the syntactic structure of declarative sentences in overt speech, but also semantically organized in inferential relations of incompatibility and consequence. Second, sensations are introduced as states of perceivers, in analogy with the syntactic structure of perceptual reports, whose objective ‘replicas’ are modelled on spatially extended and colored objects described in third-person empirical discourse (e.g., experiencing a state of “sensing a red triangle” models “a red triangular inner replica” on “red triangles,” where the latter are conceived as the common cause for the former). These internal episodes and their causal link to physical observables are key to explaining something the original image was incapable of—namely, the representational competences of mindful beings. For it is by correlating introspectible episodes to publicly observable objects and events that Jones can explain how there is a possible asymmetry between an agent’s overt behavior (verbal and non-verbal) and states of affairs in the environment, rendering intelligible instances of deception, misperception, and error. For example, Jones can say that “Dick is having a sensation of a red apple so he thinks there is a red apple over there!” upon hearing Dick utter “I see a red apple over there!” as he reaches out to the air, when in fact there is no red apple over there.

As Jones’ account of experience matures, he introduces intentional locutions and propositional attitude ascriptions, which serve to analyze behavior dispositionally and form counterfactually robust explanatory-schemas to form predictions and assessments. Now one can say “Dick would have not reached toward the empty vine had he not believed that there was a red apple over there.” These attitude-ascriptions bolster Jones’ ability to explain the conditions for the realization or failure of epistemic and intentional acts that bind agents to their environments in pragmatic terms, as part of a problem-solving dynamics. For example, one can say “Dick reached toward the hologram image because he erroneously believes that there is a red apple over there, and he believes this because he has a sensation of a red-apple over there even though there is no red apple.”

Pre-Jonesean psychological statements employ Rylean resources that are enriched by semantical devices and categories. These psychological statements neither coincide with behavior-plus-dispositions-to-behave statements nor do they reach beyond them to inner episodes proper. Pre-Jonesean psychological statements are entailed by statements characterizing someone as speaking nonparrotingly, and thus meaningfully. This is because to say of an utterance that it is non-parroting is to say that it is, for example, a tokening of a certain proposition—e.g., the proposition that one plus one equals two. If the utterance is a •one plus one equals two• or a •I shall raise my hand• or a •Lo! this is red• then it is, respectively, a “thinking-out-loud” that one plus one equals two, an *intending*-out-loud that he himself will raise his hand, or a taking-out-loud of something to be red.¹³ To be a pre-Jonesean psychological event is to *mean* something (where to *mean* something is to be a •one plus one equals two•, etc.). This is a product of the resources of Rylean discourse, wherein pre-Jonesean discourse is understood as having that the subjunctive conditional included in it. Insofar as the Sellars makes any direct reference to the thinking activity of the ‘I think’, as it relates to psychological events, Sellars notes that:

...it is 'I think . . .' rather than 'I am thinking . . .' which I count as a dispositional cousin of 'I believe . . .'. 'I am thinking . . .' is a variegated locution which implies a sequence of episodes (a process?), and can also be used to refer to processes-cum-dispositions ("I am thinking much, these days, about Vietnam"). (Sellars in Rosenthal & Sellars 1965)

Given Sellars' conception of a thought-episode, it is the case that we can, and often do, fail to be aware of many of our thoughts. Some postulate that what it is to have a thought necessarily involves one's believing that if a subject has a thought and also has the ability to handle discourse about thoughts, then if this person is asked *what* they are thinking, they are able to report on it. However, following Sellars' Rylean Myth, what is required is that the distinctions involved in our ordinary talk about psychological phenomena be preservable on the basis of constructing such talk from the resources Jones' quasi-postulation provides us. Following Sellars, some of what we call thoughts are non-inferentially reportable and some are not. We can regard only a subset of what Sellars deems thoughts as properly *speaking thoughts*, i.e. as reportable. Sellars' formulation thus speaks to a distinction between a subject's being said to think that-*p* and a person's being said to *have the thought* that-*p*. In the latter case, following Jones, the thought is understood as *episodic*. Such *episodic* thoughts are often dispositional in nature, insofar as we have a disposition to have the thought in question. Following Sellars, we can speak of the havings of thoughts as mental states or as mental acts, "in the sense of actualities (as contrasted with dispositions or propensities)" (NI 655). Sentences such as "I am thinking *p*.", "I think *p*.", and "I believe *p*.", on the other hand, have a "dispositional force" (Sellars in Chisholm-Sellars 1965: 533). This brings to bear that having the thought that-*p* is not equivalent to thinking that-*p*. Therein, post-Jonesians can be understood as coming to talk *about* their thought-episodes dispositionally; in doing so, post-Jonesians thereby come to talk about thinkings, havings of beliefs, and believings.

There is a breakthrough staged here. The emergence of the manifest image constitutes at once a kind of psychological and sociological-theoretical breakthrough, through which experiential episodes are functionally introduced as explanations to understand the behavior of agents: sensations and thoughts are theoretical postulates that allow us to form inferences to explain the relation between the psychology of agents, their interactions with other agents, and their environments. Since the vocabulary of experience is sense-dependent on empirical-objective descriptive vocabulary, the idea that the latter can be analyzed in terms of the former by default simply gets the epistemological order of explanation upside-down. This is just to say, however, that experiential vocabulary is *first* modeled on objective vocabulary, not to undertake any definitive commitment concerning the ultimate ontological status of such vocabulary, even if one foresees a later stage in which a process-ontological extension of neurophysiological enquiry can provide a successor theory of experience within the scientific image. Even if our observation reports are typically caused by sensory impressions, this does *not* mean that they are *about* sensations, nor that sensations present themselves as sensations to thought. Not only is the conflation between sensory cause and perceptual knowledge the beating heart of the empiricist version of the Given, but—as the myth of Jones shows—the conceptualization of experiential concepts also supposes objective descriptions before they are classified as sensations

properly. Insofar as the ultimate nature of sensory episodes remains an explanatory desideratum for a future science and ontology, the ‘ultimate objects of reference’ of our ostensive perceptual acts cannot be assumed in advance.

Red may present itself as red and white present itself as white; but sensations do not present themselves as sensations, nor images as images. Otherwise philosophy would be far easier than it is. (IKTE 422)

[W]hile the referent of the most cautious perceptual taking can be construed as a sensation, we need not conclude that the referent of all perceptual takings is a sensation. For while it could be argued that the ultimate referent is always a sensation, by construing our original complex demonstrative phrase along the lines of phenomenological reduction as ‘This somehow (a cube of pink facing me edgewise) which is a cube of pink facing me edgewise...’ the initial stages of reference saving can proceed without interpreting the referent as a sensation. (SRPC ¶61)

By the same token, that all knowledge involves the use of concepts does not entail that all conceptual acts must be about conceptual behavior. That thought episodes can be invoked as the mediating causes for empirical reports, and that thoughts are not identical to things, does not entail that the referents of all thought-episodes must be thoughts themselves. While to describe the world in the material mode supposes the capacity to endorse patterns of inference in the formal mode, it does not follow that such descriptions are about inferential licenses. The latter requires a normative metalanguage that describes the pragmatic conditions for objective description and explanation—commitment and entitlement, obligation and permission—while these commitments and entitlements serve to express epistemic attitudes toward the way the world is.

The idea is that endorsing the claim that A necessitates B is endorsing the propriety of a certain kind of inference from A to B. Of course, what the claim that A necessitates B says is not that this inference is good. It doesn’t mention expressions, proprieties, or inferences. But understanding the claim requires being able to distinguish the inferences one would become committed to by endorsing it [...] Making them explicit (the reverse transposition from material to formal mode) requires concepts pertaining to the use of expressions that are not made explicit by that use—concepts such as expression, inference, and (most importantly for our purposes here) normative concepts such as propriety, commitment and entitlement, obligation and permission. (Brandom 2001: 26)

In sum, to acknowledge that sensations and thoughts are derived concepts that are analogically constructed on extrospectible observable counterparts is not incompatible with saying that it is on the basis of having such sensory and conceptual episodes that knowledge of the external world becomes possible. It is furthermore to understand that the ultimate status of experiential episodes is every bit as liable to conceptual revision and, indeed, scientific investigation. Sellars’ dialectic of the images denies that sense impressions or thought episodes must be *like* the causes on which they are analogically modeled: even though experiences are first based on the concepts used to characterize observable phenomena in the objective mode, it does not follow that the relationship between the model and what is modeled is one of metaphysical identity or qualitative resemblance. Rather, heeding to the modern sense of representation, the features attributed to the replicas of sensory episodes are conceived in analogy with those of

spatially extended and qualitatively determined bodies, in terms of counterpart attributes, i.e., in terms of the isomorphy between the two structures.

If, per impossible, Kant had developed the idea of the manifold of sense as characterized by analogical counterparts of the perceptible qualities and relations of physical things and events he could have given an explicit account of the ability of the impressions of receptivity to guide minds, endowed with the conceptual framework he takes us to have, to form the conceptual representations we do [...] He would have argued that when on a certain occasion we come to have an intuitive conceptual representation that this green square adjoins that red square, we do so by virtue of having a complex of non-conceptual representations which, although non-spatial and without color have characteristics which are the [analogical] counterparts of *square*, *red*, *green* and *adjoining*, and which make them such as to account for the fact that we have this conceptual representation rather than that of there being a purple pentagon above an orange eclipse. (SM ¶78)

The same point holds for our treatment of thoughts, such that the possibility of a correspondence between propositional states and the world does not entail that the world has propositional form, or that the features we ascribe to discursive acts must resemble in kind or be identical to the properties of the entities thus described. For unless we reproduce what we term the “factualist fallacy”¹⁴—according to which the structure of the world cannot be conceived in analogy or structural isomorphy with our conceptual determinations without thereby being identical, metaphysically or qualitatively—it will not follow that the Kantian “in-itself” must be ineffable or else deemed categorially indeterminate. It is this fallacy which underlies the thesis that the “in-itself” could not be conceived in terms of counterpart determinations to those that characterize things as they appear to us in sensing and thinking. We, drawing from Sellars, here posit that counterpart determinations track epistemic revision.

More interestingly, Sellars extracts fundamental methodological constraints for naturalism on the basis of the dialectic that leads from the original image to the amplification of the scientific image in a ‘stereoscopic image’. This process reveals the central role that analogy plays in theoretical postulation in general, and for representational theories in particular. For the categorial specification of the modalities of experience in the manifest image is guided by a process of analogical construction. Similarly, the role of the naturalist, following Sellars, must engage in a process of categorial projection, which involves a series of steps: (i) *a stage of logical abstraction*, where the ontologist identifies generic categories and descriptors for the basic explanatory concepts of a scientific language; e.g., in the ‘particulate’ image and mechanistic paradigm of causation, the category of substance, whose descriptor set includes: particular, non-dynamic, spatio-temporal localizable, etc.; (ii) *a stage of identification of an explanatory desideratum* which these categories and concepts cannot successfully explain; e.g., the ‘homogeneity’ of sensory episodes and the normativity of thought within the ‘particulate’ image; (iii) *a stage of analogical projection*, where the ontologist constructs new categories on the basis of existing ones to anticipate an ontology for a future scientific theory in which such phenomena can be explained; e.g., ‘pure process’ as a projective category for an ontology that thinks of the basic natural kinds as non-particular, dynamic, individuated as spatio-temporal occurrence. Consequently, analogical postulations in both empirical and ontological theorization are interwoven as part of a diachronic and self-correcting epistemic dynamic,

through which new concepts and categories are forged on the basis of existing ones, progressively refining a representation system's capacity to describe the world and itself within it.

As I see it, the use of analogy in theoretical science, unlike that in theology, generates new determinate concepts. It does not merely indirectly specify certain unknown attributes by an 'analogy of proportion.' One might put this by saying that the conceptual structures of theoretical science give us new ways of schematizing categories. (SM: 49)

Our epistemological challenge is thus to show how such a process of categorial projection is not only nonarbitrary in the sense that it is based upon the findings of scientific theories. One must show that the progression of these theories and thus of the categories that are built on their basis can be appraised as approximating the ideal of a completed science and final ontology. That is, that not only is ontology non-arbitrarily constrained in relation to science, but that scientific progression itself is constrained in its diachronic-historical development, and understood as a process of increasing representational competence.

The extension of Sellars' critique of the myth of the given to all forms of metaphysical dogmatism and epistemological foundationalism reiterates that the nature of experience is no more transparent to us than the entities we describe in the objective mode. While Kant was certainly right that the very possibility of empirical cognition is mediated by a distinctive set of aesthetic and intellectual faculties, what the critique of the myth of the given clarifies is that the concepts through which we make the structure of experience explicit is no less theoretically mediated and no more epistemically transparent than any other metaphysical or scientific theoretical framework concerning the natural world. And as the Myth of Jones makes clear, while transcendental discourse aims to think the experiential conditions for empirical discourse, it nevertheless remains epistemically dependent on the empirical concepts that we use to describe the world in *vis-à-vis* extant ordinary objective discourse. In short, the rejection of the myth of the given must entail that all theories, regardless of whether they play a transcendental or empirical role, are constructed as part of a self-correcting cognitive enterprise. With this in mind, decisive rejoinder to epistemological foundationalism comes into view: considered irrespective of the constraints of a specific conceptual-theoretical framework(s), unqualified methodological demands for "justification" or "grounding" become simply unintelligible. Accordingly, the aspirations of arriving at a theory-neutral, self-evidential basis for knowing which would secure all theoretical endeavors from without are the result of misunderstanding the nature of discursive cognition. As Lorenz Puntel puts it:

Justification (or grounding) can sensibly be demanded or provided only within the context of an adequately determined theoretical framework [...] The naive and unrestricted demand for "justification" can appear to be demanded by thoroughgoing rationality, but in fact it is irrational to make demands without recognizing what those demands presuppose. (2008: 55)

While this might seem to reinforce a skeptical stance according to which all knowledge must be relativized according to which language is spoken, a corollary of this claim is that any epistemic challenge against the wholesale possibility of justifying our beliefs must be local

and never global. For although any of our claims is liable to challenge insofar as no claim is self-justified—and although all concepts and theories are subject to revision—insofar as any challenge must itself be formulated within a specific vocabulary or theory, we cannot question all of our claims or revise all of our concepts simultaneously. It follows that skeptical appeals to ignorance, genealogical appeals to causal factors underlying reasons, or mystical appeals to the ineffable, remain themselves theory-relative. Even to think of the “limits of language” as a whole, as Wittgenstein proposes, one must articulate such demarcation by conceptual means, positioning oneself within what Sellars calls “the logical space of reasons.”

Indeed:

Unqualified talk of “limits” of language should therefore be abandoned [...] What is crucial is how one understands “language.” If one speaks of a specific language (e.g., Wittgenstein’s “my language”) and distinguishes this language from other languages, then in a specific sense speaking of “the limits of my language” (i.e., this specific language) is or can be correct. But this means only that one is beyond the limits of this determinate language (“my language”); precisely in surpassing (or again, in speaking of) the limits of that language, one relies upon a more comprehensive language that makes possible sensible and coherent talk of the limits of the first language. This procedure of speaking about a specific language by using a more comprehensive language can be repeated arbitrarily. (Puntel 2008: 31)

As Heidegger and Wittgenstein well articulated, one can only cross the prison of language, and the logocentrism that it enjoins upon us, by refusing to speak. Such is the trail of restorative silence proffered by *Gelassenheit*, or the coeval trail of the mystic before “the unsayable,” resounding of quietude. Nevertheless, even the most uncompromising anti-humanist who stages a ruse against the valences of the logos must actively play in “the game of giving and asking for reasons.” At this point the refusal of epistemic adjudication unwittingly relapses into metaphysical incontinence. As Thomas Nagel argues, rationality is not something one can withhold judgment about as one interrogates it, as the very act of interrogation implies the justificatory practices which constitute the activity of reasoning:

The answer is that the appeal to reason is implicitly authorized by the challenge itself, so this is really a way of showing that the challenge is unintelligible. The charge of begging the question implies that there is an alternative—namely, to examine the reasons for and against the claim being challenged while suspending judgment about it. For the case of reasoning itself, however, no such alternative is available, since any considerations against the objective validity of a type of reasoning are inevitably attempts to offer reasons against it, and these must be rationally assessed. The use of reason in the response is not a gratuitous importation by the defender: It is demanded by the character of the objections offered by the challenger. (Nagel 1997: 24)

We name this inextricable bind between deliberative cognition and sapient thought the persistence of *the rational*. One cannot affirm or justify the obsolescence of rationality in pains of pragmatic contradiction. One cannot exist from the space of reasons from within. Pointing to the diversity of language games, to the autonomy of cultures and languages, or to encroachments of anthropocentrism cannot alleviate this burden. Global challenges to rationality as a whole cannot but rely on what they disavow: those inferential, discursive practices of description,

explanation, and theorization, which constitute the activity of reasoning.¹⁵ Robert Brandom provides the following apology for the philosophical avowal of conceptual rationality against the charges of “logocentrism” waged by Derrida and others:

That our expressions play a suitable role in reasoning is an essential, necessary element of our saying, and their meaning, anything at all. Apart from playing such a role in justification, inference, criticism, and argument, sentences and other locutions would not have the meanings appealed to and played with by all the other games we can play with language. We philosophers should be proud to acknowledge and affirm our logocentrism, but should also justify it by an account of the relations between meaning and use, conceptual content and discursive practice. (2008: 43)

This apology makes no concession to the anti-realist. That any epistemic challenge is relative to a vocabulary or the discursive standards of a community does *not* entail the that the very idea of a mind-independent reality is unintelligible. Nor does it even entail the thesis that it is impossible to formulate standards of epistemic success for when knowledge of a mind-independent world obtains. That no concept is intelligible independent of others—that no claim is immune to epistemic challenge, and that no theory is beyond revision—does *not* entail that these are “irrational” processes, without a direction. On the contrary, as Sellars shows, if theoretical understanding—and, thereby, thinking the thought of the ‘I think’—including ontology, is rational, it is “not because it has a foundation, but because it is a self-correcting enterprise which can put any claim in jeopardy, though not all at once” (EPM §38). The question that naturally follows is just how reason as a historical, revisable process nevertheless makes knowledge of mind-independent world possible.

5. INFERENCEALIST SEMANTICS AND NORMATIVE PRAGMATICS

Sellars’ functionalist account of discursive cognition and his historicized conception of scientific enquiry as a self-correcting enterprise frees transcendental enquiry into the conditions of possibility of experience from its residual metaphysical essentialism. This requires making more precise the distinction between the empirical and transcendental, so as to untether the forms of intuition and the understanding from contingent theoretical-formal paradigms, infiltrating Kant’s account of both the forms of intuition and categories of the understanding. But it also involves articulating the sense in which transcendental discourse is not metaphysical in scope, while laying the ground for metaphysics.

In this regard, Sellars insists that while acts of discursive cognition remain inseparable from the biophysical and linguistic basis on which they happen to be realized, the functional roles that concepts instantiate are not reducible to their specific modes of implementation. This is not to say that language comprises an autonomous metaphysical domain separated from the realm of natural causation—it is simply to say that the normativity and semantic dimensions associated with the instantiation of conceptual roles need not be specified by way of an empirical description of its material bases, and can furthermore be instantiated in an

indefinite variety of divergent material mediums. To give a useful example: if we were to ask someone with regard to the game of chess “what is a pawn?,” and he were to respond by describing the material properties of a given pawn—for example, those of a pawn made out of wood—we would be rightly justified in responding “But not all pawns are made out of wood!” In such a context, one is not asking about the *material properties* of any given pawn that exists, ever existed, or will exist. Instead, one asks rather about *the role* that pawns play invariantly, in the sense of what any object, regardless of its internal structure, would have to do, in order to count as being a pawn, in relation to the rules that determine how one ought to play the game of chess. This functional role can be implemented in pawns made of wood, glass, computer screens, or any given material medium as long as the holistic articulation between elements and rules is satisfied, such that the same function can be realized in wildly divergent and indefinitely numerous material mediums.

Analogously, and extending on Wittgenstein’s (1986) game-metaphor, Sellars tells us that grasping a concept is mastering the use of a word, or linguistic locution more generally. This leads Sellars to sketch a specific version of functionalism that understands discursive cognition in terms of the roles that concepts play in an economy binding perception, inference, and action. To understand a concept one must adopt a broadly coherentist picture of language and meaning, and a normative conception of discursive practice. Consequently, to understand the functional role that an expression plays within a given language game is to understand how rational agents interact by inferential practices of description, explanation, and justification, integrating these inferential roles to perceptual and practical contexts of application. Mastering the “use of a word” therefore requires not only knowing the right circumstances in which an expression is applicable in response to a given stimulus coming from the environment. It also entails knowing how to track the consequences of using expressions by integrating them into inferential relations with each other as part of a discursive-social economy. This normative-functional account of sapient cognition is key to understanding Sellars’ social account of conceptual behavior, which describes discursive intentionality within a public space in which agents interact perceptually, inferentially, and practically with each other and their environments, assessing each other’s behavior according to norms of epistemic and practical reasoning. In this way, we can say that Sellars’ *cognitive* functionalism coordinates an inferentialist semantics with a normative pragmatics that conceives of rationality as a socially distributed set of practices through which agents interact with each other and with their worlds.

This basic framework provides the resources for the re-elaboration of the distinction between the empirical and the transcendental we mentioned above. For Sellars, we must distinguish between an *object language*, whose concepts serve to empirically describe features of the world, from *metalinguistic claims* which describe: (a) *the invariant roles* that specific concepts play within a linguistic economy, and which can be abstracted from their specific expression in a given language, e.g., semantic vocabulary—“Rouge” in French means “Red” in English; (b) *the invariant features* on whose basis discourse is possible, which would thus comprise “transcendental” claims proper, in the sense of describing invariant features of the framework of sapient experience, e.g., all sapient systems must be capable of inferential reasoning practices.

This comprises a variety of distinct vocabularies which jointly provide a successor framework to the Kantian account of the categories.

From the Kantian categories, the “pure concepts of the Understanding,” Sellars distills the idea that besides concepts whose principal use is empirical description and explanation, there are concepts whose principal expressive role is rather to make explicit essential features of the framework within which empirical description and explanation are possible [...] Among the kinds of concepts that Sellars sees as playing such a role are alethic modal concepts, normative concepts, semantic and intentional concepts, and ontological-categorical concepts such as “property,” “universal,” and “proposition,” along with the names of particular universals (“circularity,” “redness”) and propositions (“The fact that snow is white”). (Brandom 2015: 34)

Among these, epistemological vocabulary is also taken to be metalinguistic, insofar as knowledge ascriptions work to normatively characterize a linguistic performance by placing it within “the space of reasons” by characterizing a linguistic performance in terms of its role as a premise or conclusion in a rational process of justification. For to say of an agent that they ‘know’ or that their beliefs are true, following Sellars, is to ascribe to them an epistemic normative status, where the relevant facts which are tracked by the use of such normatively invested epistemic assessments are in principle irreducible to non-epistemic facts that fulfill an empirical-descriptive role.

[In] characterizing an episode or a state as that of knowing, we are not giving an empirical description of that episode or state; we are placing it in the logical space of reasons, of justifying and being able to justify what one says. (EPM §36)

The idea that epistemic facts can be analyzed without remainder—even ‘in principle’—into nonepistemic facts is [...] a mistake of a piece with the so-called ‘naturalistic fallacy’ in ethics” (EPM §5)

Sellars extends the Kantian account of experience as an integrated system of abilities or faculties to not only conceive of linguistic practices in functional terms, but of sapient agency in general as a functionally integrated representational system, binding perception, inference, and action. Following Sellars’ “Some Reflections on Language Games,” when it comes to *language-entry transitions*, a speaker makes an utterance in response to their non-linguistic environment. An example of such a *language-entry transition* is when I say “there is a blue dog” while conscious, sighted, and in the presence of a blue dog. When it comes to *language-exit transitions*, an agent performs an action in response to an utterance of their own. An example is my saying “I will help you across the avenue” to the blue dog, and then helping the blue dog across the street. In *intralinguistic transitions*, a speaker makes an utterance and then follows it up with another, related utterance. For example, I might say, “It is snowing” and then say “Therefore, the street will be wet.” With regards to *language-entry* and *language-exit* transitions, expressions that have the same functional role and thereby fall under the same dot-quoted “common noun” feature in the same transitions. Insofar as *intralinguistic transitions* are concerned, they feature in *analogous transitions*. *Analogous transitions* involve expressions which, themselves, fall under the same dot-quote “common nouns” as the expressions that

feature in the transitions of the expressions that fall under same dot-quote “common noun” as the expression under consideration. For example, if “it is snowing”’s feature in transitions with “the street will be wet”’s, then all •it is snowing•’s feature in transitions with •the street will be wet•’s. Taking another example, “es regnet”’s (in German) feature in transitions with “die Straße wird nass sein”’s.

Following and expanding upon Sellars’ basic synchronic functional account of linguistic intelligence, can characterize discursive cognition in terms of the integration of conceptual and nonconceptual states, through which sapient systems instantiate four different kinds of “transitions”:

- i. *Language-entry transitions* (perception)—System S reliably transitions from non-conceptual state x (input) to conceptual state y (output), e.g., Tim sees a blue dog and utters “There is a blue dog in the alley!”
- ii. *Language-language transitions* (inference)—System S reliably transitions from conceptual state x (input) to conceptual state y (output), e.g., Tim utters “There is a blue dog in the alley” and infers that “There are stray animals in the neighboring area outside.”
- iii. *Language-exit transitions* (action)—System S reliably transitions from conceptual state x (input) to non-conceptual state y (output), e.g., Tim utters “I ought to buy some treats for those blue doggies” and goes to buy dog-treats in the nearby shop.
- iv. *Non-language-non-language transitions* (circumspection) —System S reliably transitions from non-conceptual state x (input) to non-conceptual state y (output), e.g., Tim buys a bag of dog treats in the nearby shop and then walks back to where the blue dogs are so as to feed them.

There are several points to build upon from this expansion of Sellars’ schematic account.

First of all, following Sellars, a system’s behavior is said to be pattern-governed rather than rule-obeying if it conforms to a rule which is canonically expressed in the form of a subjunctive conditional. For example, when we say “If the iron sword is put in water, then it ought to rust,” or “The bird flies back to its nest because it senses it might be in danger,” we describe a pattern which conforms to a conditional rule that neither the iron rod or the pigeon are capable of representing to themselves. Such systems behave in accordance to rules of inference without thereby being in a position to make such rules explicit, nor having those rules be implicitly mediating their behavior in an unconscious manner by assuming epistemic attitudes that presuppose intentional competence. This is not to deny that pattern-governed regularities in mindless nature do not evince a kind of necessity. It is only to say that we must distinguish between the kind of normative lawfulness proper to rule-obeying purposive behavior which does presuppose linguistic competence and which is made explicit by deontic modal vocabulary from the kind of necessity that nature evinces in its objective modal structure, and which is made explicit by alethic modal vocabulary. Causal explanations routinely model

natural regularities and causal dependencies on the proprieties of our theoretical and practical reasonings, making use of teleological, intentional, and normative vocabulary to characterize the behavior of mindless beings in nature. If we are not to inflate such characterizations to illegitimately transpose discursive cognition into nature illegitimately, we should remember that the vocabulary of rules as it applies to non-sapient systems is modeled in analogy with the conditionals made explicit in linguistic behavior, and that this serves an explanatory lever rather as metaphysical commitment.

By the same token, however, insofar as the rule-obeying agency of intentional agents is instantiated by specific behavioral patterns, norms are not to be understood as transcendent metaphysical posits with respect to natural phenomena and events, but rather as incarnated in a system's practical attitudes, such that the "espousal of principles is reflected in uniformities of performance" (TC: 216, §53). If the norms governing the "space of reasons" preserve a transcendental status with regard to the uniformities of performance that they are reflected on, this is because one must distinguish the proprieties that articulate semantic contents and normative functioning at the level of reasoning from regularities and necessities in the natural order. That is, just as we might resist a metaphysical dualism that separates reasons from causes, we must reject a misguided idealism that conflates the two, making nature not only conceptually intelligible, but itself conceptually structured.

Secondly, states that are called "conceptual" do not exclusively pertain to the syntactic analogs of sentences in natural languages, i.e. the "this-such" units compounded with subject-predicate grammatical form. Rather, they ought to be understood as "sign-designs" liable to play a role in the functional binding of circumspection, perception, inference, and action, regardless of their material mode of implementation and syntactic basis. Accordingly, the semantic content of a concept is characterized not by a correspondence relation to items external reality, but rather by its generic functional role, that is, by the "transitions" within which it is embedded as part of a discursively mediated cognitive economy. Sellars' 'dot-quoting' notation defines a concept meta-linguistically, in terms in terms of a functional equivalence-class, in accordance with the illustrating sign-design principle, according to which any expression that falls under the dot-quote may be substituted for any role-equivalent term in another language or syntactic base. For example, "•The car is red• (in English: L_1)" is interchangeable with "•El carro es rojo• (in Spanish: L_2)". Insofar as these roles are general with respect to their modes of implementation, different syntactic and material mediums may realize the same semantic function—not only across a variety of human languages, but in principle across any material system whose constituent parts jointly realize the relevant functions.¹⁶ The preponderance of the inferential is here central: p is a linguistic state if and only if it can function as a premise in an inference with q as its conclusion, and if there is a state r which serves as the premise for an inference in which p is a conclusion, in addition to whatever non-inferential, perceptual, and agential uses p might have. While it is not a necessary condition that all concepts have perceptual or agential uses—as in the case of theoretical postulates in science—they minimally *must* have inferential uses, in order to count as conceptual proper. For sensory states to non-inferentially prompt perceptual knowledge the latter must be intelligible as conceptually

mediated, and as inferentially embedded within a space of implications, even if prompted by non-conceptual states (c.f. Brandom 2019: 114).

While causally prompted by non-conceptual inputs, perception is a linguistically mediated capacity in which such inputs are incorporated into a discursive economy, becoming liable to inferential uses. As we saw, to say of any episode that it counts as an instance of knowledge is not to describe it in an empirical mode or to index its causal origin, but to place it in a justificatory network of implications, by virtue of which a cognitive system enters the logical “space of reasons” of “justifying and being able to justify” what one says. Thus, following Sellars’ account, while presupposing the receptivity of sensation qua non-linguistic inputs as a necessary condition, to perceive something *as something* involves binding labeling responses to sensory stimuli into counterfactually robust inferential relations of incompatibility and consequence:

For while one does not have the concept of red until one has directly perceived something as red, the coming to see something as red is the culmination of a complicated process which is the slow building up of a multi-dimensional pattern of linguistic responses (by verbal expressions to things, by verbal expressions to verbal expressions, by meta-linguistic expressions to object-language expressions, etc.) the fruition of which as conceptual occurs when all these dimensions come into play in such direct perceptions as that this physical object (not that one) over here (not over there) is (rather than was) red (not orange, yellow, etc.) [...] the direct perception of physical objects is mediated by the occurrence of sense impressions which latter are, in themselves, thoroughly non-cognitive [...] this mediation is causal rather than epistemic. (PH 90)

A direct consequence of this view is that, just because perceptual reports are non-inferentially prompted in relation to non-conceptual sensory inputs, they are not for this reason exempt from epistemic challenge. Observational concepts which are used to make non-inferential perceptual reports are every bit as liable to assessment and revision as any theoretical concepts which by definition have no perceptual uses but only inferential ones. While observational concepts “ground” empirical knowledge insofar as they articulate conceptual responses to environmental data coming from sensation, this does not mean that those concepts are ‘given’ in the sense of foundational items that are neither epistemically independent (they could be had without having other concept or vocabulary) nor apodictic (they are not liable to revision).

[T]o reject the myth of the given is not to commit oneself to the idea that empirical knowledge as it is now constituted has no rock bottom level of observation predicates proper. It is to commit oneself rather to the idea that even if it does have a rock bottom level, it is still in principle replaceable by another conceptual framework in which these predicates do not, strictly speaking, occur. (SRI 185)

This point entails that the difference between the observational and the theoretical is methodological rather than ontological. Concepts that only have theoretical, inferential uses may eventually acquire observational ones, without implying that what the concepts designate or describe changes. For example, one goes from inferentially postulating the existence of Pluto in order to explain the gravitational orbit of the planets, to making perceptual reports about

Pluto. Therein, we go from theoretically introducing unobservable “macrostates” to explain negentropic disequilibrium at large temporal scales, to developing sophisticated experimental methods for measuring temporally remote phenomena.

[O]ne consequence of thinking of observation this way is that there is no particular line to be drawn between what is in principle observable and what is not. The only constraints are what a reporter can be trained under some circumstances reliably to differentiate, and what concepts she can then key the application of to those responsive dispositions. [...] When Pluto was first postulated, it was as a theoretical entity about which we could know only by making inferences from perturbations in the orbit of Neptune. With improvements in telescoping, looking at the calculated position of the hypothetical planetoid yielded the first observations of Pluto. It became, for the first time, observable. But it did not change ontological status; only its relation to us changed. (Brandom 2015: 60)

Notably, however, the postulation of theoretical entities does not only concern the postulation of unobservable entities that are knowable by inferential means only. For the development of the manifest image *as already* a kind of scientific image shows how new kinds of observables are in fact introduced to explain sensory and conceptual cognition. Genius Jones’ introduces introspectible observables in an abductive manner to explain representational functioning, preceding the postulation of *unobservables as the causes of observables*. We should therefore conceive of theoretical postulation as part of a problem-ecology in which the distinct questions pertaining to a vocabulary, theory, or domain of discourse formulates its central tasks. This is clearly visible in ontological theorization: Kant’s postulation of the noumenal “thing-in-itself” begins by introducing a theoretical ‘thought-entity’ to explain the origins of observable phenomena, knowledge of which can never in principle be the result of an empirical intuition, and as such remains only inferentially licensed.

Understanding the relation between the observable and the unobservable as methodological can be extrapolated into a larger point in response to the argument according to which a change in the mode of disclosure of an entity implies a change in its ontological status. Emblematic of this stance is the Heideggerian position that locates the change of the “hammer” from being an object present-at-hand to it being a ready-to-hand “tool” within a relational nexus of significance. Extrapolating from Sellars’ point, we can claim the hammer itself does not change when its mode of disclosure changes, so that to assume that the mode of disclosure determines the mode of being rests on a preemptive conflation.

This brings us to another point. The breakdown of circumspect activity does not refer to language-entry transitions which can lead to progressive vectors of abstraction culminating in “present-at-hand” awareness. Inferential knowledge transforms our possibilities for circumspect action in turn. For example, one goes from overtly obeying rules to build an IKEA bed by reading an instruction manual and then internalizing these rules, until one can perform the activity without even thinking about it. We do not only learn to make explicit implicit commitments in the forms of rules through conceptual competence and the acquisition of and logical vocabulary, as Brandom suggests, but also learn to make implicit inferential behavior into circumspect behavior. Just like we learn to internalize inferential rule following into

circumspect know-how, so we learn to extend theoretical concepts that are introduced and known by inferential means into observational circumstances of application, as the scientist does when non-inferentially reporting “There is a mu meson” in the presence of a cloud-chamber. While resisting the intellectualism of those who claim that conceptualization permeates all forms of perceptual and circumspect cognition (e.g., McDowell), we must also resist the practicism of those who overemphasize the non-conceptual character of circumspection at the price of eliding its functional integration with conceptual behavior, whether in the name of skillful coping (e.g., Dreyfus) or blind machinic functioning.

6. FORMALIZING SELLARSIAN-KANTIAN TRANSCENDENTAL CONDITIONS

We can now generally distinguish between three basic kinds of problem-solving abilities that articulate the relationship between conceptual and circumspect behavior in relation to perceptual instances, and correspondingly between sensing, thinking, and doing. First, there is *explicitation* as the conceptually making-explicit of norms embodied in our circumspect practices, as when we obtain the vocabulary sufficient to specify a practice that we already undertake circumspectly. For example, consider learning to describe how one learned to ride a bicycle by trial-and-error in a series of rules or steps. Second, there is *incarnation*, as the making-implicit of rules into norms that regulate our nonconceptual transparent coping. Consider how one might be taught how to ride a bicycle by an instructor through a set of instructions, and then be able to do so skillfully without internal conceptual representations as ‘operative processes’ mediating our behavior, even if such circumspect performances are subject to conceptual characterization and normative assessment.¹⁷ Finally, there is what we might call *amplification*, in which a new conceptual or non-conceptual practice is constructed without it having been either implicitly or explicitly articulated beforehand, e.g., a new practice that involves neither incarnation of rules nor the explicitation of know-how acquired through trial-and-error.

It is clear that these forms are not exhaustive or exclusive, but often complimentary and diachronically articulated: the invention of a new theoretical language enables new forms of circumspection. For instance, the invention of a new musical theory gives way to new possibilities for spontaneous expression (improvisation). Indeed, inferential knowing can be not only made implicit in allowing to form new kinds of observation reports, but also new forms of circumspect activity, where problem-solving tasks that are carried through symbolic manipulation and the explicitation of formal inferential rules proceeds without overt reflection or inference. In fact, reasoning *amplifies* the expressive possibilities in our non-conceptual practices. This is the key to understanding the mystery of mastery, where what might first appear as an abstract knowing or rule-following becomes incorporated into a form of know-how or practical wisdom. A trained mathematician that internalizes the rules of a theory and attains mastery can carry out operations without referring back to these rules, much in the same way that an accountant can perform arithmetical calculations when prompted without reflection, or as a musician learning theory eventually internalizes and is able to

behave in accordance with these rules when improvising. Giving a theory of representational competence is part of a movement of conceptual and theoretical explicitation, detailing how cognitive systems progressively develop capacities to “map” and navigate their worlds through a series of embedded functional abilities and problem-solving routines proper to sensibility, conceptualization, and theorization.

It is also clear that, even when amplified to account for circumspect behavior, the functional schema offered by Sellars remains programmatic. In developing a proper functional framework, one ought to typologize the different kinds of transitions invoked in cognition in a more robust manner, so as to account, for example, for which kinds of language-entry transitions obtain besides perceptual responses to sensory signals and direct somatic stimulation (e.g., non-mnemonic states of eidetic photographic recollection, through which a non-conceptual mental event triggers a non-inferential report about something that was seen or heard in the past). It is clear that many of these capacities involves the kinds of capacities associated with memory and the imagination already identified by Kant. With this said, it is also clear that language-exit transitions are not limited to cases of overt action, if by the latter we think of locomotive processes or overt behavioral responses following a pattern of reasoning. The transition from language to instances of visual recollection—the network of representings that Kant associates with the reproductive and productive functions of the imagination—serve as evident examples. In short, a more precise typology of the kind of stimuli which compose the various transitions involved in cognitive processing and their functional relations would allow us to map the complex routines that jointly articulate sapient experience.

Finally, just as it possible to abstract the functional role of a given concept from its specific syntactic-linguistic expression, so we can abstract the generic functional capacities involved in cognition from their modes of implementation. This leads to a more nuanced understanding of how the “conditions of experience” that Kant associates with our aesthetic and intellectual faculties that considers them as part of natural and cultural history, complicating the relationship between the empirical and the transcendental. For while the generic functions of “the space of reasons” define *a priori*, invariant capacities across all material mediums, languages, and cultures, it is also the product of contingent selections in natural history, subject also to indefinitely varied cultural-historical reconfigurations.

The idea that this logical space is an evolutionary development, culturally inherited, is an adaptation rather than a rejection of Kant’s contention that the forms of experience are a priori and innate [...] his conception of the forms of experience was too narrow, and that non-formal patterns of [material] inference are as essential to the conceptual order as are the patterns explored by formal logic. (PH: 90)

Appreciating the transcendental dimension of the enquiry in relation to its natural and cultural historical dimensions holds the key to the mystery of synthetic a priori judgments, bringing Sellars’ account in many ways closer to Hegel than Kant:

[I]f one means by synthetic a priori knowledge, knowledge which is logically synthetic, yet true *ex vi terminorum*, then, indeed, there is synthetic a priori knowledge. If one means by it, synthetic knowledge to which there is no significant alternative, then synthetic a priori knowledge is a myth, a snare, and a delusion. ... For not only can we be caused to modify out [sic.] linguistic frame, we can deliberately modify it—teach ourselves new habits— and give reasons for doing so. Now the use of a conceptual frame is the awareness of a system of logical and extra-logical necessities. The essence of scientific wisdom, therefore, lies in being tentative about what one takes to be extra-logically necessary. (ITSA: 138)

Just like the concepts, vocabularies and theories that furnish the mind are to be historicized and relativized to specific theoretical-discursive frameworks while at the same time isolated in their invariant forms, such that the transcendental study of the “forms of intuition” that furnish the bedrock of our sensory receptivity must be understood in a dual sense. For while in one sense these designate a functional set of invariant capacities by virtue of which a system represents its environment, in another sense they comprise a set of system-specific modalities which, while invariant across a species or classes of system, are nevertheless the products of natural evolutionary history. This involves the theoretical question concerning the ways in which we understand space and time when, for instance, we move from a Euclidean geometrical paradigm to a post-Euclidean one. In short, placing the forms of experience within a developmental frame is at once to naturalize and historicize the transcendental, taking our aesthetic and cognitive faculties as in principle intervenable, and our conceptual-theoretical frameworks as in principle revisable.

Hence, expanding on Sellars, we suggest that while “transcendental” determinations cannot simply to be reduced to empirical or contingent-historical ones, we must separate two levels of transcendental determination pertaining to the forms of experience: (1) *hard transcendental constraints* pertaining to the invariant and necessary functional capacities required as *a priori* conditions for cognition irrespective of its forms of implementation in specific material-linguistic mediums; (2) *soft transcendental constraints* pertaining to the invariant implementation of these generic functional capacities in a given class of cognitive systems that are, however, contingent products of natural-cultural history, and which may be subject to variation, revision and intervention. This can be typologized as follows:

- (*Hard-transcendental determination*)—A condition(s) C_h is *hard transcendental* for all cognitive systems S_x if and only if C_h is necessary for S_x to count as sapient, regardless of any contingent material or historical constraints. For example, any sapient cognitive system must be capable of performing the functional routines of perception, inference, action, and circumspection, transitioning between linguistic and non-linguistic states, irrespective of the particular sensorial mechanisms, linguistic protocols, and psychosomatic capabilities that the system uses to perform these functions.
- (*Soft-transcendental determination*)—A condition(s) C_s is *soft transcendental* for a given class of cognitive systems S_a if and only if C_s is an instance of a condition(s) C_h , where the elements of C_s determine invariant features that characterize a class of cognitive systems S which are subject to modification—e.g., the particular features of the locomotive and

neurophysiological structure of the human organism, or the subject-object sentential structure in natural languages that specify syntactic invariances in Western languages. Accordingly, *soft transcendental constraints* include those general physiological, linguistic, historical, economic, and cultural conditions that comprise the concrete historical implementation or expression of sapience, and which become liable to intervention as our theoretical-explanatory comprehension advances. In this sense, *soft transcendental constraints* lie somewhere between *hard transcendental constraints* (insofar as they specify a set of invariances across a class of systems) and *empirical constraints* (insofar as they are but modes of implementation of necessary functional capacities for a cognitive system).

At a general, structural level, the representational contents that characterize the multimodal space of conscious experience encompass the structures localized by a representational system from a variety of informational sources and ‘faculties’: sensation, memory, practical orientation, language. Under naturalist lights, we conclude by characterizing the sensory consciousness that binds representations—the synthesizing of the ‘I think’—as extending thus the map-making functioning of a representational system, that is, as part of a process system’s differentiated response to the environment in ways that can count as a mapping of the environment, however rudimentary. Such mappings enable a cognitive system to track items within a perceptual field across perspectival and positional changes, and to modulate its behavior in accordance with these changes. To explain these coordinated responses thereby involves making explicit rules or algorithmic recipes for dynamically coordinating perceivers onto objects, representing subject and represented object while minimally distinguishing between *three forms of change*: (1) *objective transformations* which affect the representation of the unity of a given phenomenon (e.g. the dog sees the treat being eaten, and so no longer tracks it within its perceptual field); (2) *phasal transformations* of an object that do not affect its represented unity (e.g. the dog sees the treat being thrown to the carpet floor and chases after it); and (3) *perspectival transformations* in the agent’s positional and behavioral location in relation to a represented object (e.g. the dog continues scouts the carpet for the treat by smelling it until it tracks it visually). These three forms of change can be structurally characterized in the form of a *triad*, encompassing the labor that Sellars associates with the Kantian ‘schematism,’ as instantiating the model of “perceivers-confronting-objects”: a group of transformations determining the possible perspectival or *positional changes in perceivers (P)*, the group of transformations that characterize the possible *profiles of the object perceived (O)*, and a set of *transformation rules* that coordinate the former to the latter (*R*):

$$S_i: \langle P, R, O \rangle.$$

Such transformation rules can be intuitively modeled as a set of conditional schemas that functionally relate the possible positional states in perceivers to the possible profiles of the objects perceived. These can be provisionally conceived in analogy with the subjunctive sentential frame: If perceiver *P* is in position M_i , then object *O* appears under profile F_i . It

is clear that a conscious system may at a given point in time coordinate itself to a variety of such objective representings, across a multiplicity of modalities and faculties, as part of a unified “apperceptive” consciousness. In naturalizing Kant’s synthesis-cum-schematization of objects across perspectival/phasal changes, one must therefore also account for how such objective representings can be concurrently represented within a perceptual field, indexed to the spatiotemporal experience of a singular cognitive system.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

References to Kant’s works are to the volume and page number of the Akademie Ausgabe = AA (*Gesammelte Schriften*, hrsg.: Bd. 1-22 Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Bd. 23 Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, ab Bd. 24 Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen. Berlin, 1900 et seqq.).

KrV = *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (A: 1781/B: 1787)

MFNS = *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science* (AA 4)

Anth = *Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht* (AA 7)

RefI = *Reflexionen* (AA 14-19)

Wilfrid Sellars’s Works

ITSA, “Is There a Synthetic A Priori?” (1953).

SRLG, “Some Reflections on Language Games” (1954).

EPM, “Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind” (1956).

PH, “Phenomenalism” (1959).

TC, “Truth and ‘Correspondence’” (1962)

SPR, *Science, Perception and Reality* (1963, 1991)

NI, “Notes on Intentionality” (1964)

SRI, “Scientific Realism or Irenic Instrumentalism: A Critique of Nagel and Feyerabend on Theoretical Explanation” (1965).

SM, *Science and Metaphysics: Variations on Kantian Themes* (1968)

SRPC, “Some Reflections on Perceptual Consciousness” (1977).

IKTE, “The Role of Imagination in Kant’s Theory of Experience”, the Dotterer Lecture (1978).

TRANSLATIONS OF KANT'S WRITINGS IN OTHER LANGUAGES

Critique of Pure Reason, Edited and translated by P. Guyer, A.W. Wood, Cambridge: CUP, 1998.

ABSTRACT: Considering how Kant's synthetic unity of apperception could be "naturalized," this paper seeks to liberate the Kantian theory of experience from any foundationalist renderings that blur the lines between the empirical and transcendental, without compromising Kant's attempt to investigate how the invariant structures of experience condition and supply rules for our knowledge of the world. This paper begins with an overview of the Transcendental Deduction's apperceptive "I think." We then consider Sellars' Myth of Jones and Sellars' notion of noumenal reality as a "limit concept" not in metaphysical but alongside pragmatist lines, where the "in-itself" is schematized as a regulatory ideal that normatively orients science as a self-correcting enterprise. Providing a successor-account to Sellars' naturalization of Kant's 'I think,' we seek to develop hard-transcendental and soft-transcendental pragmatic conditions to describe protocols for revision and integration, proffering an anti-dogmatic metaphysical stance that, true to Kant, expands our understanding of perception and linguistic licensing to include the kind of sensory and conceptual capacities associated with sapient experience.

KEYWORDS: Kant, Sellars, Inferentialism, Philosophy of Language, Perception, Naturalism

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NOTES

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2 This is illustrated by Katharina Kraus' “Triadic structure of the Unity Argument” (Kraus 2020: 92).

3 Julian Wuerth (2014) argues that Kant does not deny that the categories apply a priori to the human mind or soul, but denies that they do so in a way that gives us any knowledge of ourselves, remarking that Kant still allows for the categories to have “ontological significance” with respect to the soul, i.e., that the categories inform us that the mind or soul is a thing in itself that counts as a simple substance but that this “ontological significance” is not knowledge. Laywine (2020) responds that there is no reason why this should not count as knowledge. What is important is that what Kant denies in the Paralogism section is that the categories apply a priori to the mind or soul in such a way to yield knowledge of *ourselves*. In the *Duisburg Nachlaß*, however, there is evidence that Kant took the categories to apply a priori to the mind or soul as a simple substance.

4 In cognitive science, the ‘binding problem’ examines how various sensations become combined into the percept of any one object and the intellectual issue of how we recognize that the sensory information provided in perception is information about any one object—how can any of us have one collective consciousness of any plurality of sensory ideas? In cases of veridical perception, we are aware of spatio-temporal particulars via our integrated sensory and judgmental acts of perceiving them. Our “direct” perception of objects in our surroundings is a complex achievement requiring the integration of both sensory and intellectual factors (Westphal 2020).

5 The “two worlds” view is aptly reconstructed in Anja Jauernig's *The World According to Kant*: “For Kant, a world, strictly speaking, is a unified whole of substances that stand in mutual interactions. But we have no way of knowing whether all things in themselves mutually interact (or whether they are substances). Having said that, it seems perfectly acceptable to me to say that the realm of appearances and the realm of things in themselves are two worlds broadly understood. These realms are inhabited by different kinds of entities, are governed by different laws, and are cognitively accessible to us in different ways.⁵¹ Kant himself frequently uses the expressions ‘world of sense’ (‘Sinnenwelt’) or ‘sensible world’ to describe the dwelling place of appearances and contrasts it with the ‘intelligible world’ or the ‘world of the understanding’ (‘Verstandeswelt’) which is populated by things in themselves.” (2021: 16)

6 Thus, Kant's infamous fingers: “One must go beyond these concepts, seeking assistance in the intuition that corresponds to one of the two, one's five fingers, say, or (as in Segner's arithmetic) five points, and one after another add the units of the five given in the intuition to the concept of seven. For I take first the number 7, and, as I take the fingers of my hand as an intuition for assistance with the concept of 5, to that image of mine I now add the units that I have previously taken together in order to constitute the number 5 one after another to the number 7, and thus see the number 12 arise. That 7 should be added to 5 I have, to be sure, thought in the concept of a sum = 7 + 5, but not that this sum is equal to the number 12. The arithmetical proposition is therefore always synthetic; one becomes all the more distinctly aware of that if one takes somewhat larger numbers, for it is then clear that, twist and turn our concepts as we will, without getting help from intuition we could never find the sum by means of the mere analysis of our concepts.” (B16)

7 Henry Allison correctly points out that “[a]lthough Sellars denies the fully conceptual nature of this synthesis [figurative synthesis, or *synthesis speciosa*], since it would effectively undermine the distinction between interpretation and predication, he also insists, for reasons having as much to do with his own philosophical position as his reading of Kant, that the imagination must be granted a minimal conceptual character in order to avoid reducing sensibility into a sheer receptivity, which could not contribute to cognition” (2015: 261).

8 Concepts intentionally relate to objects vis-à-vis other representations, specifically: other concepts, their schemata, and ultimately intuitions; but intuitions do not require any such assistance (B93/A68).

9 A representation can be more determinate than another in virtue of representing its objects as possessing a wider range of predicates (e.g. a species-concept is more determinate than a genus-concept). A concept is determinate just in case, for every predicate F, it either contains F or -F. Concepts, on the other hand, are typically incompletely determinate in this way, with the possible exception being <God>, which is determinate at least with respect to God's intrinsic properties. Conceptual representation, in general, is not completely determinate. For extensive discussion of complete determination see Kant's lectures (28: 413, 503, 554, 630, 722-4, 779, 1156) and *Reflexionen* (Ref. 5760, 5783, 5784, 5786, 6245, 6255, 6290, and 6322) on metaphysics.

10 "The hyphenated phrase 'this-cube' expresses a representing of something as a cube in a way which is conceptually prior to cube as a general or universal representation; that is, in a way which is conceptually prior to predication or judgment." (SM 7)

11 In doing so, Sellars arguably does not heed the *quid juris/quid facti* distinction Kant scholars like Westphal have long underscored.

12 Some commentators identify theoretical entities as unobservables, in the sense of entities that can only be described inferentially, in contrast to observable entities that are liable to be the referents of non-inferential perceptual reports. Exegetical issues aside, this distinction is misleading, since one can argue that the manifest image begins by theoretically introducing new kinds of observables in the form of introspectible episodes of thoughts and sensations.

13 Here we have employed Sellars' dot-quotation device, which we will further elaborate on below. For now, let us underscore that, for Sellars, statements of the form '--- means ... (in language L)' are synonymous with statements of the form '---'s (in L) are •...•s'. For example, 'rot' (in German) means red' is synonymous with 'rot's (in German) are •red•s'. These paraphrases use dot-quotation. This device produces common nouns which apply to all and only those linguistic expressions which have the same functional role in their language as the expressions enclosed in the dots has in the language of the containing statement.

14 The "factualist fallacy" assumes that being cannot have counterpart determinations to those semantic contents bestowed by our descriptive concepts or explanatory frameworks, establishing the conditions of sense that fix our conditions of reference.

15 I owe this point of poetic emphasis to Dan Sacilotto (forthcoming).

16 Subtracting the functional structure of propositional states from sentential syntax, Sellars imagines the fictional language 'Jumblese' as a functional analog of a natural language: a language dispensing of predicates as supplementary symbols, and endowed with only names that (a) fulfill the referential function, and (b) style modifications of the names which fulfill the relevant characterization function.

17 For a discussion of the distinction between accounts of conceptual understanding in terms of operative process and normative statuses, see Rouse (2015: 43-50).

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