

## A CRITIQUE OF REPRESENTATIONALISM IN HEIDEGGER AND SELLARS

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**ABSTRACT:** In this paper, we compare Heidegger and Sellars' respective responses to Kant's Schematism section of the *Transcendental Analytic*, taking heed of how both philosophers motivate a criticism of representationalism in their respective renderings while also prodding their Kantian insights towards a holist conception of normativity. We begin with an overview and analysis of Heidegger and Sellars' holism, comparing both thinkers' systematic thought. We then turn to how both appraise Kant's Schematism section, first working through Heidegger's analysis of Kant's understanding and imagination. We follow this up with Sellars' naturalized Kantianism, taking particular interest in how Sellars emphasizes the basic foundational units, i.e., 'this-suches', grounding Kant's theory of perception. We appraise both approaches, making the case that they offer a compatible productive misreading.

**KEYWORDS:** Kant; Sellars; Heidegger; Schematism; Representationalism

### I

In this paper, we will compare Heidegger and Sellars' responses to Kant's conception of imagination and understanding as delineated in the Schematism section of the *Transcendental Analytic*. This paper will motivate a critique of representationalism by drawing from complementary critiques offered by Heidegger and Sellars, eventually theorizing a naturalized Kantian framework. We will begin by first justifying our project, which takes up Heidegger and Sellars as somewhat compatible and complementary thinkers, while also underscoring the significant points of departure between the two. We will then review Kant's Schematism section before taking up how Heidegger and Sellars appraise it, concluding with a post-Kantian framework that synthesizes Heidegger and Sellars' critiques.

Let us here clarify what, exactly, we mean by representationalism. Representationalism can mean that what it is for a subject to have a state with a certain phenomenal character is for that state to have a certain representational content. According to this account, if a person occurrently believes/judges some state of affairs to be the case, then their believing has high epistemic worth. This belief is thus non-inferentially warranted and self-evident. According to the thesis of representationalism,

mental qualities represent intentional qualities, on which perceptible properties are represented solely by way of intentional content. Therein, the representationalist takes all introspectable qualitative aspects of a conscious experience as qualities that the experience non-conceptually represents the world to have.

It is well known that Kant problematizes direct realist representational theories of perception according to which the direct objects of our awareness are mental representations, wherein these mental representations are typically caused by objects in our surroundings and which—in cases of veridical perception—represent the actual characteristics of those objects (Westphal 2020: 135). How, then, is the self-ascription of sensory experiences possible if not through knowledge of direct sensorial acquaintance with objects of perception? For Kant, answering this question requires that judgments in experience do not treat empirical sense-data as objectively representing some mind-independent *represented*. As is well known, for Kant any representational state which provides one with the awareness of a plurality of sensory ideas or experiences involves judgments in experience. And according to Kant's transcendental philosophy, experience (*Erfahrung*) is a kind of empirical cognition (*empirische Erkenntnis*). Specifically, experience consists in sensation-based judgments about an object or an objective reality (*Prolegomena* §18). Experience thus results from the mind's activity of bringing a multitude of sensations under empirical concepts, and of therein combining those concepts into judgments (*KrV* B165-6). The two main faculties involved in experience for Kant are the faculty of *sensibility* and the *understanding as the faculty to judge*. Sensibility (*Sinnlichkeit*) immediately relates to objects and yields sensory intuitions (*Anschauungen*) of these objects according to the forms of space and time. The understanding (*Verstand*) applies general concepts (*Begriffe*) and yields judgments (*Urteile*) about objects of experience in accordance with its basic forms, the categories (e.g., unity, substance, causality). Perceptual experience thus requires perceptual synthesis of sensory intake, but sensations/sensory intake cannot *alone* account for synthesis. Kant's positive thesis hence entails that the understanding comes to play in perception, as the apprehension of intuition into empirical consciousness requires a mental activity of synthesis. Synthesis cannot be accomplished by passive faculties that simply receive data, as synthesis requires active faculties that bring for the representations—the imagination and understanding.

Kant hence indicates a significant advance over representationalism, as Kant's transcendental method rejects any alleged “transparency of consciousness.” This so-called “transparency argument” is often taken to originate in Descartes, but still finds defenders in contemporary philosophy of mind (Tye 1997). So-called “strong representationalists” appeal to “transparency”, or *diaphanousness*, to argue that there is nothing more that we are aware of in having world-directed experiences than the objects

and properties we putatively perceive. According to this line of thinking, someone seeing a tree has no access at all to the intrinsic features of their mental representation that make it a mere representation of seeing a tree. Thus, in recognizing the distinctive contributions of sensation and judgment in perceptual experience, Kant reconceives sensations no longer as Cartesian/Humean objects of awareness but as components of awareness (Westphal 2020: 142). And in cases of veridical perception, we are aware of spatio-temporal particulars via our integrated sensory and judgmental acts of perceiving them. As such, our 'direct' perception of objects in our surroundings is a complex achievement requiring the integration of both sensory and intellectual factors.

Contra British empiricism, Kant's critique of representationalism hence illuminates a problem beyond simple givenness of sense-data. As noted, Kant's account demonstrates that representationalist accounts of sensory ideas tend to assume that if a sensory idea was caused by an object, that idea also represented some feature of that object. But, under Heideggerian lights, representationalism is criticized once again, albeit in different form. This time the culprit is Husserl, for whom only once our so-called 'natural attitude' is 'suspended' and undergoes a phenomenological reduction, does the phenomenologist gain access to the general structure of intentionality. For Husserl, this reduction allows the phenomenologist to include the ontological structure of the objects of experience. In motivating his 'bracketing' method of phenomenological reflection, Husserl thought it possible to understand the nature and content of perception by way of an independent perspective divorced from perceptual reference to the physical environment. Insofar as the Husserlian 'bracketing' of the 'natural stance' seeks to decant itself of the residual metaphysical inflation of the Cartesian ego as *res cogitans*, the content of perception, on this view, can be fully comprehended while remaining indifferent towards elements/spatio-temporal particulars in the physical environment.

Indeed, Husserl, himself, had rejected a certain strip of reductive givenness rejecting in particular the notion that patterns of association of sensory qualia, or specific inferences which comprise those patterns, provide objective meaning there is. Similarly, Husserl rejected the 'intellectualist' approach which holds the intellectual capacity for judgment or propositional inference is what confers objectivity. Husserl's alternative was to proffer objectivity bestowing acts by distinguishing between perception and propositional attitudes, where some of these objectivity-bestowing acts are subpropositional and others are 'immanent' within perception. In untethering perception from propositional attitudes, Husserl conceives of so-called 'noematic' acts which underlie perception and judgment. These noematic acts thought of objectivity as to be derived from idealized events—i.e., 'transcendental' acts—accessible to an agent via phenomenological reflection, where reflection could yield 'essences', objective

structures, and idealized acts (1913: § 41-55; 85-90; 94-97, 101-131, 150-151).

Nevertheless, what Husserl's method shared with the British sense-data theorists inspired by Russell's sense-data simples was to avoid looking at the contents of an individual's mind and psychology. Indeed, "[t]he point here is not just that Husserl takes up a first-person point of view on perceptual contents is that he construes those contents as not already implicating reference and attribution to the physical environment. In this respect, Husserl's conception of perception is very like that of the phenomenalist/sense-data-theorists inspired by Russell" (Burge 2010: 131). And while Husserl's account *does* move beyond transparency/diaphanousness, it also forges a correlation between noesis-noema, which is taken to be foundational in relation to empirical knowledge concerning the external world. Moving beyond Husserl's phenomenological 'reduction' of the 'natural attitude,' Heidegger asks whether enquiry into the subject's cognitive access to the world of phenomena shrouds more fundamental forms of intentional disclosure than representation, targeting the ontological practice that uncritically carried over metaphysical prejudices since the Greek origins of philosophy. The "existential analytic of Dasein" which sets off the project of *Sein und Zeit* is thus formulated not in terms of a *transcendental epistemology*, but rather as a *fundamental ontology*. *Fundamental ontology* necessitates a means of disclosing how one person can perceive their world in one mode and a different person perceive *their world* in a wholly distinct manner.

Heidegger's project retrieves thus problematizes the subject-object dichotomy reiterated in Husserl, setting out to investigate more primordial forms of intentional "comportments" (*Verhalten*) that characterize our being-in-the-world. In doing so, Heidegger typologizes our being-in-the-world, describing how, in relation to the future-oriented modalities of engaged practice ("readiness-to-hand," *Zuhandenheit*), objective cognition ("presence-at-hand," *Vorhandenheit*) appears but as a *derivative* mode of intentionality. For Heidegger, structures of being-in-the-world as involvement in practical concerns, future-directedness, and situatedness are hence taken as "more primordial" (*ursprünglich*) than theoretical reflection. Whereas theorizing might be derivative from being-in-the-world, practical activities cannot be accounted for in terms of the representationalist picture assumed by the theoretical attitude (Guignon 1990: 231).

Lastly Sellars famously challenges a specific version of representationalism which takes the form of sense-data inference. Sense-data inference states that:

x looks  $\theta$

therefore, something *is*  $\theta$  (Chisholm 1950, 173).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> As David Papineau notes, sense-datum theorists explain all sensory experiences not in terms of ordinary sensory perception of ordinary material objects, but as involving the special

However, Sellars goes further than simply challenging sense-datum theories. Indeed—and as is well documented from their published debates and correspondence—Sellars’ position is poised contra Chisholm’s so-called ‘adverbialist’ view, which holds that sensory experiences are constituted by modifications of the conscious properties of subjects; according to an adverbialist, to visually experience a red ball is to visually experience in a red-ball-like manner. Following the adverbialist framework, sensory experiences are simply qualitative conscious properties that do not relate their subjects to any further objects beyond themselves. Adverbialists like Chisholm further stipulate that we should equate any talk of ‘seeing a red ball’ with such adverbial descriptions as ‘visually experiencing redly and roundly’. Sellars detects ‘givennist’ foundationalism in those who espouse a direct apprehension account of self-presentingness, according to which in the case of perception it is the fact that-*p* which directly justifies one’s non-inferential perceptual belief (and verbal report) that-*p*. In response, Sellars argues that sensations themselves are not objects of self-conscious awareness—instead they are components of awareness, typically particulars in our surroundings (EPM 142). However, Sellars’ advancement over representationalism is not simply at the level of conceptual content and sense-data. Indeed, Sellars emphasizes a distinction at the level of *linguistic* objects as well. Following Sellars, we must distinguish between two kinds of functional roles realized by linguistic behavior. The first are the relations of *signification* that comprise those semantic-inferential proprieties that concepts acquire according to socially conformed norms of use, as part of a language. The second are the *picturing* relations between discursive items (comprising both the nominal terms of a natural language and those model-structures in formal languages) and non-discursive items in the environment (comprising the ultimate “truth-makers” of a language or theory; Sellars 1963: 215). Sellars emphasizes linguistic objects because language is seen as essential to the uniquely human mode of picturing, and not because only languages picture. By bifurcating signification from picturing, Sellars seeks to “abandon the presupposition at the core of orthodox naturalistic Representationalism, that propositional content and word-natural-world correspondence live in the same box” (ibid., 170). In his critique of representationalism, Sellars remarks that just as “the generalizations in question do not, so to speak, separately relate ‘red’ to red things and ‘man’ to men [but] relate sentential expressions containing ‘red’ to red things and sentential expressions containing ‘man’ to

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relationship of sensory awareness to facts involving special sense data. However the adverbialists of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century held that “sensory experiences are constitutionally non-relational” such that “[s]ensory experiences are constituted by the way subjects are experiencing, not by any relations between subjects and further entities” (2021: 136).

men” (Sellars 1979: 70), so “the representational features of an empirical language require the presence in the language of a [whole] schematic world story” (128).

Like Kant and Heidegger, Sellars does not merely critique representationalism but also offers a positive thesis in its place. Echoing the late Wittgenstein’s criticisms of St. Augustine, Sellars argues that the map of the world that is produced by a language is not found sentence by sentence but solely in the entirety of the living language-cum-thought “running isomorphic to the whole world” (Millikan in Stekeler-Weithofer 2005: 54). Sellars’ positive thesis underscores the role that inference plays in understanding, speaking to how the inferential rules we articulate are neither descriptions of regularities of human doings nor prescriptions articulating how “human doings should proceed in an ‘optimal’ case” (Peregrin in Stekeler-Weithofer 2005: 48). Rather, inferential rules do what the rules of chess do—they restrict the possibilities of our doings, hence constituting a space for a novel possibilities.<sup>2</sup>

We now have a provisional map of how Kant, Heidegger, and Sellars engage with the thesis of representationalism and how each moves *beyond* the specific version of representationalism that they problematize. However, in this paper, our interest is not in simply observing how the rejection of representationalism transpires in Kant, Heidegger, and Sellars, but rather in analyzing how Heidegger and Sellars’ appraisal of Kant’s conception of the imagination and understanding motivates both a critique of representationalism and lends a positive (post-)Kantian epistemology. Indeed, both philosophers (rightly or wrongly) read representationalism into Kant, but in doing so prod forth original contributions to our understanding of Kantian epistemology. Our survey of Sellars and Heidegger shall not be uncritical—in both cases, as we shall see, both collapse Kant’s conception of the imagination with his notion of the understanding. Despite some misreadings and uncharitable interpretations can be located in both Heidegger and Sellars’ analyses of Kant, by comparing Sellars and Heidegger’s insights (and their productive misinterpretations), we will be able to formalize a post-Kantian realist-cum-naturalist paradigm which heralds the best insights of both thinkers.

Before doing so, however, let us consider how Heidegger and Sellars compare with one another so as to justify our synthetic project, which involves reading the two thinkers together while also qualifying the limits of any such venture. Any project which reads two philosophers as compatible thinkers risks eliding the incompatible details, and we

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<sup>2</sup> These constraints (i.e., “rules of criticism”) are liberating, according to Sellars’ account. Within chess, we are allowed to move pieces in a certain way only; and if we respect this, possibilities open up, for example the possibility to sacrifice a piece for a strong attack, etc. Within language, when we accept its rules, we can move in the space of meaningfulness, within which we can mean various things previously unavailable to us, we can communicate with others and think propositionally.

must be privy not to gloss over antinomies and antagonisms where they appear. Unfortunately, there has been a dearth of scholarship comparing Heidegger and Sellars head-on—this is despite the fact that a significant number of scholars working on Heidegger in the Anglo tradition are, to some degree, Sellarsians.<sup>3</sup> This might suggest that the two thinkers share little at best and are wholly incompatible at worst—after all, at the most superficial level Sellars’ scientific realism and psychological nominalism has little to do with the phenomenology espoused by Heidegger. Nonetheless, there are some important points of confluence to take notice of before we consider how the two philosophers analyze Kant’s Schematism specifically.

To begin with, both Sellars and Heidegger stake their projects on our unmediated familiarity with worldly entities. Furthermore, neither Sellars nor Heidegger deny the existence of “inner” mental or conscious experience, although they both treat inner mental events/conscious experiences as freighted upon a more fundamental grasp of publicly accessible circumstances. In Heidegger’s account, this comes to bear with Dasein’s make-up as being-in-the-world; for Heidegger, Dasein is said to be manifest in everyday dealings with equipment and with other sapient beings (SZ 309). With Sellars we have the well-known critique of the myth of the given, which makes the case that our capacities for epistemic knowledge cannot start with sense/data mere experiential presence (EPM §54). For Sellars, any understanding of so-called “inner” appearances—such as something’s “looking red”—is parasitic on being able to competently grasp relevant worldly circumstances (“red”). Comprehending these worldly circumstances necessitates that one incorporate grasping how appearances of a publicly accessible aspect of the world vary within those circumstances. As Joseph Rouse notes “[i]n the case of colors, for example, the relevant circumstances would include lighting, distance, viewing angle, and the visual and functional context” (2016). Indeed, Sellars’ commitment to methodological behaviorism does not deny the existence of mental events/processes, but it does deny them any foundational role. For Sellars, mental events/states are theoretical entities which are posited to explicate publicly accessible phenomena. Although one can learn to apply the relevant concepts non-inferentially, any such non-inferential recognition of mental states is defeasible, contextually situated, and first-person-privileged vis-a-vis a default normative status, and also applicable third-

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<sup>3</sup> John Haugeland, Mark Okrent, Robert Brandom, and Joseph Rouse are such examples. There is a great deal of interest in Heidegger in the so-called left-wing Sellarsian and “Pittsburgh School” camp; this is a natural progression, given the well-documented and analyzed confluence between Heidegger and Wittgenstein. Nonetheless, the sole scholarship any of these philosophers have produced that *directly* compares Heidegger and Sellars is Rouse (in press) “What are Heidegger and Sellars Up to?”

personally without any comparable default standing.

Hence, Heidegger and Sellars each proffer a central role to the holistic capacity for understanding. With Sellars, this is articulated of meaning holism vis-à-vis conceptual role semantics (CRS).<sup>4</sup> Many CRS theorists stake that understanding the meaning of an expression from resources one is not explicitly aware of involves translating this expression into an expression constructed from resources one does use (Sellars, 1962; Quine, 1953, 1960; Davidson, 1973; Field, 2001).<sup>5</sup> For Sellars (1969), specifically, to understand intentional states we need an understanding of speech acts in terms of *speech act meaning*; as such, the meanings of expressions of a symbol-system (e.g., a language), but also the meanings of contents of mental states, are determined and/or explained by the role of the expressions/mental states in thinking. Sellars' CRS hence commits him to rejecting the idea that thoughts have any *intrinsic* given content which is prior to/ predates the use of concepts in thought.

Insofar as Heidegger's holism and social externalism is concerned, this is evident in the social construction of rule-following in Heidegger's conception of normativity. Heidegger's conception of the normativity of "*the they*" (*das Man*) commits him to the idea that our attitude contents (beliefs, intentions, etc.) depend essentially on the norms of our

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<sup>4</sup> According to conceptual role semantics (CRS), the nature of meaning is functional. Jerry Fodor famously argued that all concepts are innate on the ground that to learn a word, one must learn its definition; according to Fodor, however, there are very few definitions that are anything other than translations into another language of the same expressive power; therefore, the language of thought must come equipped with translations of most English words (Fodor and Lepore 1992). Many have found the conclusion hard to accept, for how could evolution have provided us with innate concepts? Thus it is an advantage of CRS that it allows one to overcome this argument by opening space for an alternative to (1): one can learn a word by learning to use it, independently of any definition. See:

<http://www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/philo/faculty/block/papers/ConceptualRoleSemantics.html>. Accessed April 10, 2121.

<sup>5</sup> Gilbert Harman notes that:

This might suggest treating "'Nichts' means nothing" to a first approximation as a variant of "'Nichts' is best translated into my system as 'nothing'." Let us call proposals that try to explain meaning statements (of the form 'e means m') in terms of translation translational accounts of meaning statements. Various worries might be raised about such accounts. It might be objected that the suggested treatment can be shown to fail by comparing the translations into French of "'Nichts' means nothing" and "'Nichts' is best translated into my system as 'nothing'". Sellars (1962) responds by rephrasing the proposal using "dot-quotation," where "'nothing.'" is used to specify a type of expression that can appear in any language, categorized by its use in its language. Field (2001) notes that ordinary quotation often functions like Sellars' dot quotation". (Harman 2005: 5)



social environments (SZ 169). As articulated via Heidegger's verbiage, "distantiality" is understood as Dasein's agitation/discomfort with the way in which it differs from others. This differing is what Heidegger terms "distance" (*Abstand*). Beginning with one's youth, Dasein is concerned with ways in which it differs from others, and Dasein seeks to minimize its differentiation from others. This is not always entirely successful, and there is deviance. But deviance often finds itself corrected by the normalization of behavior by others, which is due to the tendency towards minimizing difference; this creates social conformity. These corrections results in the *standards* to which Dasein is to conform, and this upholds measure(s) of differentiation. These corrections come in different phenomena (e.g., "distantiality," "subjection," "averaging out," "leveling down") but the general pattern is of normalized comportment, and all the phenomena which constitute it make up what Heidegger terms *das Man*. "*The they*" is itself a pattern of "comportment," a way of "being-in-the-world"—that is, it is a way in which someone participates in normalized practices. Heidegger's holism is thus social, as for Heidegger participation is never some neutral activity, for it always simultaneously both entails living in accordance with normalized social norms *and* enforcing them. "*Das man*" suggests the impersonality of the phenomenon—normalized behavior is not tailored to any one person, but applies to all. Like Sellars, Heidegger locates the constitutive conditions of intentionality in the world, rather than simply in our heads (Carman 136). However, contra Sellars' naturalism—which is tethered to the analysis of intentional states vis-à-vis (third-person) speech acts—Heidegger does not take as granted any specialized descriptions of the external world drawn from the natural sciences. Instead, on Heidegger's account, the (social) world has authority over the contents of our intentional attitudes, but this social world cannot be reduced to the physical world itself. The social world is understood as the world of human customs, institutions, and beliefs as they are made accessible to us by our ordinary shared normative standards of intelligibility.

This is not to suggest that Heidegger's account is denuded of attention to speech-acts—quite the opposite. For Heidegger, understanding the being of entities is a condition for any and all encounters with entities *as entities*; thus, Heidegger calls understanding an *existentiale*. And any interpretation of something *as something* includes the linguistic assertions that point out and communicate about entities in any definite way, which always presupposes some more fundamental and unexplicated conception of understanding. But, indeed, there are substantial differences insofar as understanding and language are concerned—first and foremost, Sellars talks about understanding as conceptual, whereas Heidegger resists this term. Nonetheless, what is most important is that Heidegger and Sellars do both take a holistic capacity to understand the being of entities, or to understand things conceptually, as differentiating human beings as sapient

beings, distinct from other non-human animals (despite apparent continuities). Consider, for instance, that Heidegger (1983/1992) characterizes non-human animal life as “world-poor”, where “world” amounts to the whole interrelated nexus of significance within which various entities and projects make sense. The early Sellars similarly allows that we can productively “explain [animal] behavior by ascribing to them beliefs, desires, expectations, etc., but, and this is a key point, we invariably find ourselves qualifying these explanations in terms which would amount, in the case of a human subject, to the admission that he wasn’t really thinking, believing, desiring, etc.” (ITM, 527). The later Sellars (1981a) allows for the explanatory attribution of representational structures and even propositional attitudes to other animals for the purposes of cognitive science, although he nevertheless continues to insist upon a critical distinction between these representational systems and those which also have the capacities to use logic so as to formulate rules or norms that reflexively govern its own operations (MEV).<sup>6</sup> For Sellars, these latter systems, and only such systems, are capable of genuinely conceptual thinking.

Having outlined some points of confluence and difference between Sellars and Heidegger’s general systems, we are now prepared to see how they apply their systems to Kant’s Schematism. In what follows, we will first work through the Schematism section of the *Transcendental Analytic*, and then consider Heidegger and Sellars approaches. We will then conclude by dovetailing their accounts, considering what lessons both philosophers’ critical appraisal of Kant might offer for purposing systematic Kantian critique of representationalism.

## II

In the Schematism section, Kant describes the correspondence between the forms of intuition and the categories of the understanding in accordance with two mathematical paradigms, distinguishing between two kinds of “magnitudes” (A161/B200). The first is *space* as the form of “outer sense,” comprising the *physical* reality of objects that affect the mind ‘from without’, measured as *extended magnitudes*, and corresponding to the category of Quantity in the *Axioms of Intuition* and made explicit by (Euclidean) geometry. The second is *time* as the form of “inner sense, comprising the

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<sup>6</sup> Following Sellars’ account in EPM, there are two kinds of nonlinguistic creatures. There are some who are not humans, i.e., non-human animals, who are thought by Sellars not to use language even if they have some measure of signaling that is communicative and thus something that functions analogous to language. The other kind of nonlinguistic creature is a human being at a very young age. For Sellars, people are not born, much less conceived, as having language-use. Language has to be learned, and the kind of creatures that we are are geared to learning language easily and readily.

*psychological* flux of sensations that affect the mind ‘from within,’ measured as *intensive magnitudes*, corresponding to the category of Quality in the *Anticipations of Perception*, made explicit by arithmetic.

For Kant, I consciously represent a line if I apprehend it segment-by-segment under the form of time, i.e., successively. In his discussion of extensive and intensive magnitudes, Kant argues that although we can represent qualities, e.g., redness, through an "instantaneous" apprehension all "at once," we have to apply a "successive apprehension" for the representation of extended spaces and times. While we may spatially intuit a triangle "at once", through this intuition we do not yet *perceive* the triangle as a spatially extended figure—extended magnitudes are represented by successively adding a basic measure over time (A164/B204; A167/B209). In addition to spatial intuition, the perception of outer objects for Kant constitutively involves the differentiation of spatial segments and motions, and involves both apprehension and self-affection. This division entails the dimensions of space and time, the “forms of inner and outer sense”, respectively. All intuited ‘individuals’ appear to the subject already as spatially extended, localized in space, and numerically individuated in accordance with the principles of geometry. The qualitative depth of space and the qualities that “fill” space consists of a psychological dimension of intensive magnitudes, quantized in terms of “degrees of reality,” corresponding to arithmetic as formalizing the chronological structure of time as succession:

In all appearances, the real that is the object of sensation has intensive magnitude, that is, a degree...[e]very color, as for instance red, has a degree which, however small it may be, is never the smallest; and so with heat, the moment of gravity, etc.  
(A166-A169/B202-B207)

Kant here takes sensations to be caused by something real in bodies—colors are sensations, caused by bodies, and explicable by rationalist science. This is precisely why, despite being sensations, they are not imaginary/false. While colors are subjective and relative to individuals, they are not to be reduced to color-sensations or imaginary sensations because. Judgment is what allows for the application of this rationalist science. As such, the intensive ordering of psychological being and extensive ordering of physical being are implicitly at work in intuition before the subordination of sensibility to concepts in judgment, and before mathematical knowledge is acquired. This conformity between the understanding and the objects given by intuition requires further analysis. Where does this primitive “ordering” come from, if it is neither the activity of the understanding in judging, nor a purely passive reception of unformed data in the sensory manifold? Which “faculty” is responsible for being the lawgiver here? There must be, Kant argues, a “mediating representation” that is at once sensory and intellectual, defined by its

“homogeneous” distribution across the two faculties. This is the role that Kant assigns to the transcendental imagination, (*facultas imaginandi; Einbildungskraft*), involving the operations of the “schematism.”

... there must be a third thing, which must stand in homogeneity with the category [concept] on the one hand and the appearance [intuited object] on the other, and makes possible the application of the former to the latter. This mediating representation must be pure (without anything empirical) and yet intellectual on the one hand and sensible on the other. Such a representation is the transcendental schema. (A138/B177)

These mediating representations entail that intuition is already active, “guiding” the subject by coordinating it to its environment. The imagination presupposes and acts upon the manifold of pure intuition, as what is given without form by sensibility in its purely passive dimension.

The first thing that must be given to us *a priori* for the cognition of all objects is the **manifold** of pure intuition; the **synthesis** of this manifold by means the imagination is the second thing, but it still does not yield cognition. The concepts that give this pure synthesis **unity**, and that consist solely in the representation of this necessary synthetic unity, are the third thing necessary for cognition of an object that comes before us, and they depend on the understanding. (A79/B105)

The labor of the imagination supposes an originary synthesis, more primitive than that between sensibility and the understanding in judgment, but more developed than the barren reception of sense-data. Insofar as it conforms to the categories of the understanding, the imagination involves something an originary, *proto-conceptual* unifying function, which suggests that the understanding must itself contribute to its activity. Yet while it organizes the data of sensibility prior to judgment, it already orients the subject prior to overt conceptualization.

In the A-Deduction, the spontaneity of the transcendental imagination is defined as a threefold power of *synthesis*, following the pure receptivity of what Kant names the *synopsis* of the sensory manifold: “If therefore I ascribe a synopsis to sense, because it contains a manifold in its intuition, a synthesis must always correspond to this, receptivity can make cognitions possible only if combined with spontaneity” (A97). This threefold power of synthesis corresponds to the three subjective ‘sources’ of all empirical knowledge: *perception*, *imagination*, and *apperception*. First, the pure *synthesis of apprehension* in intuition guides the individuation of the sensory manifold into a consistent “image” (*Bilde*) or unified representation (A97), thereby giving form to the formless [*Enbildung*] (A120). In its pure or transcendental deployment, it is rooted in time *qua* form of inner sense (A115). Second, the *syntheses of reproduction* by the imagination conditions the association

of distinct representations across divergent moments, conditioning the unity and relations bestowed by the mind to appearances as objects in time. It is on the basis of this power of association that the reproductive imagination makes possible the empirical recollection of an object that is no longer before the senses, the capacity to keep track of an object as it changes across time or as it disappears from view, as well as the capacity to anticipate an object in sight of another. The associations between intuited representations drawn by the imagination in its empirical use must already belong to the constitution of appearances themselves. For if sensory intuition provided no consistency or regularity, the mind could never learn to anticipate or bind representations corresponding to different objects, or even be able to track the development of a singular object and its parts that subsist across time across changes.

[I]f cinnabar was sometimes red, sometimes red and sometimes black, sometimes heavy and sometimes light... I would never have the opportunity to associate - i.e. my imagination would never have the occasion to associate - the heavy cinnabar with the colour red.

But if I were always to drop out of thought the preceding representations (the first parts of the line, the antecedent parts of the time period, or the units in the order represented), and did not reproduce them while advancing to those that follow, a complete representation would never be obtained: none of the above-mentioned thoughts, not even the purest and most elementary representations of space and time, could arise (A101-102/B129)

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, intuitions would yield no unity *as* representations (A101). The syntheses of apprehension must thus be considered indissociable from those of the imagination, and must presuppose the latter. For insofar as the imagination provides the conditions for the representation of objects in time, it conditions even the possibility of any empirical perception of 'images.' This is the *transcendental* role of the *productive* imagination which underwrites its empirical, reproductive use. It 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 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).

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. 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).

For in me they can represent something only in so far as they belong with all others to one consciousness, and therefore must be at least capable of being so connected [...] This synthetic unity presupposes or includes a synthesis, and if the former is to be a priori necessary, the synthesis must also be a priori. The transcendental unity of apperception thus relates to the pure synthesis of imagination, as an a priori condition of the possibility of all combination of the manifold in one knowledge [...] Thus the principle of the necessary unity of pure (productive) synthesis of imagination, prior to apperception, is the ground of the possibility of all knowledge, especially of experience. (A116)

The associative powers of the reproductive imagination supposes that appearances themselves exhibit an orderly connection. Similarly, 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 exhibit an orderly connection *in accordance with* the categories of the understanding, which the latter make explicit i.e. 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, between inferential relations in the logical order and lawful correlations between appearances in the material order. Such empirical correspondences suppose thus the transcendental correlation between the “I think” and the object (“X”) that grounds the unity of apperception, i.e. that objects and their relations can be represented diachronically in experience. 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)

What is it, in virtue of which we represent an outer object as something which is temporally determinate and stable? It necessarily involves our inner representing of an object's representation, with the relevant representational state taken as corresponding to temporal relations and other representations/states in us. To represent some object as a particular kind of object means representing one's present intuition of this object as standing in determinate temporal relations to other representations. Hence, to represent something as some  $S$  at time  $t$  means to represent one's present intuition of this  $S$  as continuous to  $S_{t-1}$  and  $S_{t+1}$ . To represent any object as of a particular kind means representing one's current, actual intuition as being of the same object as a non-actual but possible simultaneous intuition of it from a different spatial perspective.

The concept of an empirical object tracks the intuitively given features of the world. For example, the concept of 'redness' tracks *intuitively given redness*. There is to some extent a non-problematic homogeneity at play here. The intuitively given features of the world are the features that my empirical concepts latch on to. To the extent that my empirical concept 'red' has generality and a certain logical signature, it fits into judgment, which intuitions by themselves do not have. That which the concept takes up is an intuition. There is a certain 'fit' between intuitions and concepts. This 'fit' obtains because intuitions are products of syntheses—a bunch of sensory features are synthesized into an intuition. As such, this synthesis involves apprehension in intuition, which includes the dual act of *Durchlaufen* and *Zusammennehmung*: running through and holding together (A99). This synthesis is a temporal action, evinced with the threefold synthesis: if I do not run through the manifold of a given intuition in time, it would be an absolute unity for me. Furthermore, I would never be able to form a conceptual thought from it. Thus, it is only because it is given to me with my *form* of intuition that can I *create* intuitions. This fact makes intuitions somewhat homogenous with any type of conceptual cognition, because both cognitions and intuitions are products of synthesis—the synthetic activity of the mind is presupposed in both. Kant can thus suppose that, at the most basic level, concepts and intuitions share a certain amount of structural similarity.

It is critical here to underscore that schemata are rules. Thus, I cannot express how to do anything in a concept—a concept, for Kant, is a hierarchical genus-species structure, and to instruct one *how* to apply a concept to an object requires a rule/schemata. The concept figures in a judgment, which has the structure of an 'S is P' or 'Fx' proposition. As such, concepts are cognitively meaningful in judgment-structures. To see how judgment has reference to a sensibly given object requires an actual object

in the world. Hence, the "third thing" Kant speaks of is the transcendental rule or judgment itself (B177). The transcendental schema is well suited to be this "third thing" because it is intellectual, like the categories, and sensible, like intuition. This schema solves a problem unsolved and implicit by the end of §26 of the B-Deduction—this question concerns the intuitions of space and time, which are pure images tailored to the requirements of experience, as laid down by the categories. How are these pure images produced? The Transcendental Deduction did not address this query but solely told us that these pure images involve a synthesis carried out by the imagination and that this synthesis must conform to the synthetic unity of pure apperception, the objectively valid (*objektiv gültig*, i.e., holds for all of us) formal principle of the understanding which secures the relation between our sensible representations and an object and holds for all of us. Kant notes that the "concept of the understanding contains pure synthetic unity of the manifold in general" (B178/A139), a result of the Deduction. The concept of the understanding, meaning any one of the categories, is a form of synthesis of the manifold in general. Time, the form of intuition in inner sense (since all of our representations are stretched out in time)—and thus the formal condition of the manifold in inner sense—contains an a priori manifold in pure intuition. The kind of synthetization that my categorial concepts govern is itself a form of structuring representations in time. This condition is central for Heidegger and for Sellars.

### III

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, as I would 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 schema. The 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 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 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 (A138–139=B177–178). 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’ (A144–145/B183–184). 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. The 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. And this is precisely what inspires Heidegger, in *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik* (hereafter: *KPM*), to associate Kant’s account of imagination with the problem of human finitude.

Heidegger tells us that Kant is to be credited for interrogating the demands of metaphysics to a degree found in no philosopher before or after him, as he was the first to see the “abyss”, or finitude, to which thinking leads in its search for a ground (KPM 161). For Heidegger, the propaedeutic task of “laying the ground of metaphysics” and

assigning it to pure reason leads to the crisis of the critical project. For Heidegger, this occurs as Kant's account of the faculties approaches the "mysterious" power called "the transcendental imagination," in which the articulation between thinking and sensing becomes obscure. For Heidegger, Kant sets a limit with "the unknown," not only in the transcendent limit of noumenal exteriority but also *within* experience, therein limiting the possibility of knowing. Kant thus makes a mistake as it is at this point that Kant turns away, Heidegger tells us, where he should not have; and in turning away, Kant assimilates the mysterious workings of the imagination back into the understanding:

In the radicalism of his questions, Kant brought the "possibility" of metaphysics to this abyss. He saw the unknown. He had to shrink back. It was not just that the transcendental power of imagination frightened him, but rather that in between [the two editions] pure reason as reason drew him increasingly under its spell. (118)

For Heidegger, the encounter with the unknown/finitude threatens not only the system of judgment that animated Kant's representational account of experience but also ruins the very possibility of transcendental grounding, which reconstituted the scientific and foundationalist prospects of philosophy since the neo-Kantian project of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century, up to the phenomenological project inaugurated by Husserl and extended in *Sein und Zeit* (*SZ*). This critique is related to Heidegger's broader project with the existential analytic of Dasein in *SZ*, where Heidegger distinguishes between (a) what is thought within an "ontic" register, in terms of those individual entities which comprise the world of "things," and (b) the *being* of what is thought as such. This is what Heidegger calls *the ontological difference* between *being* and *beings*: being is not *a* being, and any attempt to think of being *qua* being as a thing confuse the modalities under which being is disclosed to experience as beings, and the "being of beings," as such.

It is thus the very attempt to conceive of the in-itself in positive terms, in analogy with the subjective and objective structures of experience, as Kant does, however minimally, which already transgresses the limits of finitude. Heidegger's accusation is that Kant transgresses what he sees as a limit-condition and, more broadly, centers the subject's structure rather than the structure outside the structure. Hence, in §23 of *SZ*, Heidegger contests that the subjective "feeling" incarnated in the body is a sufficient condition for orientation in the "world" and, citing Kant's 1786 *Was heißt: sich im Denken orientieren*, Heidegger maintains that "through the mere feeling of a difference of the two sides of my body' I could never find myself in a world." Heidegger here underscores that Kant's transcendental investigation misses the "existential constitution of the In-der-Welt-sein" (1927, 109). Heidegger responds to Kant by showing that the most original condition for orientation does not lie within the subject but, instead, in the structure of being-in-the-world.

Given that one of Heidegger's central aims is undoing Cartesian mind-body dualism, this idea of human existence as being-in-the-world is in contrast to traditional inner-outer dichotomies, including Kant's inner/outer sense, and objects of appearance/thing-in-itself. Albeit Dasein originally and linguistically entails spatial reference, Heidegger also notes that being-in-the-world involves an openness to "being" mediated by the human embodied, worldly, and temporal condition. One even finds this connection in Heidegger's late *Zollikoner Seminare*, in which the idea of *Leib* or lived body is opposed to the inheritance of Cartesian dualism in contemporary psychology reflected in the mechanistic notion of the body/*Körper* (Nuzzo 2008: 349 n.39). Given Heidegger's claim that "the body is the necessary, though not sufficient condition for relations (to the world)" (1987b, 204, 207, 220, 232–235), he places Kant's transcendental view of embodiment and the finitude of our knowledge in terms of the ontic-ontological difference (Dallmayr 1993: 240–241).

Thus, for Heidegger, while the ontic individuation of everything that appears is said to be reference-dependent on Dasein's sense-endowing intentional acts and its 'compartments,' the being of these entities is said to be radically sense and reference-independent from all intentional acts. To elide the radical autonomy of being with respect to its modes of appearing would be to conflate the two sides of the ontological difference, and to postulate the possibility of reference independence between entities and their conditions of sense ("modes of disclosure"), falling into the trap of modeling the in-itself on the conditions of sense. However, the claim that being-in-itself cannot be even conceived as determined in analogy (or isomorphy) to the conditions of sense under which objective being is disclosed is premised on a kind of representational nihilism. Heidegger's mistake is to assume 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. And indeed, even if specific conditions of sense mediate not only our cognitive compartments when referring to objects and their properties through discursive means, but to the entire network of practical significances by virtue of which we interact with entities in "circumspect" activity, as Heidegger argues, it would still not follow that the existence of entities depends on the conditions of experience or the acts of experiencing subjects.

Putting this to the side, in *KPM*, Heidegger notes that Kant introduces a proto-analytic of Dasein by revealing conditions of our finitude, i.e., the role played by the productive imagination in mediating between human sensibility and the requirements of our finite understanding. Yet for Heidegger, Kant's pure intuition is always and necessarily receptive and passive, and invests the transcendental imagination of all active function. Heidegger takes note that Kant's revision in the B-Deduction clarifies the way

that the organization of appearances by the imagination correspond to concepts. He thus describes the *understanding* as the source of all synthesis, both in the sensory manifold (figurative synthesis, *synthesis speciosa*) and between concepts (intellectual synthesis, *synthesis intellectualis*) such that the productive imagination concerns the structuration of the former *in accordance with* the latter: the transcendental synthesis of the imagination is “an effect of the understanding on intuition,” one that acts “in accordance with the categories.”

Now since all of our intuition is sensible, the imagination, on account of the subjective condition under which alone it can give a corresponding intuition to the concepts of understanding, belongs to sensibility; but insofar as its synthesis is still an exercise of spontaneity [...] the imagination is to this extent a faculty for determining sensibility a priori, and its synthesis of intuitions, in accordance with the categories, must be the transcendental synthesis of the imagination, which is an effect of the understanding on sensibility and its first (and at the same time the ground of all others) to objects of the intuition that is possible us. (B152)

And yet, qualifying the scope of the transcendental deduction to the realm of possible experience, Kant reckons that, “before” the imagination acts as an emissary of the understanding on intuition, the latter must be given to the subject, without us being able to determine how this takes place (B145). According to Heidegger, Kant’s deduction of the categories determines the scope of their application to the forms of intuition, such that we cannot determine *why* we must experience the world in such a way (B146). In this way, Heidegger argues, Kant’s transcendental enquiry is not only delimited to the realm of possible experience, but experience is circumscribed to the requirements of a transcendental *logic* under the authority of the understanding. It is by subordinating the figurative synthesis of thought to the conceptualizing and objectivizing activity of the understanding that, Heidegger argues, Kant’s critical “laying the ground” for metaphysics ultimately devolves in a metaphysics of the subject. Heidegger refers to Kant’s *Lectures on Metaphysics*, where the “forming power” (*bildene Kraft*) of the imagination is localized as part of a “Rational Psychology.” The tripartite, progressive constitution of the objective syntheses of apperception indexed to the imagination are thus correlated to the *subjective* constitution of inner sense, and thus to the three temporal dimensions of the present, past, and future. In this way, the imagination conditions any *succession* of instances within which entities *in time* *subsist* (180).

1. The faculty of taking a likeness [*Abbildung*], the representations of which are of the present time: *facultas formandi*.
2. The faculty of reproduction [*Nachbildung*], the representations of which are of a past time: *facultas imaginandi*.

3. The faculty of prefiguration [*Vorbildung*], the representations of which are of a future time: *facultas praevidenti*. (122)

Heidegger's framework reiterates the structure of a metaphysics of presence as part of what Heidegger names 'now-time,' wherein temporal modalities are considered as modifications of the present. The future is conceived as a 'now-not-yet' and the past as a 'now-no-longer.' If Heidegger is correct, in transposing the activity of the understanding to the imagination, Kant not only reifies the categorial framework of substance metaphysics into a metaphysics of the subject, but the latter turns out to infiltrate the forms of intuition. Furthermore, behind the sequential distribution of time in its three modalities from the purview of the present, the imagination is apparently the *a priori* condition for the form of presence as such, which unifies all representations. This is what Heidegger names "primordial time," revealed by the imagination and the real condition for the syntheses of now-time and for the *passing* of presence.

Pure intuition can form the pure succession of the now-sequence only if, in itself, it is imagination as that which forms, reproduces, and anticipates. Although, on the ordinary plane of experience where "we take account of time," we must consider it to be a pure succession of nows, this succession by no means constitutes primordial time. On the contrary, the transcendental imagination as that which lets time as the now-sequence spring forth is—as the origin of the latter—primordial time. (Heidegger KPR: 181)

This is the pivotal point at which Heidegger detects a recoil in Kant's critical method before the "abyss" of primordial time, which apparently incurs Kant to retreat into pure "reason". For Heidegger, this means that Kant subordinates transcendental enquiry to the requirements of transcendental logic and, as such, that Kant was incapable of carrying through the aim of a "subjective deduction". Because this mystery of "primordial time" was beyond the reach of Kant's purported transcendental Anthropology and Psychology, Kant assimilated the formative function of the imagination to the understanding in order to save pure reason (KPR: 117).<sup>7</sup>

How is the baser faculty of sensibility also to be able to constitute the essence of reason? Does not everything fall into confusion if the lowest takes the place of the highest? What is to happen with the venerable tradition, according to which Ratio and Logos have claimed the central function in the history of metaphysics? Can the primacy of Logic fall? Can the architectonic of the laying of the ground for metaphysics in general, the division into Transcendental Aesthetic and Logic, still be upheld if what it

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<sup>7</sup> As Heidegger notes, the Transcendental Deduction had to be at once Objective ["*objektive*"] and Subjective, that is, as pertaining to the operation of the faculty of thinking itself. See KPM, 116.

has for its theme is basically to be the transcendental power of imagination? Will not the *Critique of Pure Reason* have deprived itself of its own theme if pure reason reverts to the transcendental power of imagination? Does not this ground-laying lead us to an abyss? In the radicalism of his questions, Kant brought the possibility of metaphysics to this abyss. He saw the unknown. He had to shrink back. It was not just that the transcendental power of imagination frightened him, but rather that in between [the two editions] pure reason as reason drew him increasingly under its spell. (118)

Heidegger extols Kant's contextualization of judgment, praising that it is not solely the combining of concepts that is relevant in making judgments but that something else is involved—the intuition, i.e. the synthesis of a manifold of sensations. For Heidegger, Kant's analysis in terms of the fundamental principles of understanding brings to bear the “between” as a critical context for the inclusion of any thing in judgment (Engelland 2017: 157). Furthermore, Kant anticipates Heidegger by situating rationalism, with its coeval “dogmatism” within its limits and context. Nevertheless, Heidegger's critiques are quite pointed: despite Kant's view of judgment makes a significant advancement, it also remains subject to the dominance of thought, specifically insofar as Kant's conception of judgment—and Kant's transcendental idealism *tout court* fails to grasp history, exacting an improper, and rationalistic-cum-dogmatist disjunction between “being and thought.” For Heidegger, the proposition of judgment, “traced back to the between, ultimately rests on the fundamental disposition granted in history” is to exact a “determination” (*Bestimmung*), which requires initially being determined and disposed by history's “fundamental disposition” (*Grundstimmung*) (ibid.; Heidegger 1989: 391/273).<sup>8</sup>

The Heideggerian “corrective” to Kant consists in freeing temporality from chronological time, and with it the representational correlation between the subject and the object which grounds apperception. The existential analytic of Dasein thus pursues the analytic task by tracing the conditions of intentional disclosure to its pre-representational state. This involves the practical bases of Dasein's being-in-the-world pursuing the “progress of the existential ontology which begins with the analysis of everydayness and [which] takes aim solely at the working-out of the unity in the transcendental primal structure of the finitude of Dasein in human beings” (KPM 165). Heidegger's corrective privileges the present for representational cognition, revealing the primacy of the future in the circumspect activity of Dasein's being-in-the-world. Moreover, it attempts to carve out the possibility of a transcendental deductive schema

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<sup>8</sup> In a 1961 lecture, Heidegger demonstrates that he still thinks Kant puts thought in essential relation to intuition, although Heidegger no longer suggests Kant subordinates thought to intuition (459/347).

of temporality from time, and no longer pursue a subjective deduction in which time would correspond to the categories of the pure understanding. But is Heidegger correct in his critique of Kant's Schematism and conception of imagination?

In §24 of the B-Deduction, Kant calls the aforementioned *synthesis speciosa*—in particular, the synthesis of a manifold of sensible intuition—“figurative” in order to distinguish it from the “intellectual” synthesis carried out by the understanding through the categories “with respect to the manifold of an intuition as such” (B151). For Kant, image-formation—even when carried out a priori—is not equivalent to understanding. This is because, contra understanding, no image has logical structure for Kant and, more importantly, imagination and understanding do not operate independently of one another. A manifold is an abstraction useful only for conceptually isolating the activity of the understanding in order to demonstrate its distinctive character. The manifold we actually receive is always of a specific kind—namely, the one given to us under the forms of human sensibility. The manifold undergoes synthesis by the understanding, but not without the help of the imagination. And, by the same token, the imagination never synthesizes a manifold of human intuition without the direction of the understanding. Kant characterizes the imagination by itself when he remarks on it as “blind function of the soul” of which we are seldom conscious (B103). We can here isolate the imagination as distinct from the understanding to “test” Heidegger's critique. We see that even when isolated, imagination still serves at the behest of the understanding—Kant remarks that the unity of apperception in relation to the synthesis of imagination is the understanding, and precisely the same unity, in relation to the transcendental synthesis of imagination, is the “pure understanding” (A119).

Here we have the “pure understanding” that Heidegger construes as an outgrowth of the imagination, which is itself the core faculty of cognition in human beings. The “pure understanding” is considered as that which mediates what seems initially to be an insuperable opposition between sensibility and understanding. On this view, to talk about the understanding as the source of legislation for nature disguises the indispensable work of the imagination (KPM, §17). However, Heidegger is mistaken here. For Kant neither says nor implies that the categories ultimately *come* from the imagination, nor that judgment as such is one of its activities. Rather, the categories and judging are distinctive contributions made *by* the (pure) understanding. The “pure understanding” (A119) is hence an artefact of the so-called “argument from above,”<sup>9</sup> carrying out the deduction of the categories from pure apperception.

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<sup>9</sup> The “Argument from Above” (A116-9) challenges the rationalist position that knowledge can be produced through the intellect alone.

If we were to proceed as Heidegger does, and call upon nothing but the respective characterizations of the synthesis of apprehension, the reproduction in the imagination, and the recognition of concepts, it is almost impossible to see how we can characterize the understanding except as Kant does at A119. But Kant enriches his conception in moving forward; indeed, as reflected by the Schematism's taking up the Deduction's problematic and driving it further, Kant's account of experience would not work without an account of the *graphic elements of understanding*. The imagination's role is to elaborate such an account—the unique feature of the productive imagination is that it mediates between sensibility and the understanding, and this is precisely why Kant says that we can have no knowledge unless the sensibility and understanding cooperate.

Heidegger's "return to Kant" was motivated on the aforementioned methodological crisis in the pursuit of a transcendental deduction, a crisis already perceptible in *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, i.e. the precarity phenomenological science had to face when showing how the temporal disclosure of beings as constitutive of Dasein's finite transcendence (*ekstasis*) was *deducible* from the being of time as such (*ekstema*). As Heidegger strives to show how the "temporality of our being-there" (*Zeitlichkeit des Dasein*) is to be transcendently derived from "time of being" (*Temporalität des Sein*), the resources of a transcendental method falter. More precisely, it is the untenability of securing a transcendental *deduction* in the attempts to describe how "primordial time" functions as the *real condition* from which not only chronological but 'existential' time was derived, that the resources of phenomenological *analysis* become voided. For how are we to think of primordial time, shorn from all categorial determination and formal ordering, untarnished by the metaphysically-laden endowments of the understanding? How can transcendental *logic* proceed in the absence of any determination which would suffice to generate a deductive schema for the conditions of experience from being? For Heidegger, phenomenological disclosure can not correspond to any discrete "image" or objective schema, to no entity or tool, to no comportment or facultative power. The crisis of the sciences that, according to Heidegger, was to be salvaged by phenomenological foundations now leads to the crisis of the transcendental itself, as it *ungrounds* itself in the void of being, and as such ceases to provide an epistemic footing for metaphysical enquiry.

Let us now turn to Sellars' "naturalized Kantianism," which attempts to avoid the metaphysical excess and skeptical consequences of transcendental philosophy, neither succumbing to the temptation of absolutizing the conditions of experience into the mechanisms of nature as a whole, nor relinquishing the project of positive epistemology. Sellars' task consists in identifying the generic logical constraints that govern the process through which empirical science progressively realizes the representational task to



describe and explain the categorial structure of spatio-temporal being, as part of a self-correcting enterprise through which knowing realizes itself diachronically.

#### IV

In *Science and Metaphysics*, Sellars describes the problematic coordination between the receptivity and spontaneity of the faculties. For just as sensible intuition turns out to have its own mode of productivity, so the understanding has its own mode of receptivity, as it synthesizes the endowments of sensibility (2). Sellars underscores Kant's attempt to negotiate between the faculties, where intuition provides the point of contact between mind and world. If in dislodging the transcendental imagination as a separate faculty in the first edition Kant made the source of intuition's spontaneous productivity mysterious, Sellars also notes the danger in the second edition where, assimilating the imagination to the understanding, Kant transfers this obscurity to the relation that *space* holds to *sensibility*. The "form of outer sense," which *individuates* the sensible belongs squarely to the spontaneity of thought, leads to the unwelcome conclusion that "[s]pace would seem to disappear from receptivity as such" (8). Thus, the "intensive magnitudes" that compose the pre-individuated sensory manifold are separated from spatial being, with the equally unwelcome conclusion that the material contents of our intuitions are no longer understood as having a *physical* nature, but rather 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. (KTE: 269).

For Sellars, 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. Kant is charged with making space a byproduct of the productive imagination, a case of the understanding functioning "in a special way"; as such, the relation of space to the sensible realm that serves as the "brute fact or constraining element of perceptual experience" becomes plainly unintelligible (9). While Sellars credits Kant for distinguishing the dimension of receptivity in the "radically non-conceptual character of sense," it is because in doing so Kant avoids assimilating the non-conceptual character of sensing to the conceptually mediated intuition of individuals, resisting 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)

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 even more primitively a proto-conceptual dimension that is prior to the subordination of particulars under universals in judgment. 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 *The Role of the Imagination in Kant's Theory of Experience*, 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.

The rule-bound formation of images by the transcendental imagination—viz., schematism—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 one 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"), and which finally concern the structuring of all representations in time *qua* form of inner sense (A142/B181).

Sellars critique is as follows. Attesting to its unconscious nature, Kant describes the schematism as a "blind" but originary "function of the soul" that provides the world of representation its objective ground (A94/A97, B127). It 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 (B184). While Kant's conception of the synthetic powers of the imaginations elucidates 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. According to Sellars, Kant's conception of intuition is confused between singular representations, which are conceptual, and the non-conceptual manifold of receptivity (1968: 3–7). Like Heidegger, Sellars falters here for this “confusion” arises solely if we fail to distinguish between the roles of sensation and intuition—however, Kant keeps these two apart (Allais 2015: 149).

Nevertheless, in separating the workings of the schematism from the imagination, Sellars argues, one must first distinguish between *perceptual takings* and *what is believed about what is perceptually taken* (IKTE 420). The former dimension specifies 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.” In this sense, intuited individuals are already *categorially* specific, even though they do not function by themselves as *universals* or general terms that subordinate particulars in judgment, lacking thus *grammatical* form.<sup>10</sup> The second dimension 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.”

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). Between these lies the gulf wherein the activity of the imagination reveals itself. While, in an episode of perceptual awareness, the “juiciness” of the apple may not *directly* be presented to the senses of the observer, it forms an “actuality” that is “not merely believed in”—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

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<sup>10</sup> “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)

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. 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 (SM 424). The empirical construction of these image-models specifies the schemas for localizing objects and can be thus 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. Schemas are understood *in accordance with* conceptual “recipes” that express an *algorithmic structure*, but no *syntactic* or *grammatical structure*. As such they lack categorial and logical form.

In short, we do not perceive of the object what might be called “categorial” features. For the image construct does not have categorial features. It has an empirical structure which we can specify by using words which stand for perceptible qualities and relations. But it does not have logical structure; notness, or-ness, allness, some-ness are not features of the image-model. They are features of judgment.” (SM: 463)

[T]he productive imagination is a unique blend of a capacity to form images *in accordance* with a recipe, and a capacity to conceive of objects in a way which *supplies* the relevant recipes. Kant distinguishes between the concept of a dog and the schema of a dog. The former together with the concept of a perceiver capable of changing his relation to his environment implies a family of recipes for constructing image models of perceiver-confronting-dog. (KPI: 424)

For Kant, the schematism produces a dynamic, continuously updated *model* for the construction and localization of objects in space and time, in coordination to perceivers. Thus, for Sellars, 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 imagination with that of the understanding’s 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, specifying 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? What Kant describes as a secret “art of the soul” in the imagination “visible” to us through discursive means.

Despite this mysterious nature, it is the imagination that preserves the rational ordering of appearances. In folding the imagination into the understanding in the second edition, the workings of the “soul” provides a presentation (*Darstellung*) of a mental whole in relation to which we can determine inner appearances, without cognizing the whole as such (Kraus 2020). Employed as an “analogue of a schema” (A665/B694), the idea of the soul substitutes for all those schemata that cannot be applied to inner appearances, outlining the domain in which inner experience can be operative as the empirical cognition of inner appearances. As Sellars puts it, this leads Kant to postulate absolutely basic and determinate ‘this-suches,’ which precisely correspond to the image-models of objects. For Sellars, this essentialized correlation between our qualitatively specific categorial determinations and non-categorially formed image-models reveals how, at the origin of synthesis that is the labor of the transcendental imagination, Kant not subordinates the latter to the understanding. This correlation models the transcendental application of the faculties on their empirical explicandum, reifying discursive determinations as foundational or “absolutely basic.” Hence, the schema for “perceiver-confronting-apple” is modeled on “*S* perceives that there is a red apple over there.”

The schematization of image-models of external objects that structure the intuition of those “individuals of experience” is modeled in analogy with empirical judgment—those “absolutely determinate basic this-suches” that shape the *categorially* determined *grammatical* subjects of our perceptual takings. As Sellars shows, this places Kant in proximity to Aristotelian abstractionism, hiding an empiricist excess and a residual essentialism affecting Kant’s account of perceptual consciousness:

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)<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Sellars’ appraisal is not necessarily fair, as Sellars elides Kant’s distinction of the different uses of the understanding, focusing instead on empirical use. According to Kant, the understanding “gives” (*gibt*) or “creates” (*schafft*) concepts, which are then employed as real predicates (A643/B671). Kant distinguishes two “real” uses of the understanding: a *transcendental* and *empirical* use (A296/B352). Given that Sellars’ project sidelines the transcendental in Kant, it is fair to say that he focuses on *empirical* use of the understanding, which must be exercised in light of sensible intuition (B128). And indeed, as Sellars realized, this involves the application of concepts to something real and, if legitimate, must be based on corresponding sensible intuitions. A category is applied to a sensible object by synthesizing the sensible world through which this object is “given” to the mind in accordance with the category. The resulting “intuition of an object is regarded as determined with regard to one of the logical functions of judgment” (B128). In turn, the categories gain sensible content in terms of the generic

As a result, even if the individuals furnishing the bedrock of our perceptual takings do not play an *epistemic* role outside of their occurrence in inference and judgment—insofar as they are grafted by the productive imagination by a set of implicit rules corresponding with the categories—they are *given* to us already in conceptual-categorical shape in perceptual experience. This leads Kant to an iteration of the myth of the categorial Given, which encompasses at once an ontological and an epistemological aspect: (1) the idea that intuited representings are *categorially structured*, and (2) that a direct *causal* rather than properly “epistemic” link holds between being directly conscious of something and being aware of something *as* something:

**(Myth of the Categorial Given)** If S is directly aware of an item *x* with categorial status C then S is directly aware that *x* has categorial status C. (Sellars 1981b, §45).

To reject the Myth of the given is to reject the idea that the categorial structure of the world—if it has a categorial structure—imposes itself on the mind as a seal imposes an image on melted wax. (EPM: §45)

For Sellars, this is the point in which we not only a residual *metaphysical essentialism* in the characterization of the forms of intuition, and also a residual *epistemic foundationalism*

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spatio-temporal properties of objects they define. Employing the categories as rules of synthesis then results in real determination (*reale Bestimmungen*) of objects of experience; the “real” use determines real properties that are judged to be instantiated in objects as determined. Similarly, the application of an empirical concept as a real predicate to an object given in intuition consists in synthesizing the corresponding sensible manifold in accordance with the empirical concept and, if successful, results in recognizing that the object instantiates this concept; by reflecting the object of my current perception under the concept <ball>, I examine whether the object instantiates the marks that are contained in the concept, such as marks that are expressed by the partial concepts <spherical> and <able to bounce>. But Sellars’ diagnoses fails to appreciate Kant’s careful distinction between objects of mere thought and objects of possible experience, collapsing the former into the latter objects of empirical cognition. But, we ought to note that Kant also thought that through logical predication we determine an object of thought, which Kant calls a “logical something” (L-MP/L<sub>2</sub> 28:644) and an *ens rationis* (A292/B348). Through real predication based on corresponding empirical intuitions, we determine an object of empirical cognition as something empirically real (Bxxviii). The determination of an object of thought requires only logical possibility, in terms of a judgment that is conceivable without contradiction, but it does not require that the possibility of its “real” instantiation be proven. Thus, a judgment about a unicorn could be a perfectly fine determination of a “logical something” (or *ens rationis*), even if it has no real instantiation; compare this to a judgment about a square circle, which would not even be about a “logical something”, but instead be a “logical nothing” (*nihil negativum*) (see: A290-292/B346/349).

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.”

## V

Having analyzed the role of the imagination according to Sellars and Heidegger, let us now take stock. We are now in a better position to assess Kant’s relapse into a metaphysically loaded conception of the transcendental, continuous with residual epistemological foundationalism of the sort that Sellars criticizes under the title “*the myth of the given*”. This relapse is operative at different levels within the representational theory of experience, including the characterization of the noumenal exterior, the characterization of the forms of intuition and the schematism of the imagination, the categorial account of judgment, and the unity of apperception. For Heidegger, the subordination of transcendental philosophy to the requirements of a logic infiltrates the way that the tripartite “formative powers” (*bildende Kraft*) of the productive imagination subordinate the form of time to the requirements of a *logic*, within the scope of a “Rational Psychology”. For Heidegger, the *apprehension* (*Abbildung*), *reproduction* (*Nachbildung*), and *anticipation* (*Vorbildung*) which orient the schematism comprises subordination of temporality to presence, as part of what Heidegger names “now-time.” As Kant assimilates the imagination to the understanding, so the pure power of the imagination as the temporal structuring of appearances as “primordial time” becomes mystified as via metaphysical reflection.

Sellars emphasizes that, in conceiving time as the form of “inner sense,” the sensory manifold becomes interpreted as a field of purely “intensive magnitudes,” whose psychological nature become are problematically connected to physical space. The corrective proposed by Sellars can be understood as follows: to claim that there is a non-conceptual dimension in sensory receptivity is not to claim that sensory episodes must be conceptually unintelligible, or incommensurate to a vocabulary specifying the physical structure of space:

That the idea that visual perception always involves minimal conceptual representations is false does not, I believe, need to be argued. On the other hand, the idea that visual perception always involves sense impressions properly described by a special use of a minimal physical vocabulary does seem to me eminently capable of defense, once the confusion of sense impressions with the minimal conceptual representations which do occur in extremely guarded perception has been overcome. (SM: 15)

In explaining the coordination between the forms of intuition as part of a naturalized transcendental framework, Sellars refuses to model development on the synthetic powers

of the transcendental subject, while also denying the Platonist solution of abstracting ontology and phenomenology from sensibility and space *qua* structures of experience. Implicit in both accounts is Kant's inadequate treatment of space. For in separating the receptivity of sensibility from the structuring of space by the imagination under the understanding, Kant apparently reifies a particular conception of physical being in particular and of natural science in general, which universalizes the *theoretically* contingent and empirical postulates of Euclidean geometry and Newtonian mechanics as transcendental constants. In other words, Kant does not seem sufficiently sensitive to the difference between synthetic *a priori* truths insofar as they purport to track *the invariant conditions of our spatio-temporal experience*, and what Hans Reichenbach famously referred to as "framework principles," which furnish the *base assumptions* of any given scientific *theory*, and which determine how empirical data is to be understood in each case as theory-laden. As a result, Kant fails to distinguish between the *structures of experience*, which include the cognitive conditions *for* theorization, and a *theory of experience* that attempts to make explicit these transcendental structures. Kant thus blurs the lines between the empirical and transcendental in thinking of natural science as closed historically.

The conflation of empirical theories with transcendental constitution, in fact, infiltrates for Heidegger the core of Kant's account of synthesis: despite the attempt to "ground" metaphysics, the different modes of transcendental synthesis that Kant postulated are extrapolated from empirical instances, once more under the requirements of a logic, in a psychologistic framework. What Heidegger shows is that this issue concerns the perils of securing a transcendental deduction which would suffice to ground empirical knowledge in the temporal unity of the subject. For Kant does not only inflect an essentialist metaphysics into the activity of the understanding with the categories within a 'system of judgment'. As we have seen, Kant's correlation between intuition and thinking can only be secured insofar as the forms of intuition themselves become imbued with a productivity that proceeds "in accordance with" the categories, as expressed in the proto-conceptual "image-forming" powers of the transcendental imagination, operating as a surrogate for the understanding. The intellectual spontaneity of the subject guides the schematization of time and space, as the articulation of the sensory manifold into representations.

However, correcting the inadequate treatment of time and space in relation to the activity of the subject does not necessitate simply interrupting the metaphysical reification of presence in our conceptions of time, as Heidegger insists. And it doesn't consist in merely replacing a Euclidean notion of space and Newtonian mechanics by, for example, a non-Euclidean geometry and Quantum Mechanical understanding of spacetime, which would only once more proceed by reifying an empirical and theoretical



framework. Sellars takes us further than Heidegger here, as a post-Kantian realist-cum-representationalist metaphysics involves making explicit the epistemic logic of revision through which conceptual and theoretical cognition progressively make explicit the structure of the forms of intuition. This means conceiving of thinking itself as a self-correcting enterprise, in which the historical development of empirical science progressively realizes reason's representational aspirations. Such a historicized naturalist alternative refuses the purely psychological status accorded to sensations, as well as temporalizing the conceptual activity of the understanding as it progressively makes explicit the structures of space and time in relation to scientific thought. 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, conceived as "effect" of the understanding on intuition.

It would be preemptive, however, to conclude that any representational account of experience must be destined to such metaphysical reification, or else have to relinquish aspirations for a transcendental logic. For Sellars, the development of empirical science disrupts the "myth of substance" as it revises its central postulates. While the transcendental specifies the invariant structures of experience, the intelligibility of these structures is accomplished through the realization of empirical enquiry. In conjunction with Kant's ahistorical conception of science in his account of the forms of intuition, by inflecting the categorial conception of being as substance into the functions of the understanding Kant's representational account of the schematism elides how reason makes itself explicit as a protocol for cognizing the world to which it belongs.

At the most general, the myth of the categorial given infiltrates the transcendental unity of apperception itself, describing the structural unity of the "I think" (transcendental subject) and the "X" of cognition (transcendental object) that subordinates thinking under the matrix of "conceptual identity." More generally, the transcendental stance generates a version of the myth of the categorial given apposite to the different variants of correlating the thought and representation. Kant here is guilty of taking epistemically foundational the dyad between the subject and the object in apperception.

Taken as a whole, the steps comprising the Kantian metaphysical relapse can be understood as diagnosing both a residual ontological dogmatism and epistemological foundationalism within the critical program: the *myth of substance* and the *myth of the given*, which specify the invariant forms of nature and subjectivity.<sup>12</sup> The extension of Sellars'

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<sup>12</sup> In developing with Sellars' prospects for a process-ontological idiom apposite to naturalism, Johanna Seibt explicitly targets the "Myth of Substance" as a direct metaphysical counterpart of

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. And while Kant was certainly right in 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. Heidegger provides a coeval insight which clarifies that 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 already in 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

In sum, the appropriation and correction of Kant proposed by Heidegger and Sellars allow us to distil three demands: (1) to avoid falling into an *ahistoricist picture of the thinking* that reifies contingent theoretical or empirical structures as necessary-transcendental ones; (2) to avoid falling into a *transcendental skepticism* according to which knowledge of the world as it is ‘in itself’ becomes impossible or unintelligible, risking a kind of psychologism that sets philosophy in “the slippery route to absolute idealism”; (3) to avoid falling into a kind of *Platonist subjectalism* that disavows representation at the price of transposing experiential structures onto nature writ large (c.f. Sacilotto 2020).

In response to these three demands, what Sellars’ reconstruction of Kant points toward, I will suggest below, can be summarized in three central theses: (a) we can liberate our theory of experience from the foundationalist and ahistorical assumptions that blur the lines between the empirical and transcendental, without compromising the attempt to investigate how the invariant structures of experience condition our knowledge of the world; (b) we can reconcile the notion of noumenal reality as a “limit concept” not in metaphysical but alongside *pragmatist* lines, following Peirce, by understanding the “in-itself” as a *regulatory ideal* which normatively orients science as a

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the myth of the given, to which indeed analytic philosophers would have remained beholden, using the Kantian conception of objectivity in terms of the complex demonstrative model as a paradigmatic expression: “Despite recent formal sophistication - in fact, even strongly supported by the standard interpretation of predicate logic - ontological thinking still is dominated by the categorial dualism of ‘thisness’ and ‘suchness,’ of objects and properties. Surprisingly few contemporary philosophers explicitly address let alone diagnose this curious conservatism.” (TCI 272).

“self-correcting enterprise,” through which mind represents the world of which it is part; (c) we can expand our concept of nature so as to both resist a crass reductionism that would eliminate the representational structures of experience, or else pursue a subjectalist transposition of experience into the world writ large. In pursuing these three theses, Sellars’ “naturalization of Kant” implies an *anti-foundationalism in epistemology* that describes reason as a protocol for revision and integration, and an *anti-dogmatic metaphysical stance* that expands our understanding of Nature to include the types of sensory and conceptual capacities that are associated with sapient experience. Therein, Sellarsian naturalism is coeval with an epistemic and ontological realism. The Sellarsian approach, however, is robustly anti-transcendental, denuding transcendental analysis’s forms of experience from dogmatic metaphysics as much as from its skeptical conclusions.

At this final juncture, naturalization *tout court* may appear to be the victor, but, in fact, it is critical scientific realism as method which prevails. For both Heidegger and Sellars recognize the theoretical disunity of the sciences—the question of whether and how this disunity can/should be superseded is a salient if underdeveloped concern underlying both projects. Sellars notes that “there are as many scientific images of man as there are sciences which have something to say about man,” where each science deploys distinct instruments and methods; this “diversity [...] is compatible with intrinsic ‘identity’ of the theoretical entities themselves” (2007, 388-89). Sellars, himself, runs up against a problem here, given his ineliminably modal character of scientific understanding, for the possibility of such unification in a straightforward way seems difficult to reach, since the entities as disclosed by different sciences are not identical in their modal character (e.g., quantum mechanics vs Newtonian physics). Heidegger offers a general ontological characterization of the sciences as discovering entities as merely occurrent, yet also insists upon the way “basic concepts” and an understanding of being that “delimit certain definite areas of a subject-matter” (SZ: 27) are ontologically constitutive of specific sciences. Often Heidegger takes up the case of mathematical physics as providing a fully general conception of nature, but also recognizes that physics is but one example of a scientific domain governed by an understanding of being.

Thus, both Sellars and Heidegger make salient the question of the unity and/or disunity of the various sciences in their naturalist accountability to the world, and their accounts can complement one another. Sellars more explicitly naturalizes Kant, as we have seen, but Heidegger’s and Sellars’s differences over the importance of the sciences for philosophy emerge against their background commitments to differentiating the task

of philosophy from that of the sciences.<sup>13</sup> Both of them pose this issue against the background of a strongly historical sense of conceptual change in the sciences and philosophy, and the possibility that our best current understanding will not merely be improved or partially modified by subsequent developments, but will be conceptually and methodologically reconstructed (Rouse 2016). Sellars and Heidegger thus each consider the prospect of an eventual completion of scientific inquiry, yet this is conceptualized alongside the register of a limit-concept in both cases, where any naturalist approach must recognize its timeliness and, thus, its limitations. Heidegger contends that the finalized scientific enterprise would be correct in only its own terms. Sellars poses a comparable concern, given that his aspiration to a ‘stereoscopic’ fusion of the scientific and manifest images starts from his recognition that the scientific image seems to accord no place whatsoever for man and the manifest image; this is furthered by his rejection of any accommodation of the two images via an instrumentalism that would subordinate the sciences to our perennial self-conception. For Sellars, the scientific image emerges *from* the manifest image, and to the extent that the manifest image does not survive “man himself” does not survive, for “man is that being which conceives of itself in terms of the manifest image, [such that] to the extent that the manifest does not survive in the synoptic view man himself would not survive” (2007, 386). As such, a common insight to Heidegger and Sellars is that observational terms are always taken to be “theory-laden,” as the distinction between theory and observation is methodological rather than ontological, insofar as theoretical concepts could in principle acquire observational uses.

Here, however, one might preemptively raise the following objection: if the structures of experience are every bit as “theory-laden” as our metaphysical accounts, do we not motivate a radical skepticism, reprising the ineffable which we sought to unburden Kant from? For if neither experience nor the world can serve to provide “foundations” for philosophy, and if a transcendental deduction cannot proceed from the basis of any specific theory or paradigm, what resources can be deployed to avoid a relapse to dogmatic metaphysics? Yet to acknowledge that a theory of “experience” is the result of a process of conceptual and theoretical elaboration does not entail that this process must be, as Heidegger notes, an overextension of metaphysical-empirical thought into the pre-representational bases of experience.

Thus, we have returned to where we started: representationalism. Recall the theory of diaphanousness—the representationalist appeal to the structure of sensory experience

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<sup>13</sup> Whether in terms of ontic and ontological concerns, or in terms of specialized disciplinary subject matters and the philosophical “eye on the whole”, respectively.

as revealed via introspection, where introspection constitutively involves worldly properties like red-ness and round-ness. Representationalists argue that introspection on its own suffices to show that experience must be representational (Harman 1990; Tye 2002; Dretske 2003). On this view, some property can be ‘present’ in conscious phenomenology even in those cases where it is not necessarily instantiated. Red-ness and round-ness are thus able to constitute one’s phenomenal sensory experience even if red-ness and round-ness are not actually brought to bear in any objects in the environment/world. For representationalism underscores introspection as method, such that it is enough for one’s mind to ‘reach out and grasp’ the property of red-ness and round-ness in itself, abstracting it from any environmental incarnation or contingency. Representationalism further holds that all qualitative mental states are exhausted as representational states; the representationalist’s order of explanation begins with an independent notion of relations of reference/denotation, which obtain between mental or linguistic items and objects/sets of objects in the nonmental, nonlinguistic environment. Accordingly, phenomenal properties are just representational properties, such that red-ness and round-ness are just perceptual states that represent red-and-round-things. Representationalists think of representation as a generic relation, any species of which will hold between names and objects, predicates and properties/sets, and sentences and states of affairs.

In response, we stake that there is no meaning without material-inferential properties and that mental qualities represent in a mode distinct from intentional content, while denying that semantic statements are “genuinely relational”, for asserting so would lead straight to a representationalist theory of meaning (either in the traditional Empiricist, ostensive-definition rendering or in the “naturalized semantics” version which treats reference as some kind of causal relation). To be sure, we deny diaphanousness, which treats (introspective) reference and denotation as providing a word-world link, while we prompt a naturalism where scientific language demands a deflationary representationalist semantics—one that takes observational reference (and not introspection) as a fundamental explanatory notion that is always subject to future revision. And, simultaneously, we hold that normative discourse, which is fundamentally expressive, must be treated non-representationally. Following Heidegger, we affirm that knowing requires that there is an internal and non-accidental relationship between the knower and what is known—Heidegger warns us against taking mind and world as “accidentally” or contingently and, correspondingly, against the mistake of holding that the intentional structure of comportments is something immanent in the subject (1982:

64-65).<sup>14</sup> While Heidegger warns us against an erroneous subjectivizing of intentionality, we, following Sellars, must also affirm the possibility of making explicit the structure of the non-conceptual by conceptual means, while refusing the fallacy according to which any such attempt to do so will result in a metaphysically illegitimate paralogism that transgresses the limits of experience. It is only through conceptual revision and theoretical elaboration that the structures of experience can be understood, including its sensory and non-conceptual aspects. The task is thus understanding how thinking progressively makes explicit the sensory, conceptual, and theoretical means through which knowing becomes realized in time.

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<sup>14</sup> Heidegger describes this as an erroneous objectivizing based on our naïve understanding of things, where mistake is grounded upon our taking our intentional directedness on reality to be an "extant relation" (1982: 64-65).

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