

## Sellarsian image- models and Kantian Imagination

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**Abstract.** It has been assumed by an important element of Kantian scholarship that there is a central connection between the categories and the logical forms of judgement (let us call this the ‘Standard View’ or SV). Although this suggestion is true in a broad sense, it has prevented interpreters from appreciating one fundamental idea of Kant’s theoretical philosophy: that the employment of pure concepts pertains in an *equally fundamental way* to the unification of sensory material, or what Kant calls the ‘manifold of sense in intuition’, as Wilfrid Sellars has pointed out in his theory of ‘image- models’. We will call this ‘Kantian Intuitionism’, as opposed to the SV. Not only that, this widely held connection of category to judgement has caused what we may call a ‘propositional’ prejudice in contemporary discussions on conceptualism. Specifically, we can appreciate this misconception within the famous Dreyfus- McDowell debate, and their mutual incapacity to account for the Kantian premise that conceptuality suffuses sensory experience without appealing to propositional structures. Parting from Kant’s ‘Clue’ [B104/A79], our contention in this article is that his idea that conceptuality is embedded in *both* judgmental thought and perception, can be shown to be an appropriate answer to the Standard View, and furthermore, to constitute a starting point to enlarge the comprehension of some doctrines of Kantian theoretical philosophy. Among these, the Transcendental Deduction and the Schematism. In this sense, our reading will show the broad implications of the ‘Clue’, not only for the comprehension of Kant, but also for the clarification of some contemporary philosophical discussions.

**Keywords:** Imagination; Transcendental Deduction; Transcendental Schematism; Kantian Intuitionism; Propositionalism.

### [es] ‘Imágenes- modelo’ Sellarsianas e Imaginación Kantiana

**Resumen.** La tesis de la conexión central entre categorías y formas de juicio ha sido aceptada en términos generales por un importante grupo de filósofos kantianos (a esta tesis la llamaremos la ‘Interpretación Estándar’ o IE). Aunque esta idea es correcta en un sentido amplio, ella ha llevado a intérpretes de Kant a pasar por alto una premisa central de su filosofía teórica: el empleo de conceptos puros tiene que ver de una forma *igualmente fundamental* con la unificación del material sensible en lo que Kant llama ‘el múltiple del sentido en la intuición’, como bien ha indicado el filósofo Wilfrid Sellars en su doctrina de las ‘imágenes- modelo’. Llamaremos a esto ‘intuicionismo kantiano’, en oposición a la IE. Más aún, la creencia común en la premisa de la conexión de categoría y juicio, ha llevado a filósofos contemporáneos a caer en lo que podríamos llamar un ‘prejuicio proposicional’. Específicamente, podemos apreciar este prejuicio en el famoso debate entre McDowell y Dreyfus, y en su mutua incapacidad para explicar la idea kantiana de que la conceptualidad permea la experiencia sensorial, sin apelar a estructuras proposicionales. Partiendo del *Leitfaden* de Kant [B104/A79], nuestra premisa en este artículo es que la conceptualidad está implicada de una manera fundamental tanto en el pensamiento judicativo como en la percepción, yendo en contra de la IE, y así mismo abriendo un campo de comprensión innovadora de algunas doctrinas kantianas centrales. Particularmente, de la Deducción Transcendental y del Esquematismo. En este sentido, nuestra lectura pretende mostrar las implicaciones de la ‘clave’ kantiana, no solo para una comprensión nueva de Kant, sino también para la clarificación de algunas discusiones filosóficas contemporáneas.

**Palabras clave-** Imaginación; Deducción Transcendental; Esquematismo Transcendental; Intuicionismo Kantiano; Proposicionalism.

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## 0. Introduction

At the heart of the *Critique of Pure Reason* lies a distinction between two fundamental cognitive powers, sensibility and understanding. Prove of the significance of this distinction is Kant’s insistence that it is precisely this realization that makes his own position superior to the philosophical systems of his most prominent predecessors, Empiricists and Rationalists. In light of this fact, it is perhaps unsurprising that this distinction has also been at the center of recent attempts by contemporary philosophers to inherit the spirit of Kant. In

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this sense, if sensibility is the capacity for perception and the understanding the power of conceptual thought, a critical question for Kant and contemporary Kantian philosophers is how exactly do these two capacities relate? In the context of contemporary Kantianism, this issue gained prominence through Wilfrid Sellars' writings –namely, in his classic paper 'Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind', among others that expand his reading of Kant<sup>2</sup>.

Specifically, Sellars is concerned with the problem of how the interaction of sensibility and understanding ought to be conceived if a certain kind of rational relation is to obtain from their respective exercises. In contemporary Kantianism, in line with Sellars' thought, one usual philosophical path is to assume that if intuition, in order to exhibit the appropriate kind of unity, does depend on the involvement of conceptual capacities, then the unity of sensory experience is the *same* as the unity of conceptual thought<sup>3</sup>. For instance, in his *Mind and World*, John McDowell assumed that sensory experience is propositional because it is conceptual. Later on, he rebuked his former claim, arguing instead that the conceptuality of sensory experience is not primarily propositional, but *intuitional*. On the other side of the philosophical spectrum, there are those who assume that if conceptual capacities are not required for intuitions to bear appropriate unity, then we ought to recognize the existence of a different kind of unity<sup>4</sup>. Advocates of this view claim that possessing a *sensible unity* is sufficient for intuitions to play a role in human knowledge. Moreover, they claim that the involvement of conceptual capacities in sensibility would actually prevent it from playing its proper role. For instance, Dreyfus preeminently assumes that such involvement is incompatible with the specific sensory nature of perception and coping (Land, 2006).

Rather than focusing ourselves in contemporary debate, however, our goal in this article is to argue that Kant's philosophy offers a third alternative. Our argument will proceed as follows: we will begin by sketching the received view of the spontaneity of understanding as distinct capacity from the receptive nature of sensibility (*per SV*). We will, then, provide textual and interpretative evidence to regard this view as misleading, because it fails to account for what seems to be an integral feature of Kant's conception of experience: that conceptuality shapes our perceptual and embodied engagement with the world. In the rest of the article, we will work out this perspective

form a broad Sellarsian interpretation that will serve as a systematic background to work out the role of imagination in Kant's theory of experience. Particularly, we will focus on Sellars' notion of image- models and its relationship to intuitive representations by sketching the way in which the imagination synthesizes the material receptively given in the presentation of objects. More on this later. But first, let us turn to a general diagnosis of the problem at hand.

## 1. Sensibility and Understanding in Kant

Kant undertakes his distinction of human cognitive capacities in the following passage:

Our cognition springs from two fundamental sources of the mind; the first is the capacity of receiving representations (the receptivity for impressions), the second is the power of cognizing an object through these representations (the spontaneity of concepts). Through the first an object is *given* to us, though the second it is *thought* in relation to that representation (which is a mere determination of the mind). [...] If the *receptivity* of our mind to receive representations, insofar as it is affected in some way, is to be called sensibility, then the mind's power of producing representations from itself, the *spontaneity* of cognition, is the understanding. (A50f/B74f)<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See compiled essays in: *Kant's Transcendental Metaphysics. Sellars' Cassirer Lectures, Notes and other Essays*. Ed. Jeffrey Sachs. See also: Sellars, Wilfrid. *Science and Metaphysics: Variations on Kantian Themes*. Routledge. New York.

<sup>3</sup> Land (2006) correctly highlights the interpretative line of the Standard View: Besides Allison and Pippin, commentators who accept this claim include Jonathan Bennett, *Kant's Analytic*, (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge UP, 1966); Graham Bird, *The Revolutionary Kant*, (La Salle, Illinois: Open Court, 2006); Wolfgang Carl, *Die transzendente Deduktion der Kategorien in der ersten Auflage der Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, (Frankfurt/M.: Klostermann, 1992); Paul Guyer, *Kant and the Claims of Knowledge*, (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge UP, 1987); Dieter Henrich, *Identität und Objektivität*, (Heidelberg: Winter, 1976); H. J. Paton, *Kant's Metaphysics of Experience*, (London: Allen & Unwin, 1936); P. F. Strawson, *The Bounds of Sense*, (London: Methuen, 1966). Suggested by an anonymous reader, concerning SV: -Jiménez Rodríguez, A. (2016): "Die Projektion des Schematismus in den vorkritischen Schriften Kants: Das Problem der mathematischen Konstruktion". In: *Kant-Studien* 107 (3), pp. 429–450. -Dahlstrom, D. O. (1984): "Transzendente Schemata, Kategorien und Erkenntnisarten". In *Kant-Studien* 75, (1–4), pp. 38–54.

<sup>4</sup> See: Robert Hanna, *Kant and the Foundations of Analytic Philosophy*, (Oxford and New York: Oxford UP, 2001), and his more concise exposition his "Kant and Nonconceptual Content," *European Journal of Philosophy* 13 (2005), 247–290.

<sup>5</sup> "Unsre Erkenntniß entspringt aus zwei Grundquellen des Gemüths, deren die erste ist, die Vorstellungen zu empfangen (die Receptivität der Eindrücke), die zweite das Vermögen, durch diese Vorstellungen einen Gegenstand zu erkennen (Spontaneität der Begriffe); durch die erstere wird uns ein Gegenstand *gegeben*, durch die zweite wird dieser im Verhältniß auf jene Vorstellung (als bloße Bestimmung des Gemüths) *gedacht*. [...] Wollen wir die *Receptivität* unseres Gemüths, Vorstellungen zu empfangen, so fern es auf irgend eine Weise afficirt wird, Sinnlichkeit nennen: so ist dagegen das Vermögen, Vorstellungen selbst hervorzubringen, oder die *Spontaneität* des Erkenntnisses der Verstand."

According to this passage, sensibility and understanding differ with regard to the way in which their respective representations are *caused*<sup>6</sup>. Sensibility is characterized by Kant as receptive because sensible representations depend on the affection of the mind by something external. On the other hand, the understanding is characterized as spontaneous because it generates representations by its own power, independently of external causes.

It has long been believed by interpreters that because Kant defines understanding as the capacity for judgement, this capacity itself is correctly characterized by spontaneity. Consequently, common belief is that to exercise the spontaneous capacity of the mind *is* to make judgements. For instance, Kant says things such as: ‘We can trace all acts of the understanding back to judgment, so the understanding in general may be regarded as a capacity to judge’ (A69/B94). Part of Kant’s point here seems to be that because concepts serve to cognize objects when they are applied in judgements, a capacity for thought, or cognition through concepts, *is* a capacity for judgement. In this sense, taken by Kantian statements like this, commentators have commonly sought to explain his notion of spontaneity with reference to the distinctive traits of judgement (Land, 2006: 191).

One prominent interpreter that endorses what we shall call the Standard View (SV) is Henry Allison<sup>7</sup>. Central to Allison’s view is the idea that judgement ought to be comprehended as a ‘taking as’. In this sense, to make a judgement is to take something to be the case—for instance, that some object *a* has the property *F*. The point of this statement is that it makes explicit the requirement that, in making a judgement, the subject ought to be aware of its own creative power. In particular, the subject must be aware that its act contains a claim to objectivity, to truly represent how the world is. On its turn, how things are is independent of how they are represented to be, in the sense that representing things to be a certain way does not mean they are, in fact, *that way*. In every case, the representation can be true or false. So, if the subject is to be aware of its own creative power, this means it must have a grasp of the objective standard of correctness of his representation. Consequently, judgements must involve grasp of the fact that things may or may not be the way judgements say they are, which means that the productive power of judgement ought to involve an awareness of the distinction between what we judge to be the case and what *actually* is the case.

For judgement to be a creative power is for it to involve apperception, to involve an appropriate kind of self-awareness—namely, what Kant calls ‘self-consciousness’. Allison, among others, goes as far as claiming that this is, in fact, the content of Kant’s principle of apperception, according to which the ‘I think’ must be able to accompany all my representations’ (B131). The crucial point for our purposes is that, precisely, according to the inherited view of Kant endorsed by Allison and others, the apperceptive nature of judgement requires spontaneity. On their view, to take a representation as an objective take on how things are, is not sufficient that the representation be merely caused by sensory consciousness. Instead, the subject must take a certain stance towards its representation, attach a certain meaning to it. And the positing of this significance cannot be explained, the traditional view of Kant contends, through the workings of merely receptive sensible capacities. Sensible, i.e. receptive, capacities can account for the fact that representations occur in the mind by affection of our sensory apparatus. However, they cannot explain the fact that the subject is able to attach to its representations of the world objective significance—namely, explain why the subject is self-consciously in possession of its grasp of the world. For instance, Allison, endorsing the traditional view, writes that

Sensibility can present to the mind *x*’s that are *F*’s, but it cannot, not even in collaboration with the imagination, take or recognize them as such. This is the work of the understanding. In this respect, then, Kant’s conception of spontaneity is an essential component of his account of the understanding, and particularly its distinction from sensibility. (Allison, 1996: 62).

As Land correctly notes, the crucial argumentative step for the Standard View (SV) is to identify the ‘taking as’ of judgement with what Kant calls the synthesis of intuitions. Consider, for instance, the following passage, where, commenting Kant’s identification of understanding with spontaneity, construed as ‘the mind’s power of producing representations from itself’ (A51/B75), Allison endorses his defense of the Standard View (Land, 2006: 192):

The key to understanding this identification lies in Kant’s further identification of discursive thought with judgment. [...] What judgment ‘produces’ from itself is the representation of objects, that is to say, objectively valid judgments. The understanding is, therefore, spontaneous in the sense that it ‘constitutes’ objectivity or

<sup>6</sup> Let us here clarify that we do not refer to ‘things in themselves’ impinging inwardly, from outside conceptuality, on our sensibility. On the contrary, we take it that Kant’s true teaching, as expounded by McDowell and others, is that conceptuality is embedded in our experience ‘from the ground up’. The notion of cause is, however, in contemporary Kantianism a controversial and much debated one; we shall not, for this reason, engage in exegetical battle here, but simply remark the problematic nature of this notion.

<sup>7</sup> See Allison, *Idealism and Freedom: Essays on Kant’s Theoretical and Practical Philosophy*, (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge UP, 1996), as well as his book *Kant’s Transcendental Idealism*, 2nd ed., (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 2004). Another prominent representative of this approach is Robert Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind,” in Pippin, *Idealism*.

objective reference in and through the act of judgment, and it does this by synthesizing the manifold of sensible intuition in accordance with its own inherent rules (the pure concepts of the understanding) (Allison, 1996: 94).

As we will try to show, what Allison claims, however, represents more than his personal reading of Kant; it represents perhaps the clearest expression of the miscomprehension embedded in the Standard View: in making a judgement, the passage claims, the subject synthesizes a manifold of intuition. And since Kant holds that all synthesis is spontaneous, we have here an *identification* of judgement and synthesis. Consequently, according to the Standard View, judging is a kind of synthesis, and synthesis is a kind of judging.

In what follows, we will turn to our refutation and resolution of this misconception from a broadly Sellarsian interpretation of Kant's idea of the synthetical activity of imagination.

## 2. Kantian Intuitionism vs Standard View

As we have said, the interpretative hinge of SV relies in the common premise among Kantians that all synthesis takes the form of judgement. To begin unraveling this misconception —and its attendant resolution—, let us quote Kant's words on the necessity of the spontaneity of reason in synthesis:

The manifold of representations can be given in an intuition that is merely sensible, i.e. nothing but receptivity, and the form of this intuition can lie a priori in our faculty of representation without being anything other than the way in which the subject is affected. However, the combination (*coniunctio*) of a manifold in general can never come to us through the senses, and therefore cannot already be contained in the pure form of sensible intuition; for it is an act of the spontaneity of the power of representation, and, since one must call the latter understanding, in distinction from sensibility, all combination, whether we are conscious of it or not, whether it is a combination of the manifold of intuition or of several concepts, and in the first case either of sensible or non-sensible intuition, is an action of the understanding, which we would designate with the general title synthesis in order at the same time to draw attention to the fact that we can represent nothing as combined in the object without having previously combined it ourselves, and that among all representations combination is the only one that is not given through objects but can be executed only by the subject itself, since it is an act of its self-activity. (B129f)

As it is clear from the passage, the notion of spontaneity that in Kant's view is, simply put, the idea that combination in experiential content cannot be 'given', insists upon a topic that is amply worked out throughout the *Critique*: that synthesis or combination of representations is never merely sensible, but rather always tied together with the unifying functions that he calls the pure concepts of understanding. In this sense, one of Kant's chief concerns of establishing the objective legitimacy of his categories is closely tied with the idea of them being a priori functions of combination or synthesis —not in vain, in the section intitled 'Clue to the Discovery of all Pure Concepts of Understanding', Kant calls the categories 'pure concepts of synthesis' (A80/B106).

Importantly, what the Standard View fails to account is the idea that combination is inextricably connected with a *broad* notion of spontaneity of the human mind. So, the SV's contention that all synthesis takes the form of judgement is mistaken in the face of Kant's premise —seen in the passage—, that the exercises of reason are operational on *different types* of combination or synthesis. Important here is Kant's distinction between a 'combination of the manifold in intuition' and a 'combination of concepts'. Notwithstanding the Standard View's mishap of conflating both functions, it is clear in the passage that since combination of concepts is something evidently done in judgement, the combination at play in intuition ought to be *analogically similar*, although should not be conflated with the exercises of judgmental thought.

What is important for our purposes here is to keep in mind the implications of the Standard View's mistake to conflate the notions of judgmental thought and intuitive synthesis, and therefore, to obscure Kant's broader notion of the spontaneity of reason. In contrast to a 'single- species view' of spontaneity (Land, 2006) —the view that spontaneity of the mind is fundamentally exemplified by judgmental acts of combination—, we want to propose a 'two- species view' of spontaneity that is able to account for the fact that Kant distinguishes between *two distinct kinds* of exercises of spontaneity at play in thought and perception. One is the act of combination at play in judgmental thought; the other is a rational combination at play in the unification of the deliverances of sensibility. Important is to recognize —against the Standard View— that even though the categories derive from the logical forms of judgement, this, however, does not mean that *all synthesis is* judgmental synthesis. This is why the main inherited notion we ought to discard is the misleading view that the sole function of the categories is producing judgement in the progressive enhancement of scientific knowledge.

In this sense, it is of great importance to understand that the fact that the categories derive from the forms of judgement does not support the further claim that spontaneity can properly be identified with judgement. It is, precisely, around this claim that philosophy, so to speak, took the wrong turn and took *analogy for identity*.



The following Kantian passage from his correspondence with Beck, brings into view what we believe is clear evidence for the ‘two- species’ reading of spontaneity:

In my judgment everything depends on this: since, in the empirical concept of the composite the composition itself cannot be given by means of mere intuition and its apprehension, but only through the self-active combination of the manifold in intuition—that is, it can be represented only in a consciousness in general (which is not in turn empirical)—this combination and its function must be subject to rules a priori in the mind, which constitute the pure thought of an object in general (the pure concept of the understanding), by which the apprehension of the manifold must be governed, insofar as it amounts to *one* intuition [...] On the common view, the representation of the composite as such figures, as given, among the representations of the manifold, which is apprehended, and does therefore not belong entirely to spontaneity, as however it really must, etc. (Letter to J. S. Beck, October 16, 1792, Ak. XI, 376).

What is salient about this passage is that Kant’s insisted reference to intuition points to an act of combination that deals with what is multiple in sensibility—for instance, when he speaks of ‘the self- active combination of the manifold in intuition’ and of the ‘apprehension of the manifold [...] in *one* intuition’. Kant even refers to the ‘representation of the composite’ in geometrical figures that, according to the commonsense view, is *given*. In contrast, Kant claims that even in acts like drawing lines and angles, synthesis is operational, for the unity in the sensory multiple is always brought upon by synthesis.

In short, Kant’s claim that spontaneity is at play in the production of judgement—namely, that concept combination requires the free- agential activity of the subject—, seems easy to accept. Not so easy to endorse, we believe, is Kant’s further claim that spontaneity must be operational *within* perception itself. It seems that, precisely, it is this premise that stands against our commonsense view of perceptual experience according to which, whatever is perceived, is something *given*.

Consequently, there seem to be reasons for claiming there are two kinds of combination—namely, one in judgement and one in perception—, and reasons for claiming there is only one synthesis pertaining to judgmental thought. As is usual in Kantian interpretation, there are tensions that rather than be resolved, which would mean losing in meaning, ought to be, so to speak, stretched to their uttermost limits.

In what follows, we will try to balance out the tensions in Kant’s conception of the separation and cooperation of human faculties. Importantly, we ought to examine his fundamental premise that all combination or synthesis—whether of concepts or of sensory material— is always *actively* achieved rather than experientially given. Once again, the problem that comes to mind is how to explain the fact that Kant holds the ‘two- kinds’ of synthesis premise with the additional claim that sensibility is the receptive faculty of the mind. It seems that, at least according to some fundamental Kantian tenants, these claims are incompatible.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, we will propose that the premises are not only compatible, but cover up a fundamental tension within the Kantian framework that has been amply omitted by the Kantian scholarship, and has muddied the waters of contemporary philosophical dispute. In what follows, we turn to a broad Sellarsian interpretation of Kantian themes that, we believe, will help us work out Kant’s notion of the mediating faculty of the ‘productive’ imagination. Particularly, parting from an interpretation of Kant’s ‘Clue’ [B104/A79], our claim is that, against the Standard View, Kant’s thesis ought to be interpreted as indicating an *analogy* in function, and *not an identification* in nature between judgement and synthesis. Our way to dissolve this insidious misconception will be achieved if we are able to work out the nature of imagination from a dual-perspective: on the one hand, we must understand imagination functioning *as* understanding when producing judgement; on the other hand, imagination must be seen *as* a capacity of unification of sensory material, when operational in perception. In other words, Kant’s vision of what he calls ‘productive’ imagination must be worked out from a perspective that is able to accommodate a novel interpretation of Kant’s ‘Clue’. The following reflections will be aimed at outlining the philosophical theory behind this idea.

### 3. Kant’s notion of the productive imagination

In order to work out the role of imagination in Kant’s theory of experience, and more specifically, its role in human cognition, it will be helpful to start our analysis by considering two passages in which Kant offers a general definition of the imagination. In the first passage, which appears in the B-edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1787), Kant claims, ‘Imagination [*Einbildungskraft*] is a faculty for representing an object even **without its presence** in intuition’ (B151). According to this definition, Kant conceives of the imagination as a faculty of representation, more specifically, a faculty that is responsible for *intuitive*, sensible representations of objects that are not immediately present to us. For instance, this commonly happens when we imagine a physical object or property of an object that is no longer present to us. For example, when we imagine a landscape we saw some weeks ago, or when we see a tree as having a back side even though we are only looking at the front side. However, Kant’s views on imagination are more complex, and are not only confined

to its role concerning physical objects. Rather, Kant takes imagination to fulfill a wider role in being able to produce sensible representation of objects that are not present in virtue of being intellectual objects – for instance, concepts and ideas. This happens, for example, when we see the clouds above us as having determinate shapes (as a dog or a cat, etc.). Kant’s idea seems to be, then, that imagination plays a pivotal role in perception and cognition because it brings something non- sensible –for instance, the back side of the tree– to bear on our sensible representations. Importantly, what Kant’s argument ultimately amounts to is the idea that the imagination is essentially a capacity for producing representations that bridge the gap between what is sensible, on the one hand, and what is non-sensible or intellectual, on the other, and this mediating activity is one Kant takes to be crucial for our cognitive experience (Matherne, 2016).

In a second passage, this time from the *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (1798), Kant claims the following:

The power of imagination (*facultas imaginandi*), as a faculty of intuition without the presence of the object, is either *productive*, that is, a faculty of the original presentation [*Darstellung*] of the object (*exhibitio originaria*), which thus precedes experience; or *reproductive*, a faculty of the derivative presentation of the object (*exhibitio derivativa*), which brings back to mind an empirical intuition that it had previously (Kant, 2006: Anthro 7:167).

According to this passage, after restating the definition of the imagination from the *Critique*, Kant claims that the imagination can produce a ‘presentation’ —namely, a sensible representation of an object that is not directly present, in one of two ways. First, the imagination can act in a *productive* way when it functions as the original source of the representation. For instance, when we develop a character for a novel, we develop an imaginative representation that brings our fictional subject to life —i.e. when Shakespeare created Hamlet. Furthermore, rather than merely relying past experience, in its productive exercise, imagination makes experience possible. Even though this can happen at an empirical level —for instance, when we as readers imagine Hamlet, the prince of Denmark—, Kant claims that this can also happen at a transcendental level, when the imagination produces original representations that make experience in general possible. On the other hand, in its reproductive exercise, the imagination acts at an empirical level, producing representations that are derived from past experience. For instance, when remembering the landscape we saw one month ago, we are recalling past experience, rather than producing an original representation. In this sense, what we learn from the passage of the *Anthropology* is that the imagination functions as a bridge between what is sensible and non-sensible in two ways: one that is a productive fashion whereon it makes experience possible; one reproductive in kind, in which it is constrained by past experience (Matherne, 2016).

From these two passages, it is reasonable to infer that the imagination is in general a capacity for sensibly representing what is not present in either a creative, productive way, or in a reproductive fashion by bringing the past to life. In so doing, Kant claims, the imagination mediates between the sensible and non- sensible aspects of our lives. With such general idea of imagination already in place, we believe it is suiting to pursue the examination of the contribution of imagination to human perception and cognition. As we have said, our approach relies on a broad Sellarsian interpretation of the role of imagination in Kant’s theory of experience, that ultimately incorporates within one perspective the seeming contradiction between conceptuality and embodied coping. In this way, we believe to be advancing a response and solution to the pitfalls of SV.

#### 4. Sellarsian Image- models

In his work *Science and Metaphysics* (1968), Wilfrid Sellars claims that one of the most surprising facts about Kant’s epistemology is his insistence on the need for a sharp distinction between sensibility and understanding. Let us remember Kant’s words: ‘our knowledge springs from two fundamental sources of mind; the first is the capacity of receiving representations (receptivity for impressions), the second is the power of knowing an object through these representations (spontaneity in the production of concepts); through the former an object is **given** to us, through the latter it is **thought** in relation to that representation (as a mere determination of the mind). Intuition and concepts therefore constitute the elements of all our cognition’ (B74/A50). It is certainly striking, Sellars claims, that in spite their difference in role, Kant claims that they are both *representational* faculties (Sellars, 1968).

Moreover, Sellars argues that as readers of Kant we could be easily tempted to see representations of understanding as conceptual and, on the other hand, representations of sensibility as non- conceptual. For Sellars, however, this claim is mistaken.

To understand the underlying mistake, we could consider the following two pairs of notions: 1) sensibility/ intuition and 2) understanding/ concept. We could, then, as naïve readers of Kant group the first pair of sensibility/ intuition under the heading ‘receptivity’, and the second pair understanding/concept under the heading of ‘spontaneity’. According to Sellars’ original interpretation, however, when Kant is speaking about intuition, he is talking about conceptual representations of *individuals* (Sellars, 1968:3). On the other hand,

Sellars understands, at least preliminarily, concepts in a more orthodox way, as general representations of attributes or kinds. So, the pressing question here is what does Sellars' mean by claiming that intuitions are conceptual representations of individuals.

To understand Sellars' thesis, we may start by remembering Kant's saying that 'no representation pertains to the object immediately except intuition alone' (B93/A68). In this sense, intuition can be regarded as a representation in immediate relation to an object. On Sellars' view, however, and this is perhaps the most original aspect of his Kantian interpretation, the term 'immediate relation' can be construed on the model of the demonstrative 'this'. According to Sellars, then, 'intuitions would be representations of *thises* and would be conceptual in that peculiar way in which to represent something as a *this* is conceptual' (Sellars, 1968:3).

This view, however, does not mean that human intuition is not receptive in nature. Rather, Sellars' claim about intuitions is that, since they refer to something specific, to determinate objects, they must not be considered as *merely* receptive. In this respect, referring to the cognitive power Kant, in his Deduction, calls 'productive imagination', Sellars claims that intuitions must involve synthetic activity which is not merely that carried on by the understanding, but primarily one carried on by the transcendental imagination (Sellars, 1968: 3). And it is, precisely, in this sense that the synthetical function of productive imagination must not be regarded as independent of understanding, but rather as *one* and *same* function. Once again, we may remember Kant's premise of the Clue, according to which 'the same function that gives unity to the different representations **in a judgement** also gives unity to the mere synthesis of different representations **in an intuition**' (B105/A79). Not in vain, in a previous passage, Kant claims that 'synthesis in general is, as we shall subsequently see, the mere effect of the imagination, of a blind though indispensable function of the soul' (B104/A78). According to Sellars, thus, 'this imagination, under the name 'productive imagination', is the understanding functioning in a special way' (B151).

In short, productive imagination must be regarded as 'the understanding *qua* engaged in that representing of individuals' (Sellars, 1968:4). Consequently, since synthesis is a function of imagination, that Sellars' on the other hand claims is a *special functioning* of understanding, we can argue that imagination and understanding are not two separate faculties, but share a common, mysterious root in the human soul —if we may express it in such a way.

Being as it may, what is salient here is Sellars' idea that Kantian intuitions are a product of imagination's synthesis, which is the understanding itself in its specific role of representing individuals. In consequence, intuitions synthesized by the productive imagination are to be regarded as conceptual-representations of individuals. Sellars' demonstration of this idea, without a doubt highly original and rather unorthodox, is the following:

Following the premise that intuiting means to represent a 'this', we can consider the enunciation:

This-dog

This enunciation, which is not a proper judgement, is obviously closely connected with the judgement

This is a dog

According to Sellars, the first enunciation 'this-dog' expresses the representation of something *as* a dog, in a way that, somehow, seems prior to the term 'dog' that in the second judgement pertains to the representation of a general kind. In this sense, Sellars' idea seems to be that any individual represented in perception as a *this*, is always a specific *this*; in this case, *this-dog*. The implicit point here is that a representation of a *this*, say, an intuition in the sense Sellars reads Kant, is essentially a concept-involving representation. Such representation, however, is also receptive in a fundamental way, as we will see. Ultimately, on Sellars' view, intuition is a representation that gives immediate access to an object, a representation expressible in a demonstrative sentence of the kind this-dog, this-tree, this-apple, etc.

To clarify Sellars' notion of Kantian intuition, we may refer to a more sophisticated example presented in 'The Role of Imagination in Kant's Theory of Experience' (1978). Even though the language of analysis changes a bit, the underlying idea is the same:

- 1) This is a pyramid
- 2) This pyramid is made of stone (Sellars, 1978: 424)

As we can appreciate, the first example has the grammatical form of a demonstrative sentence. The second, by means of linguistic analysis, can be translated into the structure, 'this is a pyramid and it is made of stone'. The demonstrative 'this' for Sellars, however, is not a mere grammatical structure, but a structure that connects our representational acts with the empirical objects of our experience (Sellars, 1978: 428). In fact, an intuitional act is nothing other than the mental counterpart of the grammatical demonstrative structure of the kind 'this pyramid which faces me edgewise'. Consequently, the role of intuition is a fundamental one, it is the role of bringing a particular object before the mind for its consideration.

Now, the object as a determinate *this-such* involves, besides of the intuition that brings it before the mind, also a sensible content, perceptible sensory qualities. In this respect, we can bring to light Kant's words: 'the effect of an object on the capacity of representation, insofar as we are affected by it, is **sensation**' (B34/A20). In this sense, we can distinguish between sensation and intuition. Sensations give us that which we perceive in the object —namely, its 'empirical structure [...] [its] perceptible qualities and relations' (Sellars, 1978:428). On the other hand, intuitions present to us objects in the form of something specific, be it dog, tree or apple. Ultimately, and this is Sellars' most original idea, since intuitions *have* categorial form, we can find categorial form *in* them (Sellars, 1978: 429). In other words, intuitions are demonstrative representations whose linguistic counterpart are demonstrative sentences. Importantly, sensory qualities of the object are relevant in both cases. For instance, the sentence 'blue-eyed white dog' refers to perceptible qualities of the empirical object, as well as to the conceptual components of the demonstrative thought.

Interestingly, Sellars' reading of Kant relies on sophisticated phenomenological analysis. In his aforementioned text, he appeals to phenomenology: "Our access to the external world and to the nature and variety of the object (in a suitably broad sense) of which it consists is through perception' (Sellars, 1978: 419). Moreover, Sellars claims that 'phenomenological reflection on the structure of perceptual experience, therefore, should reveal the categories, the most generic kinds or classes, to which these objects belong, as well as the manner in which objects perceived and perceiving subjects come together in the perceptual act' (Sellars, 1978: 419). Thus, any reflection that aims to uncover the structure of experience must begin by uncovering the relevant features of perceptual experience.

## 5. Perception and Imagination

In this sense, the first feature of perceptual experience that phenomenological reflection uncovers is the distinction between the act of seeing and the object seen. This means, on Sellars' view, visual experience presents itself as a direct awareness of a complex physical structure. It also presents itself as having a point of view, as 'made' of perspectives (Sellars, 1978). For instance, perceptual objects usually present themselves as 'complex structures of color expanses' that are interpreted as 'three dimensional physical objects' which stand in particular relations to each other and to the perceiver. As we will see, these 'complex visual structures' are sensible models construed by the imagination according to recipes of construction provided by empirical concepts -models that are, as Kant claims in his Schematism, products of methods for providing concepts with pictures (B179/A140). Furthermore, those sensible, representational models (Sellars' image- models) —taken by the perceiving subject *as objects*— turn out to be the proper candidates for intentional reference. In this sense, imagination is a faculty that provides concepts with pictures made from sensible material in accordance with conceptual recipes for construction: this is why the imagination can be regarded as a faculty of *presentation* —namely, a faculty for presenting what is not present. In what follows, we will elucidate the concept of image- model and its relation to Sellars' notion of the way imagination synthetizes the material receptively given in the presentation of objects. This will allow us to shed light on the relation of conceptual thought to embodied coping, and therefore, to clarify what we have called the propositional prejudice embedded in contemporary conceptualism.

In his phenomenology, Sellars' distinguishes, then, between objects perceived and what they are perceived *as*. Thus, in veridical perception, the object, for instance, a blue-eyed white dog is seen *as* a blue-eyed white dog. Although this sounds a bit confusing, we contend that Sellars' here is referring to his Kantian interpretation of perception as intuitional takings of *this-suches* (Sellars, 1978). Specifically, Sellars introduces his concept of an image-model in order to make comprehensible the conceptually guided, and at the same time empirically constrained, presenting activity of the Kantian imagination (as set forth in the Deduction and Schematism). Image-models are, in a first approximation, complex, three-dimensional images of objects and, as such, are the result of a conceptually guided imagination on non- conceptual sensory input (Haag, 2013: 67). Now, if image-models were the result of a conceptual shaping of strictly non-conceptual sensory input via the productive imagination, then we may rightfully ask what is the nature of the sensory input fed into this shaping? Purely receptive sensations are conceived in a first analysis as states of perceiving subjects, which are the effects of our senses being affected by something external. Moreover, these states themselves contain the sensible qualities (*qualia*) which the subject conceives as the properties of the objects of perception. According to Sellars, and here he differs with the McDowellian interpretation of Kant, sensations are 'non-conceptual states of consciousness [...] none of which are apperceived' (Sellars, 1968:10).

Since it is sensible material on which the productive imagination operates, one reasonable question is what happens to it in the synthetizing process. The synthetizing activity of imagination *shapes* this receptive sensory input such that it becomes the qualitative material content of a spontaneous, and hence conceptually-structure, image of a three-dimensional object. This object is represented with its sensory qualities and pictured as 'perspectival' —namely, always in relation to the point of view of a perceiving subject. Sellarsian image-



models are, then, conscious conceptual shapings of unconscious sensory elements that are situated below the line that separates receptivity from self-conscious spontaneity<sup>8</sup>. In Sellars' words,

Thus, when Kant speaks of the productive imagination as 'taking up' (A120) the manifold of outer sense into its activity (the synthesis of apprehension) the metaphor implies, of course, that the manifold is an independent factor which has a strong voice in the outcome. On the other hand, it is only if the manifold is mistakenly construed as belonging to the conceptual order that it *makes sense* to suppose that it, so to speak, bodily or literally becomes a part of the resulting intuitive representation. If it is, as I take it to be, non- conceptual, it can only guide 'from without' the unique conceptual activity which is representing of *this- suches* as subjects of perceptual judgement (Sellars, 1968:16).

So, image-models are conceptually shaped, although they also carry sensible elements. Indeed, the productive imagination could not form image- models unless guided by the help of 'recipes' provided by understanding, which take the form of empirical concepts. Here we may remember Kant's notion of schema, that functions as the conceptual recipe for forming images: 'This representation of a *general procedure* of imagination in providing an image of a concept, I entitle the **schema** of this concept' (B179/A140).

As worked out in his Schematism, the Kantian schema is a conceptual recipe for shaping sense- impressions determined by the Kantian categories and their corresponding schemata (Haag, 2013: 68). Consequently, image-models are the result of spontaneous, conceptual shaping of sense- impressions, which, as Kant claims, are the result of the affection of our senses by things-in- themselves. In this sense, the properties of the image- model thus construed are its sensible properties. The properties they comprise, however, are not only the properties actually perceived, but also the sensible properties we *imagine* the object as having (Haag, 2013). In Sellars' words, 'We see the cool red apple. We see it as red on the facing side, as red on the opposite side, and as containing a volume of cool white apple flesh. We do not see of the apple its opposite side, or its inside, or its internal whiteness, or its coolness, or its juiciness. But while these features are not seen, they are not merely believed in. These features are present in the object of perception as actualities. They are present in virtue of being *imagined*' (Sellars 1978, §21-422). Let us unpack Sellars' sophisticated bit of descriptive phenomenology with some more detail. As we have mentioned, Sellars' fundamental contribution to Kantian interpretation is his claim that the productive imagination affords representations of extended structures in space by constructing 'sense-image models'. In his words,

[Perceptual] consciousness involves the *constructing of sense- image models of external objects*. This construction is the work of the imagination responding to the stimulation of the retina. From this point on I shall of these models as image- models. (Sellars, 1968: 26).

Precisely, image-models are what Sellars believes Kant has in mind in his A- Deduction when he speaks of 'images'. In Kant's words, the aim of synthetical imaginative activity is 'bringing the manifold of intuition into an *image*' (A120). Sellars' argument for the premise that perception involves such image- models, as we have said, rests on a bit of sophisticated phenomenology (Rosenberg, 2007). Unpacking the quoted passage of the red apple, we can distinguish between *what* we see (an apple), *what* we see it *as* (red on the outside; cool, juicy and white on the inside), and *what* we see *of* it (its red facing surface, but not its opposite red side, or its juicy, white, cool flesh inside). Sellars original idea here is that these features, although not seen, are not merely believed in. They are, in fact, present in the object of perception as 'actualities' (Sellars, 1968: 21). This means that certain sensory features, while they are not really perceived, are not merely thought of, but are actually 'bodily' present in the experience. Sellars' main contention is that they are present by means of the productive imagination. To explain this fundamental Sellarsian idea, let us hear, once again, his own words:

Roughly imagining is an intimate blend of imaging and conceptualization [...] Thus, imagining a cool juicy red apple (*as* a cool juicy red apple) is a matter of (a) *imaging* a unified structure containing as aspects images of a volume of white, surrounded by red, and of mutually pervading volumes of juiciness and coolth, (b) *conceptualizing* this unified image- structure as a cool juicy red apple. (Sellars, 1968: 23).

In the Sellarsian sense, thus, perception is a matter of *sensing –cum- imagining* a unified structure, and conceptualizing it, for instance, as a 'red apple'. According to Kant, in this sense, the 'transcendental synthesis of imagination' is an effect 'of the understanding on sensibility' (B152). As we have seen, the thesis that imagining is a fundamental component of perception is very much Kantian (Rosenberg, 2013). Importantly, Kant explicitly sets forth this idea:

<sup>8</sup> This metaphor comes from McDowell's reading of the Kantian interpretation of Sellars (2009). McDowell, John. 2009. Sensory consciousness in Kant and Sellars. In *Having the world in view. Essays on Kant, Hegel, and Sellars*, ed. John McDowell, 108-126. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

No psychologist has yet thought that the *imagination is a necessary ingredient of perception itself*. This is so partly because this faculty has been limited to reproduction, and partly because it has been believed that the senses do not merely afford us impressions but also put them together, and produce images of objects, for which without doubt something more than the receptivity of impressions is required, namely a function of the synthesis of them. (A120)

## 6. McDowell on Kantian Synthesis

Sellars' image-models are what Kant calls in his Schematism 'images of objects' (*Bilder der Gegenstände*) (A137-47/ B176-87). Such images embody the perspectival character of perceptual experience —namely, the fact that we experience the world, and the objects in it, always from a specific spatial point of view (Rosenberg, 2007: 272). Interestingly, this feature of experience is also highlighted by McDowell:

In an ostensible seeing whose content can be partly specified as that there is a red cube in front of one, the apparent red cube will be *placed* more determinately than just somewhere or other in front of one. From the standpoint of the subject of such an ostensible seeing, its content will be expressible by saying something like 'There is a red cube there'. Here we have to imagine the use of 'there' has a determinate significance by virtue of the subject's directing it in a specific way at the ostensible layout of the ostensibly seen environment (McDowell, 2009: 459).

In this sense, like McDowell, Sellars believes this 'perspectivity' is a fundamental trait of perceptual experience. This is why, from a general point of view, Sellars argues that the productive imagination does two different and complementary jobs: 'as 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 constricting image models of *perceiver- confronting- dog*' (Sellars, 1978: 424). In this sense, the productive imagination generates both the complex demonstrative conceptualization,

This red pyramid facing me edgewise  
And the simultaneous *image- model*, which is a point- of- viewish image of [...]  
A red pyramid facing me edgewise. (Sellars, 1978: 426)

In Sellars' account, the demonstrative conceptualization is the relevant recipe provided by means of the productive imagination *qua* understanding —which, for Kant, is the faculty of concepts. On the other hand, the perspectival image- model is the representation of an object located in space that is produced in accordance with that recipe by the understand *qua* productive imagination (imaging faculty) *out* of the materials provided by sensibility (Rosenberg, 2007: 273). McDowell himself offers a very appropriate account of Sellars' idea of the two-fold nature of the faculty of imagination —namely, the idea that visual experiences 'contain' claims guided by concepts that also provide recipes for the construction of phenomenal image-models. In McDowell's words,

Now we can say that in an ostensible seeing that there is a red cube in front of one —an experience in which it looks to one as if there is a red cube in front of one— the *same* conceptual capacities would be actualized with the *same* mode of togetherness [...] but this actualization of the relevant conceptual capacities, unlike the one that would be involved in the corresponding judgment, would be involuntary. (McDowell, 2009: 439).

Precisely, like we have previously insisted, the underlying idea both in McDowell's and in Sellars' account of perceptual experience is that the *same* conceptual capacities are exercised in an ostensible seeing of a red cube in front of one as in the corresponding judgement, which, of course, they take from Kant's Clue (B104/ A79). Moreover, McDowell specifies his vision for the exercise of conceptual capacities by means of the metaphor of a *shaping of sensory consciousness*:

What makes it an ostensible seeing, as opposed to a conceptual episode of some other kind (for instance, a judgement), is that this actualization of conceptual capacities is a conceptual shaping of sensory consciousness (and in particular visual) consciousness. (McDowell, 2009: 460).

Even though the focal point of this article is Sellars' views, rather than McDowell's, is it, however, appropriate to highlight this agreement between both, that in spite of their differences, shows the common Kantian roots at play in their accounts. Being as it may, what is clear here is that McDowell's account points to

a fundamental point relevant for our purposes: that in perceptual experience conceptual capacities are exercised in a distinctive manner, they ‘contain’ their claims in a distinctive way, ‘as ostensibly required from or impressed on their subject by an ostensibly seen object’ (McDowell, 2009: 450). In other words, the McDowellian idea that we take on the whole to be the correct interpretation of Kant’s Clue, is that conceptual capacities are ‘*involuntarily* drawn into operation under ostensible necessitation from an ostensibly seen object’ (McDowell, 2009: 458). This idea carries the underlying premise that sensory consciousness is never *amorphous stuff*, which, under the guidance of appropriate concepts, could be simply worked out into blue cubes, red pyramids or juicy apples, much as a lump of bronze could be worked out into an ashtray, a flower base, or a Greek statue (McDowell, 2009: 457). In this sense, McDowell’s view of conceptual capacities as always operative, although not *actively* exercised, echoes Sellars’ account of the Kantian notion of ‘manifold of sense’—namely, his account of the transcendental ‘guiding’ role of sensations. By this Sellars means the fact that in experiencing the subject is called on to actualize certain conceptual capacities under specific circumstances. The underlying question here is appropriately expressed by McDowell: ‘How is it that sensory relatedness to the environment takes the form of conceptual episodes, episodes that [...] ‘contain’ claims, at all?’ (McDowell, 2009: 444). In other words, the problem here is why does the subject’s visual experience contain *this* claim in any particular circumstance. Importantly, for both Sellars’ and McDowell’s Kantian interpretation, what is fundamental is the claim that visual experience contains claims, not as thoughts or judgements, but as *image-models* (Rosenberg, 2007: 275).

The key point is that sensory consciousness is not an *amorphous stuff* that can be shaped into *anything*. For instance, we find ourselves confronting ostensibly seen objects, e.g., a red cube in front of us, in a visual experience that is guided by sensibility and which contains a particular claim. Sellars’ leading thought here is that there must be something that constrains and determines from sensibility itself, which conceptual capacities are actualized in such perceptual experience. Consequently, these instances serve as justifications of why *those* conceptual capacities were actualized in any particular occasion. In Sellars’ words,

Thus the sense impression inference is an attempt to account for the fact that normal perceivers have *conceptual* representations of a red and rectangular object both

- a. When they are being affected in normal circumstances by a red and rectangular object; and
- b. When they are being affected in abnormal circumstances by objects which have other, but systematically related characteristics (Sellars, 1968: 17)

Importantly, Sellars differentiates between image- models and objects proper. On his account, even though image-models are perspectival in character, the objects in terms of which they are conceptualized are not. For instance, *apples* are not perspectival in character. The concept of an apple is not, of course, perspectival. Red apples in front of us, however, are *seen from* a point of view. Furthermore, apples are *imagined from* a point of view. A spatial structure, an empirical object, is *imagined from* a point of view. Yet, Sellars claims, the concept of an empirical object (an apple, for instance) is not the concept of a point-of-viewish object. Consequently, Sellars concludes, ‘we must distinguish carefully between objects [...] as *conceived* by the productive imagination, on the one hand, and the image- models *constructed* by the productive imagination, on the other’ (Sellars, 1978: 424, §29).

In this sense, Sellars conceives of sensations as belonging to receptivity and constituting ‘the brute fact or constraining element of perceptual experience’ (Sellars, 1968: 18). This means sensation plays the guiding role of selectively *actualizing* the relevant conceptual capacities. Moreover, sense-impressions are shaped by actualizations of those conceptual capacities into image- model representations of this-suches determinately located in space—namely, sensation plays the role of being the matter which sensory consciousness operates on. One relevant question here, however, is what does exactly mean that sensory consciousness is ‘conceptually shaped’ as McDowell’s Kantian interpretation claims?

McDowell’s story about conceptual shaping pertains to the idea that the *same* conceptual capacities are exercised ‘with the *same* togetherness’ (McDowell, 2009: 458), in an ostensible *seeing of* a red cube in front of us that would be exercised in *judging that* there is a red cube in front of us (Rosenberg, 2007: 281). On this way of thinking about perception, what is ostensibly seen can be literally *identical* with what is judged about it. Setting forth his Kantian interpretation, an interpretation that exploits crucial Sellarsian views, McDowell says that,

As actualization of conceptual capacities with the appropriate togetherness, the judgement and the ostensible seeing would be alike. They would differ *only* in the way in which the relevant conceptual capacities are actualized. In the judgement, there would be a free responsible exercise of conceptual capacities; in the ostensible seeing, they would be *involuntarily* drawn into operation under ostensible necessitation from an ostensibly seen object (McDowell, 2009: 458).

As we have said, Sellars himself would agree with this Kantian interpretation by means of his idea of the conceptual shaping of sensations (what McDowell calls ‘sensory consciousness’) in the production of

image-models. Importantly, Sellars believes that in seeing an object, one is always making use of conceptual capacities that are at play in both the constructing of sense-image structures and in belief and judgement pertaining to such structures. In his words, ‘seeing a cool juicy red apple (as a cool juicy red apple) is a matter of (a) *sensing-cum- imaging* a unified structure containing as aspects images of a volume of white, a sensed half- apple shaped shell of red, and an image of a volume of juiciness pervaded by a volume of white; (b) *conceptualizing* this unified sense- image structure as a cool juicy red apple. Notice that the proper and common sensible features enter in both by virtue of being actual features of the sense- image structure *and* by virtue of being items conceptualized and believed in’ (Sellars, 1968: 424, §24). According to Sellars’ phenomenological analysis, the construction of image-models is a unified process guided by a combination of sensory input on the one hand and background beliefs, memories and expectations on the other. Precisely, Sellars’ claim is that the ‘productive’ imagination is a ‘complex of abilities’ that unifies in *one* experience the distinctive contributions of sensibility and understanding.

## 7. Final Remarks

According to Sellars, thus, Kant’s distinction between (a) the concept of an object, (b) the schema of a concept and (c) an image of the object, as well as his explanation of the difference between an empirical concept, say, of an apple, and the ‘successive manifold in the apprehension’ of an *actual* apple, can be understood by means of his phenomenology of image- models. Let us remember Kant’s words here: ‘The object is *that* in the appearance which contains the conditions of this necessary rule of apprehension’ (B236, A191). So, on the one hand, we have the complex demonstrative conceptualization —Kantian intuition— of an object, and on the other, we have the image- model, which is a point-of-viewish image of oneself confronting the object in successive apprehensions. This whole process presupposes the constitution of objects by the productive imagination in conformity with recipe-schemata derived from concepts. In this sense, by means of Sellars’ Kantian interpretation, we are in a position to understand the precise sense in which the productive imagination mediates between ‘the two extremes [...] sensibility and understanding’ (A124) and is ‘an action of the understanding on sensibility’ (B152).

In conclusion, the so- called pure categories are forms of thought specialized to thought about spatio-temporal objects. The relation of the forms of thought to the pure categories is that of genera to species, as in the relation of the ‘pure categories to the schematized categories’<sup>9</sup>. On the other hand, Kant emphasizes the difference between intuitions on the one hand and sensations and images on the other. He claims it is intuitions and not sensations or images which contain categorial form. Moreover, as we have seen, when Kant speaks of *synthesis* in connection with perception, he has two things in mind: (a) the construction of image- models; (b) the formation of intuitive representations (Sellars, 1968: 430, 52). As we have said, since intuitions *have* categorial form, we can find categorial form *in* them. This means we cannot simply abstract the categories from sensations or images. They are *embedded* in our experience of objects and events, such that they are always operative although not actively or consciously exercised. Therefore, the categories are both functions and forms of judgement, that nonetheless have a synthetic function of unifying and shaping perceptual experience. This on the whole is the salient idea of our analysis of Sellars’ (and to some extent McDowell’s) interpretation of Kant. This, we believe, is the starting point for appreciating the phenomenon of ‘real-world’ conceptual impingement —namely, the way in which conceptuality shapes sensory consciousness, whereon such notions like synthesis, schema and concept come to the fore in their organic unity. Perhaps the teaching of our reflections can be summarized by claiming that it is, precisely, the Kantian imagination that connects the non- conceptual realm with the conceptual world of human experience. And this, we believe, is the starting point of a full- fledged theory of conceptuality in human perception. But this is a matter for future and more ambitious projects.

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<sup>9</sup> Note that even though the objective validity of the categories, in Kant’s B- Deduction, pertains in principle to ‘objects in general’ (from §. 15- 21), a second step pertaining to the prove of their *objective reality*, on Kant’s criterium, is required. This further argumentative step (§.21-26) concludes that the categories make perception itself possible (B161), and therefore, that pure concepts are forms of thought referred to *actual* spatio- temporal objects. What this means for our interpretation of Kant’s vision of conceptualization of experience remains, for now, undecided.



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