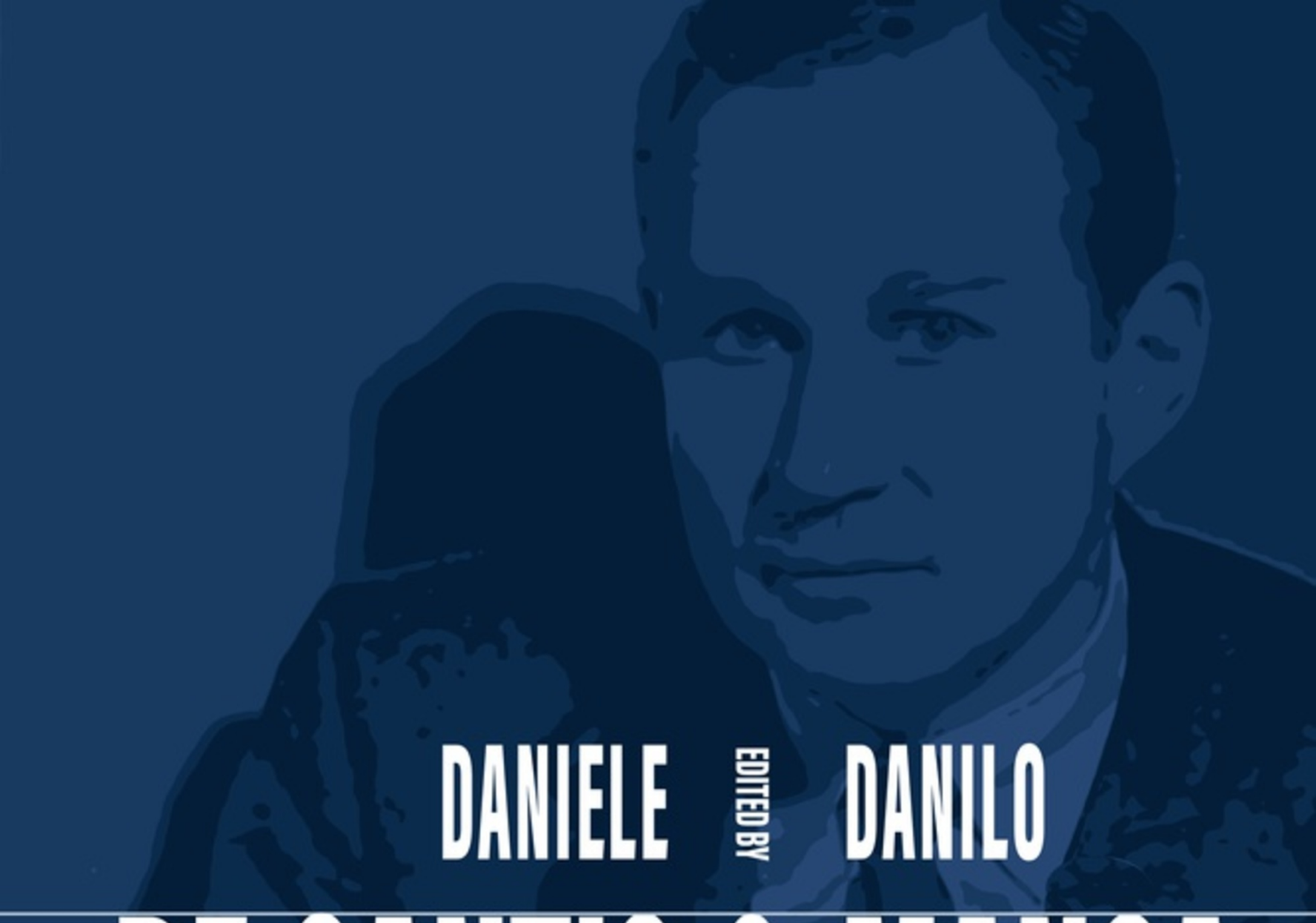

DANIELE DE SANTIS & DANILO MANCA

EDITED BY

WILFRID SELLARS AND PHENOMENOLOGY

INTERSECTIONS, ENCOUNTERS, OPPOSITIONS

SERIES IN CONTINENTAL THOUGHT

Wilfrid Sellars and Phenomenology

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Series Editor Hanne Jacobs

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ABBREVIATIONS

Husserl's Works

CM	*Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*. Translated by Dorion Cairns. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1999.
Crisis	*The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*. Translated by David Carr. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
EU	*Experience and Judgment: Investigations in a Genealogy of Logic*. Edited by Ludwig Landgrebe. Translated by James Spencer Churchill and Karl Ameriks. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973.
FTL	*Formal and Transcendental Logic*. Translated by Dorion Cairns. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969.
Hua	*Husserliana*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff 1950–84; Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers 1988–2005; Cham: Springer 2005–.

In particular, in this volume we consider the following volumes:

Hua III/1	*Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie*. Edited by Karl Schuhmann. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976.
Hua VII	*Erste Philosophie (1923/24): Erster Teil; Kritische Ideengeschichte*. Edited by Rudolf Boehm. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1956.

Hua VIII	*Erste Philosophie (1923/24): Zweiter Teil; Theorie der phänomenologischen Reduktion*. Edited by Rudolf Boehm. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1959.
Hua XI	*Analysen zur passiven Synthesis: Aus Vorlesungs-und Forschungsmanuskripten 1918–1926*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1966.
Hua XIX	*Logische Untersuchungen*. Edited by Ursula Panzer. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1984.
Hua XX/1	*Logische Untersuchungen: Ergänzungsband; Erster Teil. Entwürfe zur Umarbeitung der VI; Untersuchung und zur Vorrede für die Neuaufl age der Logischen Untersuchungen (Sommer 1913)*. Edited by Ulrich Melle. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
Hua XXIX	*Die Krisis der europaischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale: Phänomenologie. Ergänzungsband; Texte aus dem Nachlass 1934–1937*. Edited by Reinhold N. Smid. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1993.
Hua XXX	*Logik und Allgemeine Wissenschaftstheorie: Vorlesungen 1917/18 mit Ergänzenden Texten aus der ersten Fassung von 1910/11*. Edited by Ursula Panzer. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1996.
Hua XXXVIII	*Wahrnehmung und Aufmerksamkeit: Texte aus dem Nachlass (1893–1912)*. Dordrecht: Springer, 2004.
Ideas I	*Ideas for a Pure Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy. First Book, General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*. Translated by Daniel O. Dahlstrom. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2014.
Ideas I/K	*Ideas Pertaining a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy. First Book: General Introduction to a Pure Phenomenology*. Translated by Fred Kersten. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982.
Ideas II	*Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy. Second Book: Studies in the Phenomenology of Constitution*. Translated by Richard Rojcewicz and André Schuwer. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1989.

IdPh	*The Idea of Phenomenology*. Translated by Lee Hardy. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1999.
ILTK	*Introduction to Logic and Theory of Knowledge: Lectures 1906/07*. Translated by Claire Ortiz Hill. Dordrecht: Springer, 2008.
LI [no.]/F	*Logical Investigations*. 2 vols. Translated by John N. Findlay. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970.
LI [no.]/M	*Logical Investigations*. 2 vols. Translated by John N. Findlay. Edited with a new introduction by Dermot Moran and with a new preface by Michael Dummett. London: Routledge, 2001.
PAS	*Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis*. Translated by Anthony J. Steinbock. Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2001.
PhCIT	*On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time (1893–1917)*. Translated by John B. Brough. Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1991.
PhICM	*Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory (1898–1925)*. Translated by J. B. Brough. Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2005.
Semiotik	*Zur Logik der Zeichen (Semiotik)*. In *Hua XII: Philosophie der Aritmetik. Logische und psychologische Untersuchungen*. Edited by Lothar Eley, 340–74. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970.
TS	*Thing and Space*. Translated by Richard Rojcewicz. Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1997.

Kant's Work

CPR	*Critique of Pure Reason* (The work is cited in the standard mode, indicating the page number of the 1781 edition preceded by the abbreviation A, and the page number of the 1787 edition preceded by the abbreviation B). In the volume contributors indicate in the bibliography the translation they refer to followed by the number. Translated by N. K. Smith. New York: Macmillan.

LM *Lectures on Metaphysics*. Translated by Karl Ameriks and Steve Naragon. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Sellars's Works

AR "Autobiographical Reflections: (February, 1973)." In *Action, Knowledge and Reality*. Edited by Hector-Neri Castañeda, 277–93. New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1975.

BD "Berkeley and Descartes: Reflections on the 'New Way of Ideas.'" In Studies in Perception: Interpretations in the History of Philosophy and Science, edited by P. K. Machamer and R. G. Turnbull, 259–311. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1977.

EPM "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind." In *Science, Perception and Reality*. Edited by Wilfrid Sellars, 127–97. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963.

EPMH *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind*. With an introduction by Richard Rory and a study guide by Robert B. Brandom. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997.

EPMM "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind." In *Minnesota Studies in the Philosophy of Science,* vol. 1, 253–329. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1956.

FMPP "Foundations for a Metaphysics of Pure Process." *The Monist* 64 (1981): 3–90.

KPT *Kant and Pre-Kantian Themes: Lectures by Wilfrid Sellars*. Edited by Pedro Amaral. Atascadero, CA: Ridgeview, 2002.

KTE "Some Remarks on Kant's Theory of Experience." In *Kant's Transcendental Metaphysics: Sellars' Cassirer Lectures Notes and Other Essays,* edited by Jeffrey F. Sicha, 269–82. Atascadero, CA: Ridgeview, 2002.

KTI "Kant's Transcendental Idealism." In *Kant's Transcendental Metaphysics: Sellars' Cassirer Lectures*

	Notes and Other Essays, edited by Jeffrey F. Sicha, 403–18. Atascadero, CA: Ridgeview, 2002.
LA	"The Lever of Archimedes." In *In the Space of Reasons: Selected Essays of Wilfrid Sellars,* edited by Kevin Scharp and Robert B. Brandom, 229–57. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007.
LCP	"On the Logic of Complex Particulars." In *Mind* 58 (1949): 306–38.
LT	"The Language of Theories." In *Science, Perception, and Reality,* 108–28 Atascadero, CA: Ridgeview, 1963.
MCP	"Metaphysics and the Concept of a Person." In *The Logical Way of Doing Things,* edited by Karel Lambert, 219–52. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1969.
MEV	"Mental Events." In *In the Space of Reasons,* edited by Kevin Scharp and Robert B. Brandom, 282–302. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007.
P	"Particulars." In *Science, Perception and Reality,* edited by Wilfrid Sellars, 282–97. Atascadero, CA: Ridgeview, 1963.
PH	"Phenomenalism." In *Science, Perception and Reality,* edited by Wilfrid Sellars, 60–105. Atascadero, CA: Ridgeview, 1963.
PMA	"Perceiving and Mental Acts." In *Wilfrid Sellars Notre Dame Lectures (1969–1986),* edited by Pedro Amaral, 295–322. Atascadero, CA: Ridgeview, 2015.
PSIM	"Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man." In *Science, Perception, and Reality,* 1–40. Atascadero, CA: Ridgeview, 1963.
RIKTE	"The Role of Imagination in Kant's Theory of Experience." In *In the Space of Reasons,* edited by Kevin Scharp and Robert B. Brandom, 454–66. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007.
SM	*Science and Metaphysics: Variations on Kantian Themes; The John Locke Lectures for 1965–66.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968.

SPR	*Science, Perception, and Reality*. Edited by Wilfrid Sellars. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963.
SRKTE	"Some Remarks on Kant's Theory of Experience." In *In the Space of Reasons,* edited by Kevin Scharp and Robert B. Brandom, 437–53. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007.
SRP	"Scientific Reason and Perception." In *Wilfrid Sellars Notre Dame Lectures (1969–1986),* edited by Pedro Amaral, 323–46. Atascadero, CA: Ridgeview, 2015. Published online in 2009 by A. Chrucky, http://www.ditext.com/amaral/wsndl.pdf.
SRPC	"Some Reflections on Perceptual Consciousness." In *Kant's Transcendental Metaphysics: Sellars' Cassirer Lectures Notes and Other Essays,* edited by Jeffrey F. Sicha, 431–42. Atascadero, CA: Ridgeview, 2002.
SRPCPh	"Some Reflections on Perceptual Consciousness." In *Crosscurrents in Phenomenology,* edited by Ronald Bruzina and Bruce Wilshire, 169–85. Dordrecht: Springer, 1978.
WSNDL	*Wilfrid Sellars Notre Dame Lectures (1969–1986).* Edited by Pedro Amaral. Atascadero, CA: Ridgeview, 2015.

EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

Daniele De Santis and Danilo Manca

There is no doubt that Wilfrid Sellars is beginning to be recognized as a true classic of contemporary philosophy—and not only in the Anglophone world. Neither is there doubt about the importance of his most renowned criticism: ever since his Myth of the Given appeared in the 1956 lectures *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind,* its influence has been felt in what goes by the name of "phenomenology" (in the broadest sense of that term possible).[1] But just as Sellars's philosophy cannot be reduced to *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind* and the Myth of the Given, neither can his relations (whether historical or systematic) with phenomenology be restricted to this motif, or more generally, to a *bellum philosophi contra philosophos* (those of the phenomenological tradition or who claim to reconnect to it). And this is not only because Sellars himself was educated *à l'école de la phénoménologie*—although in the particular form that phenomenology displayed under the byline of Marvin Farber (see Wagner 1984; Manca 2020; and Nunziante 2020). If one still wanted to speak of a Sellarsian criticism of phenomenology (no matter what this would be), one should conceive of it as running along the internal borders of the phenomenological tradition itself rather than its external

ones. This is in part because the very borders of what we tend to speak of in the singular (phenomenology) are indeed far from being linear and easy to identify. But first and foremost because it is hard to find in his writings words or expressions that would be aimed at dismissing *sic et simpliciter* whatever he would understand by the label "phenomenology." Of course, this does not imply that Sellars could simply be included in the phenomenological tradition or be called a "phenomenologist," since this label would merely amount to shifting from a form of radical disjunction (i.e., either phenomenology or Sellars) to an equally radical—and hence unjustified—identification. In the secondary literature on the relations between Sellars and phenomenology, for the most part scholars have been preoccupied with the Myth of the Given. (This limitation has already been denounced in De Santis and Manca 2021.) The consequence has been that any contribution that could not immediately be traced back to the discussions of the Myth of the Given (and relevant problems or themes) would simply and straightforwardly fall off the philosophical and scholarly radar.

With all this being recognized at the outset, let us hasten to warn the readers that the goal of this volume is not—and cannot be—turning the situation upside down. Rather its more modest ambition is drawing (in some cases, redrawing) attention, for the first time, to the manifold lines of intersection between Sellars's reflections and those of the phenomenologists.[2] In the present volume, this has mainly been accomplished by means of three different strategies. The first strategy consists of addressing some of the most traditional topics—for example, that of the Given, of the structure of experience, of the nature of perception (and more generally, of intentionality), or of the opposition between manifest and scientific image—by trying to look at them differently.[3] The reader will find this strategy explicitly at work in the scholarship of Walter Hopp, Danilo Manca, Roberta Lanfredini, Jacob Rump, and Michela Summa. Despite the different arguments and positions respectively adopted, they all have something in common, for they all aim at

rethinking the very nature of the philosophical confrontation between Sellars and phenomenology (Husserlian or other).

In contrast, the second strategy raises new questions, thereby connecting Sellars to less studied problems or to lesser-known figures of the phenomenological tradition. For example, this is precisely what Huemer and De Santis do in the last two chapters of this book. The former does so by returning attention to a figure who is nowadays mostly forgotten—Roderick Chisholm—and his debate with Sellars concerning the linguistic or psychological nature of intentional phenomena. The latter brings into the discussion of Sellars's "particulars" two protagonists (almost always neglected) of the early phenomenological movement, Maximilian Beck and Jean Hering, as well as Husserl. Finally, the third strategy identifies phenomenological lines and motifs that run *within* Sellars's own philosophy. Two prime examples of this third strategy are Nunziante and Mertens. Nunziante makes the case for regarding *Experience and Judgment* as an important source of Sellars's own "theory of sensation" (in such a way that a certain Husserlian motif regarding the "lawfulness" of experience can be found in some of Sellars's own texts on the matter). For his part, Mertens explicitly sets out to read Sellars by resorting to the notion of "reflection" as it is developed by phenomenologists.

Of course, it would be a mistake to conclude that these strategies can be—and de facto have been—adopted separately by the different contributors. They are rather to be regarded as *ideally* distinct strategies, the many intersections of which contribute to shaping, to different degrees, the physiognomy of the chapters included here. And this is possible because no specific methodological protocol has been imposed on the authors: each chapter is the expression of the author's individual stance on phenomenology and the philosophy of Sellars—hence on the manner in which they could possibly be combined, contrasted, or even just compared.

The volume opens with a systematic discussion of the relation between Sellars and Husserl, a discussion in which

theoretical and historical analyses intertwine. Antonio Nunziante's text "Husserl's Legacy in Sellars's Philosophical Strategy" offers a perspective on Sellars's indebtedness to Husserl that goes far beyond what Sellars himself seems to concede in his "Autobiographical Reflections," where he remembers how Marvin Farber introduced him to Husserl. But the problem is precisely that of determining what kind of influence Husserl (or better, Farber's Husserl) had on Sellars and his philosophical strategy. In this specific respect, Nunziante advances a strong yet straightforward thesis: that Husserl's conception of passive synthesis, as presented in *Experience and Judgment,* played—via the mediation of Farber himself—a fundamental role in Sellars's "theory of sensation." Nunziante speaks of a "farberized" Husserl and shows how Husserl's idea of a "*Gesetzmäßigkeit*" of experience that is "incorporated within perceptual takings" can be explicitly found "in some of Sellars's writings of the Seventies." Accordingly, Sellars can be regarded as further developing a certain manner of conceiving of the relation "between the conceptual component and the specific sensorial dimension of perceptual acts" that harks all the way back to some of the preoccupations of the late Husserl.

The need for a systematic inquiry into the Husserl-Sellars relation can also be found in Walter Hopp's "Sellars and Husserl on the Manifest World." Focusing on Sellars's attack on the "Myth of the Given," Hopps advances that Husserl's phenomenology has something "positive" to say about the so-called manifest image. What Hopp offers us is a "Husserlian defense of the manifest image by way of a defense of the phenomenon of givenness and its epistemic significance." He addresses, one by one, all the different claims implied by Sellars's Myth and—through incredibly meticulous analyses of the phenomena of givenness and categorial intuition—shows how Husserl does not fall prey to any of them. It is of crucial importance to recognize that givenness is an "immediate and originary access to what exists" in such a way that even if we accept the existence of "linguistic and conceptual" entities, their existence

cannot rule out their being given to us. We have two choices. We can claim that conceptual entities are "constructions" that do not manifest the (manifest) world as it really is (although since the scientific image itself resorts to concepts and categorial structures, it, too, is unable to present the world as it really is). Or if we admit that the use of "categorial structures" in the case of the "scientific image" does not jeopardize its attempt to present the world as it really is, then we can assume the same should hold true of the manifest image and our way of experiencing it as well.

If in the case of Hopp the assessment of the relation between manifest and scientific image plays only the role of the wider backdrop against which a systematic discussion of givenness is developed, Danilo Manca and Roberta Lanfredini make the clash between the two "images" their direct focus. In "Husserl's Lifeworld and Sellars's Stereoscopic Vision of the World," Manca sets out to argue three main theses: first, that Husserl's lifeworld is one of the "most sophisticated" examples of the manifest image; second, that it is not true that Sellars's depiction of the scientific image undermines Husserl's own "ontology of the lifeworld"; and third, that this ontology "problematizes the thesis concerning the essence of the world"—thereby laying out the coordinates for rethinking and reconceptualizing the very (alleged) opposition between manifest and scientific image. As Manca convincingly points out, for the phenomenologist who has bracketed "both the manifest and the naturalistic worldview," and has thus assumed the perspective of the "disinterested onlooker," the point is not to incorporate the scientific image "into our way of life." Rather, the point is for him or her to recognize the "continuity" between the scientific and manifest image.

A similar position is outlined in Lanfredini's "Beyond the Manifest Image: The Myth of the Given Across Determination and Disposition," where the author highlights the "consistent similarities" to be found between Husserl's and Sellars's views on the manifest image–scientific image distinction. Lanfredini

writes that although Sellars and Husserl differ on many "essential points," the differences are not "so radical as they might seem at first sight," since they both share the same starting point: "a certain clarification of experience in terms of Manifest Image, which in turn can be related to the concepts of determination and characteristic note." In Lanfredini's argument that Husserl does not fall victim to the infamous Myth, what is crucial is the distinction between the "discrimination and identification of the given": as she carefully explains, if by "recognition of the given" we mean its "identification," then the conceptual, linguistic, and inferential dimension is "decisive." In contrast, if "recognition" is understood as the "discrimination of something," then the importance of the "conceptual dimension" is enormously reduced. Perception has its own "laws," which are fully independent from those of the conceptual dimension.

The reader can appreciate the complexity of Sellars's relation to Husserl precisely by comparing Lanfredini's strategy with Nunziante's analysis of the importance of *Experience and Judgment* for Sellars. While the latter strongly emphasizes what could be called the sedimented presence of the theory of passive synthesis animating Sellars's doctrine of sensation, Lanfredini's reading hinges on the articulation between "discrimination, identification, and motivation" (as "the three functions of sense-giving [*Sinngebung*] that make explicit the phenomenological notion of the given"), precisely in order to make the case for the irreducibility of the Husserlian "given" to Sellars's depiction of it.

If we now move on to Karl Mertens's "The Status of Phenomenological Reflection: A Reassessment Inspired by Wilfrid Sellars's Philosophy," we see a new angle of approach. Mertens's suggestion, as he himself explains at the beginning, "is that some crucial aspects and implications of the method of phenomenological reflection can be sharpened thanks to the confrontation with Sellars's considerations on both observational and theoretical language and his concept of scientific

realism." In contrast to all the perspectives so far, Mertens does not approach Sellars phenomenologically; instead, he goes the other way around—"from Sellars to phenomenology." Or even better, if Sellars is read in light of certain phenomenological themes and concerns (this being the direction running from phenomenology to Sellars), the task here is to show how the latter can be somehow "sharpened" thanks to the former (this being the path that moves from Sellars all the way back to phenomenology). Here the focus is on the (phenomenological) concept of "reflection"—considered in its productive and creative nature—and this is tackled on the basis of Husserl's and Merleau-Ponty's contributions. By a careful and stratified discussion of Husserl, Merleau-Ponty, and Sellars, the author reaches the conclusion that even though phenomenological reflection is related to intuition in such a way as to take us back to the familiarity of our experience (this being what Mertens refers to as the "what is it like to be an experiencing subject" or the "for-me-ness" of experience), it introduces a "theoretical language" that actually *constructs* "the meaning of the originary experience."

With Jacob Rump's essay, "The Space of Motivations, Experience, and the Categorial Given," the reader is introduced to a new dimension of the discussion concerning phenomenology and Sellars, at the center of which is the doctrine of intentionality and its many different aspects and related issues (which are also progressively tackled by both Wolfgang Huemer and Michela Summa). More specifically, Rump proposes a phenomenological account of empirical knowledge in light of Sellars's criticism of the "Myth of the Given." Notably, this account accords with Sellars's thesis "that epistemic status is accorded to empirical episodes holistically and within a broader normative context," and yet disagrees with the idea central to Sellars's peculiar nominalism to the effect that "such holism and normativity are accomplished only within the linguistic and conceptual confines of the space of reasons." In a way that is partially in line with Lanfredini (as well as with Nunziante,

although in a different way), Rump pays a great deal of attention to one of the crucial notions of Husserl's theory of experience: the concept of "motivation" (a concept whose itinerary already begins with the *Logical Investigations*). In so arguing, Rump is able to convincingly circumscribe a "space" ("the space of motivations") that is reducible neither to the "logical space of reasons" nor to that of "causes." Rump's strategy moves in a way that is the opposite of the one embraced by Mertens: his point of departure is the necessity of recognizing the correctness of Sellars's thesis that "knowledge" cannot obtain outside of a "normative" context (from Sellars to phenomenology), but he goes on to offer the counterargument that the concept of normativity does not have the (extremely limited) "extension" that Sellars (and some of his epigones) would on the contrary grant to it.[4] "Normativity" does not coincide with "conceptual normativity," and "the space of motivation" is precisely what allows Rump to enlarge the understanding of the "normative" itself (this being the way that takes us back from phenomenology to Sellars).

With Michela Summa's "Is Imagination a 'Necessary Ingredient of Perception'? Sellars's and Husserl's Variations on a Kantian Theme," a new element is added to our puzzle, one that reconnects both Husserl and Sellars to a crucial Kantian theme: that of the role played by "imagination" in the intentional and normative structure of experience. The starting point is that "Sellars and Husserl not only agree in recognizing that perception has a non-propositional and nonetheless articulated structure. They also agree in recognizing that this structure is indebted to mental activities we can somehow trace back to the functions Kant attributes to productive imagination." And yet when it comes to the question whether imagination plays a constitutive role in perception, their positions do radically diverge: while Sellars proposes an account that attributes "a crucial role to imagination in perception," this is not at all the case with Husserl. He straightforwardly rejects "the claim that the constitution of perceptual objects relies on imagination."

But the goal of Summa's chapter is not so much dwelling on their differences as arguing that the two approaches "can be mutually enlightening"—thereby contributing to an overall "transcendental account" of perception. Departing from the Kantian talk of faculties, Husserl develops a more convincing account of the "specificity" of the different syntheses involved in the process of perception. In contrast, Kant and Sellars (who claims to be reconnecting to Kant) focus more emphatically on the normativity of perception, thereby allowing us to obtain some important insights into its many forms.

Huemer's "The Chisholm-Sellars Correspondence on Intentionality" provides a discussion in which the term "phenomenology" is assumed more as a label designating a constellation of problems that allow such and such an author to be compared or contrasted with Sellars. Although Huemer focuses on the famous correspondence between Chisholm and Sellars on the very nature of intentionality, the proper name of "Chisholm" is here systematically assumed to refer to certain specific intersections between phenomenology and analytic philosophy (two traditions that at the time were hardly aware of their mutual existence and theoretical complexity). The problem at stake is their different understanding of the primitive character of intentionality and "the question of whether the meaning of linguistic signs is to be explained on the basis of the intentionality of the mental" (Chisholm) or "whether the intentionality of the mental presupposes the possession of an articulate language and the possibility to engage in linguistic exchanges with others" (Sellars). Yet as Huemer himself admits toward the end of his contribution, Sellars not only was aware that he could not convince his interlocutor but was also unwilling "to climb over the fence that separated them and change his own basic views."

"Phenomenological Variations on Sellars's 'Particulars'" by Daniele De Santis closes the volume by adding a new dimension to our phenomenological approaches to Sellars's philosophy, one that revolves around the ontological question of the nature of "particulars." The goal of the chapter is twofold.

First, De Santis follows Sellars's rejection of the doctrine of bare particulars and also pays critical attention to his doctrine of "complex particulars." Second, after a quick introduction to the phenomenological doctrine of individual essences, De Santis argues for replacing the mereologically grounded account of essences (often proposed by phenomenologically minded scholars) with a regional characterization of individual objects ("particulars," in Sellars's jargon). If Sellars's complex particulars are in fact deemed incapable of escaping some of the problems affecting bundle theories, the mereological view of individual essences is judged insufficient when it comes to making sense of and accounting for the unitary nature of the essence itself.

The present volume would not only like to bear witness to the relevance of Sellars's thought for phenomenology and phenomenologically inspired scholars (and phenomenology's importance for Sellars scholars); it would also like to contribute to recognizing the internal complexity and richness of such relations (regardless of how loose or strict our understanding of the label "phenomenology" is). Quite often, in fact, we are under the impression that the phenomenologically minded reader who approaches Sellars and his writings for the first time is in a position similar to the one in which Dante finds himself while wandering the doomed paths of hell. He recognizes most of his interlocutors—just as they recognize him—from the accent, the voice, the gestures (they look all too familiar), but the actual reasons why they are there (or why he is there) and why they are doing what they are doing often remain concealed or confused.

Whether this volume can take up the noble role of Virgil and guide the reader through the difficult terrain of the relations between Sellars and phenomenology the reader alone can properly judge.

Our hope is that this volume may represent a first step toward a broader and more systematic assessment of the presence of phenomenology in Sellars's own thought. But we also hope these texts also contribute to overcoming some of the

prejudices concerning phenomenology (especially Husserlian) that still exist among (some) Sellars scholars. It would be a great gain if in addition to overcoming "the myth of the given," these studies could contribute to overcoming the very idea of the "myth," or better, *the myth of the myth*—as the very word "myth" is often used and abused to *mark* a certain philosophy as outdated or unfit. Too often, one speaks of the *myth of something*, precisely in order not to have to delve into what the myth itself hides and conceals—or even better, in order not to have to understand what one ignores while talking about "myths."

We would like to end this introduction by expressing our deep gratitude to all the contributors for agreeing to participate in the project, as well as for their patience; a special thanks goes to Hanne Jacobs for encouraging and supporting it all the way through.

NOTES

1. "The idea of 'the given' and its alleged problematic status as most famously articulated by Sellars . . . continues to be at the center of heated controversies about foundationalism in epistemology, about 'conceptualism' and nonconceptual content in the philosophy of perception, and about the nature of the experiential given in phenomenology and in the cognitive sciences" (O'Shea 2021, 10543).
2. The talk of *phenomenologists* (in the plural) needs an explanation. As the reader will soon realize, Husserl represents the main—yet not the exclusive—reference point of the texts here published. Since the question as to what phenomenology is could not be discussed in this context, we have left the authors full freedom to decide how to understand the expression. In some cases, phenomenology simply means "Husserl"; in other cases, the term also includes post-Husserlian and post-Heideggerian figures such as Merleau-Ponty. But phenomenology can also be understood with reference to the early phenomenological tradition, as well as to some of the protagonists of its American phase. If Husserl nevertheless still represents the privileged reference for many of the authors, it is for the purpose of showing

that there are still aspects of his thought worth being explored in relation to Sellars (and which cannot be reduced to the opposition between foundationalism and nonfoundationalism or between conceptualism and nonconceptualism). These are the various reasons why the title of this book speaks of "phenomenology" in general without any specification. In contrast, see Williams (2021, 6379–81, "Apprehension as Conceptualization") for a more recent discussion of Husserl and the "myth of the sensory given," and Smith (2021) for an analysis of the different senses of the "given" in relation to Husserl.

3. On this, see also Christias (2016, section 4).
4. A similar claim has been advanced in De Santis (2015).

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CHAPTER 1

HUSSERL'S LEGACY IN SELLARS'S PHILOSOPHICAL STRATEGY

Antonio M. Nunziante

The topic of the relationship between Sellars and phenomenology is important and also notoriously complex. Sellars himself never made a mystery of the importance he attributed to the phenomenological method, to the extent of admitting, "For longer than I care to remember I have conceived of philosophical analysis (and synthesis) as akin to phenomenology" (SRPC, 431). A passage from his "Autobiographical Reflections" is often quoted to confirm such evidence:

> Marvin Farber led me through my first careful reading of the *Critique of Pure Reason* and introduced me to Husserl. His combination of utter respect for the structure of Husserl's thought with the equally firm conviction that this structure could be given a naturalistic interpretation was undoubtedly a key influence on my own subsequent philosophical strategy (AR, 283).

This passage is not as clear as it may seem at first glance, however. Of course, there is the significance of Husserl's work and

how Farber explained it, but the question is, Why did Husserl have a "key influence" on Sellars's "philosophical strategy"? Are we in a position to explain the specific reasons for this acknowledgment? We need to bear in mind that Sellars met Farber in 1933 and completed his master's degree in 1934 and that his "subsequent" philosophical strategy would therefore cover *all* of his academic production thereafter.

The topic of phenomenological influences poses a major challenge to scholars. There have been some studies on this issue, but much remains to be investigated.[1] As is well known, references to Husserl in the Sellarsian texts are few and often rather vague. My hypothesis is that to unveil their deep theoretical meaning, we should first decipher the reference to Farber and eventually understand the relevance of Husserl. I will defend the thesis that the model of the passive syntheses played a significant role in the development of Sellars's theory of sensation.

1. NATURALIZING HUSSERL

Although much can be said with regard to the history of the reception and transformation of Husserl's phenomenology in the United States (Crowell 2013; Ferri 2019; Manca-Nunziante 2020), the ultimate interpreter of this process of "Americanization" was Marvin Farber. Two contrasting elements merged in him. On the one hand, he was the greatest institutional representative of phenomenology in the US: president of the International Phenomenological Society, founder (as well as editor) of the journal *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, and close friend of Alfred Schutz and of other European exiles (some of whom he personally helped to emigrate to the States), he was the main spokesman of the American phenomenological movement during the forties. On the other hand, he was also an independent philosopher, fully engrossed in the American academic debates and with philosophical projects of his own that had little to do with the custody of Husserlian orthodoxy.

He thought that the phenomenological method was a type of philosophical investigation that aimed to clarify the essence of "every intellectual experience," and of "every experience in general," by grasping its "absolute givenness" (Farber 1951, 5). He felt furthermore that despite appearances, it was also a method compatible with a naturalistic perspective because it allowed for the shaping of a model of explanation compatible with the findings of natural sciences: "Every sound descriptive proposition in phenomenology can be asserted in objective terms within the framework of a naturalistic (realistic, or materialistic) philosophy" (Farber 1949, 612). Husserl would never have signed such a statement, but Farber—despite his profound respect for his master—never saw himself merely as Husserl's pupil, not even in the years of his studies in Freiburg (1922–24). Even his doctoral thesis (1928) was not just a reiteration of Husserl's doctrines, but an already heavily hybridized interpretation of his thought.

Right from the beginning, Farber had a sort of instrumental relationship with phenomenology, for he considered it a useful tool for reflexively describing the empirical experience, but always in accordance with the findings of natural sciences. He appreciated the depth with which the phenomenological method investigated the issue of sensuous data and perceptual experience, but his plan was to accomplish a naturalized description of experience using *some* of the instruments of Husserlian phenomenology. Moreover, he clearly distinguished between "static" and "genetic" phenomenology (Farber 1928, 15), and stated his preference for the latter, which in some ways sounded to him more suitable for a naturalization.

In Farber's philosophical production there is one text especially that reveals the theoretical nature of his project, as well as the type of impact that all this may have had on Sellars. It is an essay in a book he coedited with Vivian Jerauld McGill and Roy Wood Sellars, entitled *Experience and Subjectivism* (1949). The general aim of this cooperative book was to take a stand on the question of naturalism that heated the intellectual

American stage of the time by defending a position of strong scientific naturalism. The project intended to produce a physicalistic and evolutionary description of nature within the broad range of scientific realism: "The materialist holds that philosophers cannot improve upon the descriptive concepts of matter supplied by the working scientists of his time. He accepts what the physicist, chemist, biologist, histologist, etc. say as the best approximation at any given time" (Farber, McGill, Sellars 1949, vi–vii). The aim of the project was extremely ambitious and marked the convergence of intentions between the philosophical perspectives of Roy Wood Sellars and Farber himself. In short, it marked the encounter between naturalism and phenomenology: naturalism was meant to provide a physicalist ontology, whereas phenomenology was supposed to furnish a descriptive method of analysis.

Farber's essay was part and parcel of the project, and it was strongly focused on the nature of the "given." A first quotation can be useful to frame his arguments: "Interest in the 'given' is often motivated by the aim of determining an 'immediate' fact for philosophical analysis, which could provide a point of departure, basic criteria, and a secure support for the whole structure of philosophy. There can be no question about there being *something* immediately given for any point of view, whether subjective-idealistic or materialistic. Its precise nature is what presents the problem" (1949, 596). When invoking the immediacy of the "given," Farber claims, one should be aware of two necessary premises to be made explicit. The first one concerns the risk of splitting the world into two fully unrelated categories (mind and nature), whereas observational data are always entangled with some sort of theory-ladenness (591). The second one regards the priority of the natural world over any kind of representative experience: "The *basic fact* for all philosophizing which aspires to be true to experience is the fact of the natural world and its priority to man; and also the priority of a cultural tradition to each individual man" (592).

On the one hand, thus, the priority of nature over the modes of its representation, and on the other hand the acknowledgment that experience is *both* an event in the natural world *and* a cultural product. Philosophy should never be detached from its social-historical context, Farber says, and the analysis of experience must be undertaken again and again "in each cultural generation at least" (592–93).

Though only synthetically recalled, these two preliminary constraints are pivotal because they remind us that the datum of experience contains two different, albeit mutually integrated, dimensions: a purely objective external side, which the phenomenological method can help us to disclose; plus a proper social-cultural dimension, which makes the given less of a brute fact of nature and more of an intersubjective product of a historical and scientific tradition. The topic of the immediate givenness is therefore complex and does not allow for one-sidedness since it must combine such different requirements. It is the very notion of experience as a natural event that encompasses a plurality of levels that must be harmonized together.

In this frame, phenomenology helps us to understand that our mind is not purely passive with regard to experience but at the same time helps us to respect the independent status of the latter. Experiencing the world is by itself a natural event that must be described by appealing also to the best scientific resources of the time.

> The fact that the mind contributes meanings and interpretations to experience can be ascertained descriptively. That does not mean acceptance of the Kantian principle that form is contributed by the mind. . . . The mind has a history, and there are no demonstrated eternal, fixed forms. To recognize the "contributiveness" of the mind is not to imply that any ideas or conceptual forms *can be genetically unrelated to the causal order of experience.* The truth that Kant himself recognized, that, in point of

> time, there is no knowledge before experience, applies generally. (Farber 1949, 598–99, my italics)

The idea is thus more or less the following:

- The mind contributes to experience by providing meaning to it.
- It is not true, however, that the mind provides an eternal, pure conceptual form, as it did in the Kantian model.
- Acknowledging the active contributing factor doesn't mean accepting a reign of forms detached from their natural genetic constitution and from the causal order of experience.

These are all very important remarks that Farber further discussed in a brief footnote, in which he referred to Husserl's *Experience and Judgment* (1939): "This little-known treatise merits the careful study of all students of philosophy. In it Husserl undertakes to do what Kant failed to do—to show the actual part played by perception and the understanding in the process of experience. Accepting his descriptive findings in no way commits one to his systematic idealism" (Farber 1949, 631). The remark is concise, yet pivotal. First of all, Farber sets up a connection between Husserl and Kant, claiming that Husserl had succeeded in doing what Kant had failed to do, namely in binding sensibility and intellect. Taking for granted that the mind is both active and passive in the course of experience, Husserl succeeded in conjointly describing such a process on both the perceptive and the conceptual side. This was in fact the result of his late genetic project, where he successfully analyzed the genesis of concepts and judgments from nonpropositional experience (thus reducing the gap between the conceptual and nonconceptual states of the perceiver, as well as between immediate and mediated experiences).

Experience and Judgment was therefore Farber's favorite work, and he often returned to this particular development of Husserl's phenomenology:

> The gradually unfolding program of the *Logical Investigations,* and its continuation in the later logical studies, shows Husserl to be the philosopher who really realized Kant's transcendental method and aims. Husserl's complete philosophy of logic, with its theory of knowledge, may be regarded as a positive, constructive answer to Kant's difficulties, as an accomplished fact of transcendental analysis. The Kantian pattern is there, only immeasurably clearer and more consistent—a really "pure" theory which Kant had required but had been unable to achieve. (Farber 1943, 495)

Farber's appreciation of *Experience and Judgment* has not gone unnoticed (Sang Ki Kim 1989, 6). The idea that the origin of predicative judgments should be sought in the world of pre-predicative experience was in fact highly appreciated by him: "The phenomenological treatment of logic has the function of clarifying its basic ideas, and also providing its very elements by means of descriptive analysis of such concepts as 'judgment' and 'meaning.' The concepts of the understanding, and hence all the ideas used on the higher level of formal meaning, are traced to their 'origin' in pre-predicative experience" (Farber 1966, 29). The domain of intuitions, beliefs, direct sensuous experience, and the domain of conceptual experience in overt verbal speech were no longer incommunicable worlds. Farber almost literally repeats some statements drawn from *Experience and Judgment:* "All categories and categorial forms which appear there [in the predicative judgments] are erected on the pre-predicative syntheses and have their origin in them" (Husserl 1973, 115). But he added to this a decisive interpretative twist, for in his views naturalism perfectly implemented the idea that logical forms were first rooted in the natural

world and that eventually they manifested in the higher stages of perceptual experience. For Farber it made perfect sense to interpret Husserl naturalistically, on the basis of the same arguments contained in *Experience and Judgment:* there is a domain of "things themselves" to which we respond through acts of passive synthesis and whose logical core will be actively developed in the further stages of intellect. His strategy was to shift Husserl to his side by taking advantage of some presumed "traces of naturalism" in his later works: "With nature as the under-layer, he has the basis for the 'constitution' of the higher layers (including the domains of the various 'Geisteswissenschaften'" . . .) (Farber 1928, 113). Husserl was therefore placed in a complex framework of naturalism and scientific realism, and this allowed Faber to link his peculiar interpretation of the late Husserlian thought to the debate on the nature of the given that was very strong in the Anglo-American tradition of the time. In his essay, in fact, he analytically discusses the position of Whitehead, Lewis, and Dewey, whereas Russell, Moore, and the British sense-data tradition had been given ample space in his 1928 dissertation. Farber's general claim was that the Husserl of *Experience and Judgment* could become a formidable theoretical tool to disambiguate the difficulties hovering over the epistemological debates on the given.

There would be a lot of other interesting aspects to examine, but coming to a conclusion of this section, we can say that in Farber's view the very idea of an immediate empirical experience encompasses both physical-material as well as sociocultural factors and that our reflexive effort to make them explicit is just a natural event in the world. The interweaving of such empirical and normative instances makes the phenomenological analysis of these processes a constantly pursued methodological ideal: "All 'purely reflective' procedures and analyses of abstractions, etc., are natural events. In a very real sense, one cannot get himself, or his thinking, outside the natural order. The 'questioning' of all our knowledge of the natural order as such is still a 'natural' process of questioning"

(Farber 1949, 609). As we shall see in the next section, many seeds of Farber's interpretive attitude will be taken up by Sellars and developed by him into a highly sophisticated theory of perception.

2. HUSSERL, SELLARS, AND THE SENSE OF A PHILOSOPHICAL STRATEGY

If we carefully reread the text of the previously quoted "Autobiographical Reflections," I think there can be no doubt that, despite first impressions, the main subject of Sellars's remarks was Farber and *not* Husserl. It was Farber's own program of naturalization, combined with his respect for the master, that had had such a strong influence on him. This mere factual evidence also helps us to explain why Sellars rarely mentions Husserl in his writings. In a brief passage of the *Notre Dame Lectures* he explicitly admits that he does not aim to follow a specific Husserlian canon but rather to retain *some* of his phenomenological instances.

> I don't know what phenomenology is today, it is many things, it's all things to all men, so I can say that I'm going to take a *phenomenological stance* but I don't mean that I'm going to take a directly sort of Husserlian kind of account. But those of you who are familiar with Husserl will probably find some little gaps in which you can insert a challenge or a question. (SRP, 257)

Sellars often refers to phenomenology as a "conceptual analysis" or even as a "philosophy of perception," as though they were the same thing, and this is due precisely to the fact that he does not commit directly to an orthodox historiographical canon. Instead, he says, there is a general Husserlian theoretical picture to which he "genuflects," that is, the phenomenological reduction broadly construed (PMA, 243; SRPC, 431–32).

All this being said, however, we still have the task of explaining which specific elements of the Farberian interpretation of

Husserl have possibly played a key role in his philosophical strategy. My take is that the emphasis placed by Farber on a naturalistic reading of *Experience and Judgment* provided him with the possibility of integrating his naturalistic philosophical approach with a characteristic nomological feature. The very Husserlian idea of a *Gesetzmäßigkeit* planted in the heart of the pre-predicative experience, in fact, gave him the possibility to develop a theory of perception centered on the peculiar concept of "analogical counterpart." The latter gives rise to a fully integrated naturalistic account of perceptual experience in which conceptual as well as nonconceptual aspects of experience come to be reciprocally combined, without importing the traditional (mainly Kantian) opposition between sensibility and intellect. This is what he aimed to develop in a series of texts from the 1970s, to which I shall now turn my attention. But before going into the thorny territory of the nonconceptual experience, it is worth recalling some key points of *Experience and Judgment* to highlight the function that the passive synthesis might have played in the subsequent context of Sellars's own philosophy.

In the first chapter of *Experience and Judgment,* Husserl clarifies "the essence of the achievement of pre-predicative experience" and how "the predicative syntheses are built upon it" (*EU,* 71). The activity of perception, he says, presupposes "that *something* is already pregiven to us," namely "a field of pregivenness from which a particular stands out and, so to speak, 'excites us' to perception" (72). This domain of passive pregivenness (30) can also be considered before our mind sets it in a propositional form because it has a very "determinate structure": "This field is not a pure chaos, a mere 'swarm' of 'data'; it is a field of determinate structure, one of prominences and articulated particularities. A field of sense—a field of sensuous data, optical for example—is the simplest model in which we can study this structure" (72–73). In the field of the passive pregivenness determinate *structures* leak out: if, as Aristotle taught us, every predicative judgment consists of two

members, a "substrate" about which something is affirmed and what is affirmed about it, the field of passive pregivenness represents the germinal manifestation of those "articulated particularities" that will ultimately play the part of logical subjects in our linguistic judgments (14). According to Husserl, the fundamental characteristic of a field of sense is that of being "unitary in itself": there is a "unity of homogeneity" that contrasts with the background stage, and through complex associative patterns that he strives to trace right back to their primordial genesis, we face the form of a lawfulness ("Form der Gesetzmäßigkeit," 74) that enables the passage from an object meant as a bare "substrate" of sensuous data to an object in which properties and determinations gradually unfold until they are brought to "explicit intuition": "We can also say that it is necessary to show that this process is one of 'self-evidence,' for in it something is originally intuited as '*object-substrate*' as such, and, as such, having something of the order of 'determinations'" (114–15). According to Husserl, such a phenomenological process represents "the *place of origin of the first of the so-called 'logical categories,'*" namely the place in which the domain of pre-predicative experiences evolves into the conceptual world of linguistic judgments (115). "It is true, we can only begin to speak of logical categories in the proper sense in the sphere of predicative judgment, as elements of determination which belong necessarily to the form of possible predicative judgments. But all categories and categorial forms which appear there are erected on the pre-predicative syntheses and have their origin in them" (115). The phenomenological concept of receptivity therefore "is in no way exclusively opposed to that of the *activity of the ego,*" for, on the contrary, "receptivity must be regarded as the lowest level of activity" (79).

Now, a sort of a Gesetzmäßigkeit broadly construed and incorporated within perceptual takings is what we are also going to find in some of Sellars's writings of the seventies. Here he refers to some peculiar form of beliefs involving a hybrid normative form that links together conceptual as well as nonconceptual

structures. Two such writings are the posthumously published transcripts of the *Notre Dame Lectures* (*Perceiving and Mental Acts,* 1973; *Scientific Reason and Perception,* 1977); and the two others are *Kant's Transcendental Idealism* (1976) and *Some Reflections on Perceptual Consciousness* (1977). In this group of texts, we can see with a certain degree of clarity the part played by the "farberized" Husserl, but at the same time we are also struck by the fact that Sellars takes up his views with the explicit purpose of improving the theory of perception already exposed in "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind" (EPM): "I still think that the general strategy of that essay [EPM] was sound, but its explicit results were so schematic that, in spite of the fact that one of its central themes was a reassessment of the treatment of visual perception by philosopher in the analytic tradition it provides nothing worthy of being called a theory of visual perception" (SRPC, 431).

The point that Sellars aims to improve concerns the relationship subsisting between the conceptual component and the specific sensorial dimension of perceptual acts. The former is always verbally expressed, in propositional or quasi-propositional terms ("this is a brick," "red brick!"), while the latter is not. Indeed, the theory of the genius Jones exposed in EPM invited us to consider sensations not so much as minirepresentations of red but "as proto-theoretical states of perceivers" (SRPC, 437).

But taking up EPM's considerations, Sellars further develops this topic, the general idea being that perceptual takings must be considered as a hybrid form of beliefs, since they can be subdivided into two classes: the class of the "believing that" (which express the propositional content of an acquired belief) and the class of the "believing in" (which refers specifically to the demonstrative element of the perceptual act ["I see *this* red brick"]). The central issue that Sellars aims to develop in these essays precisely concerns the clarification of such a demonstrative element ("this"), for it is the latter that seems to grasp the specific sensuous content of our perceptive acts.[2]

Already in EPM, Sellars tried to unravel the dichotomy between "sensing" and "knowing," but now the question is rather focused on that particular class of perceptual taking that is constituted by the "believings in." The nature of these peculiar mental acts is decidedly *sui generis:*

- They represent "a *basic* kind of mental *actuality*" (SRP, 260).
- They are nonreflexive and nonvoluntary (259).
- They have logical form (260).
- They contrast with the manifestations of overt speech (261).
- "They have something like grammatical form" (261).
- "They have a demonstrative in them, like '*this*'" (261).

It would probably be hasty to characterize them as "sensations" *sic et simpliciter,* since the theory of the genius Jones seems to remain valid even in these texts, but they have rather to be considered as their most immediate counterpart (SRPC, 437). (They are more what is "caused" by sensations, according to the theory set out in EPM.) In any case, we are talking about mental acts that are not verbal, are not accompanied by verbal images, and are therefore not propositional. Are we dealing with intentional acts? This is one of the pivotal points Sellars is working on.

In the texts we are considering we are told that they display "various kinds of logical form," that we are inclined to say they have something resembling a "grammatical form," and that we treat them as if they had a propositional form. Borrowing from Husserl's language in *Experience and Judgment,* we could perhaps add that they are sort of *pre-predicative acts*. The key point is that they perform several functions at the same time: they play an indexical role (since they refer to the pure nonconceptual content of the perception); they play a "preliminary" grammatical role (since the particular they refer to becomes the logical subject of our perceptual statements);

and they summarize a multiplicity of integrated qualitative determinations, so much so that they are to be treated as "complex" demonstrative subjects (SRP, 263). Husserl could help us once again: we were in fact saying that the domain of the pregivenness represents the germinal manifestation of "determinate structures" and "articulated particularities" that will ultimately play the role of subjects in our propositional judgments. Sellars seems to resume this issue very carefully (Husserl's name appears with relative frequency in this group of writings), although the final goal is to develop them in a different way (as a matter of fact, he wants to justify his scientific realism, according to Farber's original plan).

3. PERCEPTUAL TAKINGS AS AN INTUITION OF A MANIFOLD

Two prominent questions run therefore as follows: What does the demonstrative (nonconceptual) component of the believing in refer to? What is the counterpart of the demonstrative "this" contained in a belief? The answer comes gradually. A first step in the right direction comes with the following consideration: "We should think of perceptual takings as providing *subjects* for propositional thought, rather than already having full-fledged propositional form" (KTI, 408; see also SRP, 263). In the pre-predicative form of the "believing in," there is *something* that takes shape: a kind of determination that will be conceptually classified, according to the verbal dispositions possessed by the perceiving subject. Such a basic (Husserlian) idea, which somehow aims to demonstrate the genesis of the relationship between nonconceptual determinations (yet endowed with a germinal logical structure) and classifying verbal answers (fully fledged, conceptually structured), is expanded with an interesting reference to Kant. In "Kant's Transcendental Idealism," Sellars claims that the complex demonstrative constituents of perceptual belief are *the counterpart* of the Kantian notion of "intuition of a manifold," thereby adding a new conceptual twist: "It will be useful to connect Kant's

concept of the 'intuition of a manifold' with that strand of contemporary perception theory which operates with a fairly traditional concept of intentionality. A familiar notion is that of perceptual taking. . . . Perceptual takings are in many respects the counterparts of Kant's 'intuition of manifolds'" (KTI, 408). This brief passage contains a nice piece of information. First, there is a hint at those contemporary theories of perception that operate within a traditional concept of intentionality, which can be decrypted by a reference that appeared in the text only a few lines before: "Let us take seriously, then, the thesis that intuitions of manifolds are thoughts. . . . An adequate discussion would call for a whole cluster of distinctions in which themes from Husserl, the early Brentano, Meinong and the later Brentano would be inextricably involved" (KTI, 406–7). Husserl, thus, is definitely on Sellars's mind when he connects the perceptual takings with the Kantian notion of the intuition of a manifold. But the latter is not just any connection whatsoever, because we know that Sellars construes a relevant part of his own Kantian interpretation on the distinction between "intuition of manifold" and "manifold of intuition."[3] The underlying idea, namely, is that likewise in Kant there is a distinction between conceptual and nonconceptual ingredients of perceptive acts. Such a distinction is now read as the "counterpart" to the contemporary (also Husserlian) notion of perceptual taking. Without entering the details of his interpretation of Kant (O'Shea 2011, 2018), we have to bear in mind that Sellars finds the Kantian concept of intuition, or rather *sensation,* "inadequate and inept" (KTE, 269) and in need of reshaping to such a degree that he undertakes this work of conceptual reconstruction himself in *Science and Metaphysics* and in other writings. At the same time, we also need to recall that in Farber's opinion, Kant's attempt to integrate perception and intellect was a failure—and that was exactly why he recommended *Experience and Judgment* to his pupils.

It is possible that for Sellars as well, the reference to Husserl would help to correct Kant, as emerges from the following

passage: "Our primary concern is with *perceptual* acts or takings. . . . The concept for which Kant is preparing the way is that of *rules for generating perceptual takings*" (KTI, 413). Sellars often speaks of earlier philosophers "preparing the way" for new concepts, but here the remark seems to be particularly accurate. The idea is that the relationship between *intuition of manifold* and *manifold of intuition* becomes clearer if we think of the latter as the purely sensuous side of perception, yet as something that has "structure" (KPT, 130). By referring to the purely sensory states of the perceiver, Sellars produces two important clarifications about the correct way of understanding Kant. The first one is the following:

> One of the basic mistakes that people often make is to think that, according to Kant, all relations are, as it were, contributed by the mind. This is a complete misinterpretation of Kant. Kant never says that there is no structure apart from mental activity. All he says is, and he is committed deeply to this, that the *awareness* of a spatial structure *as* spatial involves mental activity of a certain kind. But this is not the same thing as to say that a relational structure as such as to be the resultant of mental activity. (KPT, 130)

We are on the edge of intentional acts, where the mind is confronted with a structure that has not been actively produced by itself, but with respect to which it is "passive." The second remark sounds like this:

> It is helpful and useful to think of Kant in these terms, but Kant himself never says it. It is clear, however, that he thinks that the manifold of sense *somehow* is appropriate to my experiencing these shapes in space rather than those shapes in space. . . . The manifold of outer sense has a structure which is "somehow" spatial: it is quasi-spatial; it is somehow analogous to space. It has a structure which

> is appropriate to appear in conscious experience as an intuited spatial structure in space. (KPT, 131)

It is important to notice how Sellars candidly admits that Kant has never said anything like that, but that this is the most useful way to interpret his thought. The key point also in this case concerns the Gesetzmäßigkeit involved in the pre-predicative experience: it is precisely this nomological structure that allows the shaping of the very notion of analogical "counterpart" (which is a genuinely Sellarsian term).

In the perceptual takings, in fact, there are some patterns of rule-conforming sequences that leak out, even if they are not the result of an intentional act:

> The term "rule" is a dangerous one, for it suggests deliberate activity or, at least, activity which would be deliberate if it weren't so *hasty* and, in the ordinary sense, thoughtless. Actually the most useful concept is that of a sequence of acts of representing which can be reflectively classified as conforming to a rule which is (at least in principle) graspable by thought. (KTI, 413)

In this passage, the role of Husserl's passive synthesis seems to interact profoundly with Kant: we are dealing with "rules" that are not the result of a deliberate act but are embedded in sequences of perceptual takings. Sellars, going beyond Kant, interprets such sequences in an adverbialist sense. It is a long road that leads to adverbialism, but to sum up a more complex story we can say that starting from the years following EPM, Sellars progressively embraces an adverbial theory of perception, according to which the sense impression, say, of a yellow triangle should not be understood as a mental content but rather as an actual modification of the perceiver. Sensing "yellow-ly" discloses a new way to interpret perceptual acts, because in this case we are not dealing with a relational (representative) mental content that somehow is a reply to the

physical object in outer space but rather with an actual (nonrelational) state of the perceiver. Sensing yellow-ly is more similar to feeling a pain than to visually representing an object, because the sensation of pain does not *represent* a pain, but it *is* itself a pain (BD, 267).

Needless to say, interpreting Kant according to an adverbial theory of sensation means in some way to trespass the boundary of a representational theory of mind and to give shape to a new theory of intentionality, for we are now dealing with a class of new nonrelational events, whose major feature is that they are actually existent and not simply represented: "The deeper thrust of Kant's transcendental idealism is the thesis that the core of the knowable self is the self as *perceiver of material things and events*" (KTI, 417). Sellars underscores several times the so-called "transcendental principle of the affinity of the manifold of sense," which says that *if* there is empirical knowledge, not only must there be uniformity of conceptual response to extraconceptual items, *but even extraconceptual items* must "conform to general laws" (KTE, 282). This powerful revival of such a nomological element placed on the threshold of the pairing of perceiving subjects and material things is consistent with another key point of his Kant interpretation. In "Some Remarks on Kant's Theory of Experience," Sellars very skillfully recalls a claim contained in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. It says, "Things in themselves would necessarily, apart from any understanding that knows them, conform to laws of their own" (*CPR,* B164). As it is evident to any Kantian reader, the quotation is strongly decontextualized, but it is exactly in passages like this that he proves to have internalized the lesson of *Experience and Judgment:* there is a lawfulness in nature that does not depend on the perceiver, it does not depend on the perceiver's conceptual or verbal apparatuses, and it is not apprehended voluntarily. It only becomes "actual" in the sentient ways of perceptual takings.

What Kant, unlike Husserl, was never able to develop to the end was a complete notion of "counterpart" that integrated

the conceptual side of intuitions with their nonconceptual sensuous dimension. It was the relevance of this analogy that Kant was unable to fully develop, and that is why in *Science and Metaphysics,* Sellars can present us with an argument *per impossibile* that runs like the following:

> If, *per impossibile,* Kant had developed the idea of the manifold of the sense as characterized by analogical counterparts of the perceptible qualities and relations of physical things and events, he could have given an explicit account of the ability of the impressions of receptivity to guide minds, endowed with the conceptual framework he takes us to have, to form the conceptual representations we do of individual physical objects and events in Space and Time. (*SM,* 30)

The key notion is once again that of the "analogical counterpart." For the question is, How do we know that the "manifold of the sense" is the counterpart of qualities and relations pertaining to physical things or events? Such a question is exactly the same as that which was posed in SRP: "When we look at the phrase, 'this cube of pink ice,' we see something which we understand to be as it were grammatically complex. But what is the *referent* of the word 'this' which is functioning there, can we develop a theory as to, so to speak, the *focus,* of the demonstrative element here?" (SRP, 268–69). In the previous considerations we had stopped here, but now we can examine Sellars's answer to its finest grains, and we will be ready to go not only beyond Kant but beyond Husserl himself, because this is where phenomenology "lets us down" (SRPC, 436–37). When we experience a sensation, we usually think of it as something that causes a certain belief. My belief of a "pink" item in front of me is caused by the presence of a sensation of pink. This was the doctrine exposed in EPM: the sensation is the trigger of that experience that I will conceptually classify as a "pink cube" (PMA, 316). But now we can

come up with a "better theory": "Thinking of the sensation as simply something that *causes* the belief is a very tempting view. . . . I want to suggest instead that if we reflect on this situation, a *better* theory is that the *core* of the demonstrative element *is* the *demonstration,* so to speak, of the *sensation.*" (SRP, 269). The suggestion is to consider sensations not only as a causal factor but as something that is entirely ("adverbially") present in the demonstrative element: it is the indexical itself that shows the full presence of a sensation. The point is that we usually mis-*take* the sensory states of the subject for features of the physical object, according to that classic misjudgment that was proper to the classical representational theory of mind. Traditionally, the sensation of yellow was intended as an objective representation of a chromatic content and this (mind-dependent) content was then mistaken for a real feature of the (mind-independent) object. But it is precisely this idea that gave rise to the "Myth of the Given," whereas the point that should be correctly emphasized is that the sensuous side of perception is not the bearer of an "objective content," *but of an ongoing normative factor.*

* * *

In a way, the phenomenological analysis helps us to reach the ultimate threshold of perceptibility, but beyond this there is an additional world, for the physical object is more than what is revealed to us by perceptual takings (SRP, 270). This absolute dimension of processes we enter when we leave the phenomenological reduction is represented by a scientific space, in which we no longer find ordinary objects but dispositional properties, causal relations, particle systems, and physical processes that can only be described by the most up-to-date scientific theories.

This is the field of scientific realism that aims, so to speak, at the "in itself" of nature and that, according to Sellars, "has as its final cause . . . the construction of a way of representing the world which is more adequate than what we have now" (SRP,

256). But this is also part of the scientific naturalistic project of Farber (and of Sellars's father, Roy Wood), a project whose fundamental tenets, rightly or wrongly, he had always shared.

NOTES

1. Cf. Christias (2018); Moran (2012); Hampe (2010); Soffer (2003).
2. Although in Sellars the treatment of indexicals usually refers to Reichenbach (see the reference to the *token-reflexive expressions* contained in EPM part 8), or more generally to the analytical tradition of philosophy of language (Peirce; Russell), in this case the context is phenomenological, and we should not overlook that in Husserl there is also a long and articulated discussion about the "semi-conceptual" nature of indexicals (Mohanty 1976, 78; Woodruff Smith 1981, 103; Schumann 1993, 124). Within the broader context of his theory of meaning, Husserl indeed distinguishes between the purely perceptive ("occasional expression") side of the perceptual judgments and the content of propositionally articulated mental episodes. Although the former is not structured like the latter, they are not by any means lacking in structure (*LI 6/F,* § 25–26; Mulligan and Smith 1986, 135–36).
3. Parts of the central theses of *Science and Metaphysics* are built exactly on the discussion of this Kantian distinction. Cf. O'Shea (2018).

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CHAPTER 2

SELLARS AND HUSSERL ON THE MANIFEST WORLD

Walter Hopp

I happen to believe in rocks and trees and animals and planets. I believe such entities are composed of simpler constituents such as molecules and atoms, and that many have come to exist through cosmic, geological, and evolutionary processes. I believe in persons, their mental acts, and the various products of their mental acts, such as computers, Boston, legal codes, games, songs, and money. I believe all of these things can be both *described* and *explained*. And while some are more metaphysically fundamental than others, I do not draw a distinction between those that are real and those which are "*mere appearance*" (PSIM, 36).

Am I mistaken? Perhaps, if Sellars is right. Many of the items above sit within what he calls the "scientific image"—at least, that image as it exists at present. And many lie within what he calls the "manifest image." According to Sellars's brand of scientific realism, "in the dimension of describing and explaining the world, science is the measure of all things, of what is that it is, and of what is not that it is not" (*EPMH,* § 42, 83).[1] That is, the scientific image—at least "in principle"—presents itself as a "*complete* image," "the *whole truth* about what belongs" to it, and a "rival" to the manifest image (PSIM, 20).

The manifest image, accordingly, is *not* a "measure of what there really is" (PSIM, 32). Now it may turn out that some of the items in the manifest image wind up being *identical with* items in the scientific image, though Sellars is not optimistic about that proposal for a wide range of entities (PSIM, 32).

My purpose in this paper is to draw on Husserlian phenomenological epistemology to say something positive on behalf of the manifest image and of the manifest world of which it is an image. I will focus primarily on Sellars's attack on the "Myth of the Given."[2]

1. THE "ARGUMENT FROM 'KNOWLEDGE'"

Let's imagine a scientific realist who maintains that physical objects cannot have the sorts of "perceptible qualities characteristic of physical objects in the manifest image" and that "Manifest objects are 'appearances' to human minds of a reality which is constituted by systems of imperceptible particles" (PSIM, 27, 26).

Against this, says Sellars, we have the Moorean "common sense" response: manifest physical objects are *known* to be real and known to have perceptible qualities such as color. And Sellars thinks this is a good response insofar as "in the manifest framework it is absurd to say that a visible object has no colour" (PSIM 26). It is not, however, a good response overall. The force of this "argument from 'knowledge'" "simply disappears once it is recognized that, properly understood, the claim that physical objects do not really have perceptible qualities is not analogous to the claim that something generally believed to be true about a certain kind of thing is actually false. It is not the denial of a belief within a framework, but a challenge to the framework" (PSIM, 27). Sellars adds that this argument "operates *within* the framework of the manifest image and cannot *support* it" (PSIM, 28). The argument from "knowledge" is not really an argument from *knowledge*. It's an argument that, to be sure, employs legitimate moves within

something called a "framework" but is powerless when confronted with a rival framework, at least one with the explanatory power of the "scientific" one.

The defender of the argument from knowledge would likely be unconvinced, pointing out that the belief in things like physical objects with sense perceptible properties is not merely part of a closed up "framework" of other beliefs. Rather, our beliefs about such things as tables and trees are immediately or directly confirmed by our perceptual *encounters* with such things. When, as Alston observes, you move from merely thinking about things to perceiving them, the objects "are *given* to your consciousness. They are *present* to you, whereas before you were merely dealing with propositions *about* them" (2002, 72).

The biggest threat to the Sellarsian scientific image of the world is that it is silent on, and perhaps even conflicts with, our experience and its deliverances. It conflicts, not with "common sense," which may harbor countless absurdities at a place or time, but with what is given. What more decisive way to handle that threat than to dismiss the very idea of givenness—to treat it as, at best, mere common sense, a "framework"? If our best evidence in support of the manifest image, with its tables and trees and "inner episodes," is not that we are immediately confronted with the very things that our *beliefs* are about but consists instead in a question-begging appeal to beliefs constitutive of the very framework in question, and if a comparatively superior scientific framework lies at our disposal, then the way is open for the elimination of the framework of manifest objects (*EPMH,* § 7, 21; see also Soffer 2003, 303).

Before turning to Sellars's argument against "the given," let us see how the argument from knowledge could be developed within a Husserlian phenomenological epistemology.[3]

2. THE ARGUMENT FROM KNOWLEDGE: HUSSERL'S VERSION

That any attack on "the entire framework of givenness" would have to contend with Husserl's phenomenological epistemology

is obvious (*EPMH,* § 1, 14). Fortunately, however, we do not have to venture deep into the mysteries of Husserl's phenomenological method, the epoché, transcendental subjectivity, the nature of the noema, or the specifics of the lifeworld. All we need to do is examine his theory of fulfillment, a theory that describes experiences familiar to all without any need for methodological preliminaries.

According to Husserl, "a life of consciousness cannot exist without including Evidenz" (*FTL,* § 107d, 289). Just what is "Evidenz"? Husserl provides evolving but remarkably consistent answers to this question, in this text and others.[4] Evidenz is "originary givenness" (*ILTK,* § 30, 153). It is "the giving of something itself" or, better still, the "mode of consciousness . . . that offers its intentional objectivity in the mode belonging to the original 'it itself'" (*FTL,* § 59, 156; *FTL,* § 63, 168). It is "itself-givenness" (*CM,* § 24, 57).

All evidential experiences are *intuitive* experiences, but the converse is not true. Intuitive experiences include all of those in which an object is given or that are modifications of givenness. Perception is the most obvious and basic intuitive act. Imagination, phantasy, and image-consciousness are some others. What distinguishes perception is that it is "originary" intuition (*Ideas I,* § 1, 9). In originary intuition, we are presented with the object itself—not a representation or image. The perceived object is there "in the flesh" (*PAS,* 140). It is thanks to this feature of perception that it is evidential. Perceiving snow falling outside provides me an excellent reason to believe that snow is falling outside. Imagining snow falling outside does not.

Unlike intuitive acts, acts of meaning, such as thought and judgment, are not presentational. They are "in themselves 'empty,' and . . . 'are in need of fullness'" (*LI 6/F,* § 21, 728). I can think that it's snowing without perceiving any snow, imagining snow, or seeing images of snow. "A comparison of a few casually observed imaginative accompaniments will soon show how vastly they vary while the meanings of words stay constant" (*LI 1/F,* § 17, 299–300). What is true of imaginative

acts is also true of perceptual experiences (*LI 6/F,* §§ 4–5). Thoughts do not change their sense with changes in perceptual experience or lose their sense when we cease to perceive their objects.

As one might suspect, Evidenz—that is, givenness or originary intuition—plays an immensely important role in knowledge. While Husserl is not an infallibilist about most of our knowledge, he does appear to endorse foundationalism. "Every mediated justification leads back, as is well known, to an . . . immediate justification" (*Ideas I,* § 141, 280).[5] The sixth *Logical Investigation* provides the most thorough phenomenological description of such immediate justifications. They occur in acts of "fulfillment." These are the experiences in which empty acts of meaning acquire the "fullness" of which they are "in need." I can think that snow is falling outside, but this act is empty. I am "aiming" at the falling snow, but I don't *have* it. This act of thinking, on its own, has no positive epistemic status at all.

To verify this proposition, I could do lots of things—watch the weather report, check a website, ask some friends, or try to work out how well that proposition coheres with the rest of my beliefs. I could also do the obvious thing and look. When that happens, the snow—more precisely, the state of affairs of the snow's falling outside—"is seen as being exactly the same as it is thought of" (*LI 6/F,* § 8, 696). And when that happens, in favorable circumstances at least, I come to know that it is snowing.

Acts of cognitive or epistemic fulfillment of this variety are complex wholes consisting of other acts and suitable relations among them (*LI 6/F,* § 9). The minimal requirements for fulfillment are the following:

(i.) The object must be perceived.
(ii.) The same object must be thought of or meant.
(iii.) The acts of perception and thought must be synthesized in a higher-order act.[6]

Because of this, fulfillment is not the same thing as perception but includes perception as a proper part. Furthermore, fulfillment is not the same thing as perceiving an object and thinking of it at the same time. I can think about the note F-sharp, and I can simultaneously hear an F-sharp, but I won't undergo an experience of fulfillment. In fulfillment the object must be given, meant, "*and given as it is meant*" (*LI 6/F,* § 38, 765; my emphasis). Since I don't have perfect pitch, this does not occur in the case above (see Peacocke 2001, 240).

Husserl clearly regards this way of verifying a proposition to have a special kind of status and records that status in his "Principle of All Principles."[7] According to the Principle, "each intuition affording [something] in an originary way is a legitimate source of knowledge, that whatever presents itself to us in 'Intuition' in an originary way (so to speak, in its actuality in person) is to be taken simply as what it affords itself as, but only within the limitations in which it affords itself there" (*Ideas I,* § 24, 43, italics removed). Harald Wiltsche understands this to be an epistemic principle equivalent to the following: "If object P is exhibited to a subject S in intuitive givenness, then S has at least prima facie justification for believing that P exists and that P has those properties which are exhibited intuitively" (2015, 68). This is a plausible principle in its own right, and one plausible reading of Husserl's.[8] And importantly, it is a principle of foundational or noninferential justification.

The account of fulfillment sketched above leaves a lot of questions open. It is, however, fairly straightforward and also seems to describe a kind of experience which each of us undergoes on a regular basis. It also provides a way to frame the argument from knowledge. Right now I believe that a coffee cup is on the table in front of me. Both the cup and the table are "manifest" objects. And this belief is fulfilled; that is, I also perceive the state of affairs that makes it true, and my acts of perception and thought do not merely co-occur but are united in a higher, synthetic unity. And this, according to the Principle

of All Principles, entails that I am justified in believing the cup to be on the table. If we add a couple of more conditions—the veridicality of the fulfilling intuition and the absence of defeaters, say (see Hopp 2020, 218)—then it follows that I *know* that the cup is on the table. And if I know the cup is on the table, then the cup is on the table. That is:

1. If one undergoes a veridical, undefeated act of fulfillment that P, then P.
2. I am undergoing a veridical, undefeated act of fulfillment that the cup is on the table.
3. Therefore, the cup is on the table.
4. If the cup is on the table, then some objects of the manifest image exist.
5. Therefore, some objects of the manifest image exist.

Note that this argument is not the basis for our beliefs in manifest objects. We know that many of them exist immediately and noninferentially thanks to undergoing experiences of fulfillment, not thanks to objectifying our acts of fulfillment and the Principle of All Principles and using *them* as premises (see Van Cleve 1979, 70). Now we turn to the Sellarsian response.

3. THE MYTH OF THE GIVEN: SIX POINTS

Before looking at the arguments against the given and whether and how they bear on Husserl's position, let's see how its detractors characterize their target. The following six points will guide our discussion.

1. The states in which we are aware of the given possess transmissible epistemic "authority" (*EPMH,* § 38, 77). That is, they can epistemically justify beliefs and judgments. They do this, moreover, "intrinsically" (M. Williams 2009, 154), in virtue of their own nature. They are "self-authenticating" (*EPMH,* § 38, 77).

2. The subject of such a state has, "simply in virtue of being in that state," some knowledge about something—perhaps, as in Russell's early theory, knowledge by acquaintance of the intentional object of the "observation," or perhaps simply knowledge "that one is in that state" of observation (Brandom 1997, 122).
3. The fact that one can be or is conscious of what is given does not require that one possess any concepts (*EPMH,* § 6, 20; McDowell 1994, 7; Brandom 1997, 122).
4. The experiences in which we are conscious of the given do not have conceptual content.
5. The beliefs we form on the basis of our awareness of the given are "argumentatively untouchable, thus unrevisable" (M. Williams 2009, 154).
6. The experiences of the given constitute an "immediate contact between subject and object" (Christias 2018, 515).

Taken as a whole, this is a fairly unattractive view.

Fortunately, Husserl does not hold all of it. Beginning with the second point, Husserl is not committed to the view that one has knowledge just in virtue of having something given to one (Soffer 2003, 305). Recall that the Husserlian position distinguishes perception and fulfillment. Both involve givenness. But only fulfillment, for Husserl, would be a case of knowledge. The act of perception itself is not a case of knowledge for Husserl. And the act itself need not be an object of knowledge since we need not bring our acts of consciousness to fulfillment.

Regarding the third and fourth points, these are extremely puzzling if the ambition is to take on all forms of givenness. Are we to suppose that a rationalist foundationalist such as Descartes thought that "intuited first principles" (*EPMH,* § 2, 14) could be given without one's having concepts (see Johnson 1986, 601)? For our purposes in evaluating Husserl's view, we have once again to distinguish perception and fulfillment. Cognitive fulfillment does have conceptual content. Whether perception itself has conceptual content, for Husserl,

is a contested issue.[9] I do not intend to resolve that issue here, though I suspect, rather counterintuitively, that the conceptualist version of Husserl's theory of perception does not fare as well against Sellars's arguments as a nonconceptualist view. More on that below.

Regarding the fifth point above, a few comments are in order. First, the fact that a belief is "argumentatively untouchable" does not entail that it is "unrevisable" (M. Williams 2009, 154). To establish that, we would need to demonstrate that argumentation is the only way to revise a belief. But it need not be. One might revise a belief on the basis of a perceptual experience. More importantly, Husserl insists that all our empirical beliefs are susceptible to being overturned (see Soffer 2003, 309). None of them are apodictic or adequate. Adequate evidence, adequate fulfillment, is "intrinsically incapable of being 'strengthened' or 'weakened'" (*Ideas I,* § 138, 276). But all of our empirical beliefs can be strengthened or weakened. And this is itself grounded, in part, in the modes of givenness of empirical objects. One cannot perceive a physical object, or even any of its parts and properties, adequately or completely. A "self-posing" object, one which is given adequately, has only one way of presenting itself; in their case "different perceptions have different objects" (*TS,* § 10, 22). In the case of physical objects, relations, parts, and properties, this is not the case. The cup on the table is the same object whether I see it up close or from afar. Its color is and appears to be the same color when I dim or brighten the lights. Its shape and size are and appear to be the same as I alter my distance and orientation (see *Ideas I,* § 44; A. D. Smith 2008, 324). Normally, these ways of appearing are harmonious and mutually consistent—the appearance of the cup's rim changes as I move around it in just the way it should change if it is round. But sometimes they are not, and it is always possible that the way an object appears to be in one experience conflicts with that of another (see *Ideas I,* § 138).

Husserl clearly believes in some central features of the "myth," however. He is committed to the first point above:

perceptual experiences, and the acts of fulfillment in which they figure, have intrinsic and transmissible authority. They can justify beliefs through fulfillment, and they do this in virtue of their own nature (see *ILTK,* 118). No adoption or abandonment of various "frameworks," language games, or practices could alter the fact that a perceptual experience of a cup's being on a table provides epistemic support for the proposition that a cup is on a table.

The main reason perceptual experiences have such authority, moreover, is that Husserl is committed to a feature of givenness that lies at its very heart: there are experiences in which objects are present to us as they are, experiences in which verification rests, not with frameworks or games or theories or inferential moves, but with "the things themselves." If Husserl's theory is right, then, in veridical acts of fulfillment our "framework" is not a representation or "image" of reality but reality itself. Any alternative representational "framework" or "image," one which denies the truth or veridicality of this experience, would have to be an alternative to reality.

Furthermore, even if Husserl's theory doesn't satisfy most of the criteria laid down in the straw theory articulated in points 1–6 (above), it does provide the resources to generate the Argument from Knowledge with which Sellars is so unimpressed. If Sellars's attack on the given doesn't address Husserl's theory, then it doesn't address the Husserlian argument for the veridicality of the "manifest image." And if it doesn't do that, then not only does it fail as an attack on "the entire framework of givenness" (*EPMH,* § 1, 14) but it fails to address a fairly credible challenge to Sellars's version of scientific realism.

4. AGAINST THE GIVEN: THE DILEMMA

Sellars's presentation of his case against the given is notoriously complicated. The overall argument, however, takes the form of a dilemma. One version of the dilemma is concisely summed up by Bonjour: "If . . . intuitions or immediate apprehensions

are construed as cognitive, then they will be both capable of giving justification and in need of it themselves; if they are non-cognitive, then they do not need justification but are also apparently incapable of providing it" (Bonjour 1978, 11). A belief, or an act of judgment, is a paradigm of a "cognitive" state. It is, furthermore, widely understood that a "cognitive" state has propositional content. For instance, my belief that snow is falling outside is cognitive because its content is the proposition <snow is falling outside>. It is also widely assumed, and is certainly Husserl's own view, that states with *propositional* content have *conceptual* content. Propositions, for Husserl, just are complex meanings whose constituents are simple meanings or concepts (see *LI 1/F*, § 35, 333). Concepts, that is, are a distinctive type of representational content.

The dilemma, then, is this: mental states either have propositional or conceptual content, or they do not. If they do, then they cannot be foundational. If they do not, they cannot themselves qualify as instances of knowledge or justify any beliefs (see Hopp 2021, 344). Experiences of the given, however, are alleged to be both foundational and nonpropositional or nonconceptual. In Husserlian terms, this means that originary intuitions either have propositional content, in which case they cannot function as foundations of knowledge, or they do not, in which case they cannot function in the epistemically foundational way specified by the Principle of All Principles.

5. THE SECOND HORN: STATES WITHOUT CONCEPTUAL CONTENT CANNOT JUSTIFY

I begin with the second horn of the dilemma, which states that states of awareness without conceptual content are not states of knowledge, and cannot justify beliefs. Whatever role they play in knowledge, it is not an epistemic one. Sellars's argument for this conclusion begins early. Sensing is directed on sense-data, according to the sense-datum theory, and sense-data are particulars. But "what is known, even in non-inferential knowledge,

is facts rather than particulars" (*EPMH,* § 3, 15–16). If sensing is knowledge, that is "only in a stipulated sense of 'know'" (*EPMH,* § 4, 17).

As it happens, Husserl, too, appears to believe that the objects of knowledge are facts. "We prefer to speak of 'knowledge' where an opinion, in the normal sense of a belief, has been confirmed or attested" (*LI 6/F,* § 16, 721).[10] The contents of beliefs are propositions, and the objects of propositions are states of affairs.[11] And obtaining states of affairs are what facts are. Husserl does not provide any argument for this claim. Neither, in the context of making it, does Sellars. Unlike Husserl, however, Sellars does have an argument, one to which we will return shortly.

If knowledge is always of states of affairs, then it follows on Husserl's view that whatever experience immediately justifies knowledge must also be of states of affairs. The reason is that immediate justification always takes the form of fulfillment, and in fulfillment the object thought of or meant must be the same as the object perceived. The consciousness of a mere feeling, "the raw material of the sensible impressions" (*CPR,* B1), a Lockean "simple idea," or a bare particular cannot fulfill a mental state whose object is a state of affairs. This is a familiar point. In his discussion of the role of Locke's simple ideas in his theory of knowledge, to give one notable example, T. H. Green provides a criticism just as probing as, and considerably clearer than, what we find in Sellars (Green 1968, esp. §§ 56–66).

(a) The Conceptualist Response

It seems that a conceptualist view of perceptual experience is perfectly suited to address this horn of the dilemma. As Heath Williams argues, "Husserl definitely subscribes to the key thesis which will rescue him from the myth of the given, i.e., that sensations must be apprehended by a cognitive act which provides perception with a propositional shape in order for perceptual intuition to arise" (2021, 6388). And there is no doubt that a conceptualist view does a good job of calming certain

Sellarsian worries about the *relationship* between perceptual experiences and beliefs. Perceptual experiences lie within the "space of reasons" because they have the same kind of content as beliefs.

It's one thing to say what it is about perceptual experiences that allows them to enter into justificatory relations with beliefs. It's another thing to get clear on what it is about the experiences themselves that gives them their distinctive epistemic force. And when the Husserlian conceptualist answers this, I think they come dangerously close to being guilty of a *genuine* myth of the given, the kind of myth that Sellars's arguments successfully refute. Here's why. One feature of conceptual contents or meanings for Husserl is that they are intrinsically empty (*LI 6/F,* § 21, 728; also *LI 6/F* § 25, 738). That is, a conceptual content C can function as the content of a nonintuitive act, an act in which that content's object is not perceived. Therefore, let us suppose that my perceptual experience of the cup on the table has as its intentional content the proposition <the cup is on the table>, and that it fulfills my belief with the same content. What, then, accounts for the experience's epistemic power? How does it justify my belief in a way that no mere belief could? And how does it manage to establish a direct, immediate, originary confrontation with reality? In fact, why isn't it itself just another belief?

One possible answer is that it differs from belief or thought in intentional quality, where quality is "the general act-character, which stamps an act as merely presentative, judgemental, emotional, desiderative, etc." (*LI 5/F,* § 20, 586). But Husserl does not think so, and for several good reasons (see Hopp 2020, § 4.2). The most important for our purposes is that perception and judgment can and often do have the same quality (*PAS,* 75; *HUA XXX,* 72).

Another answer, and I believe the one that the Husserlian conceptualist must pursue given Husserl's rightful rejection of treating evidence as a kind of feeling (see *IdPh,* 44), is that perception is epistemically distinctive in virtue of its sensory or "hyletic"

content. Such sensory or "hyletic" content acquires intentionality through an obscure process called "interpretation" or "apprehension," and these interpretations of sensory contents are those which "first confer on them the value of being a picture or a perspectivally slanted self-revelation" (*LI 6/F,* § 22, 730).[12] On any interpretation, for better or worse (worse, in my view), Husserl believes such contents to exist.[13] On a conceptualist reading, however, these must be the contents which make such a massive epistemic contribution to knowledge.

Is that plausible? I'm not so sure. It is highly doubtful that painting a thought with nonintentional hyletic data or qualia could not endow it with such epistemic, world-revelatory power. Much more plausible is the position that such data, *if* they exist, are epistemically powerless, a position that Paul Johnston calls the "Wallpaper View" (2006, 242).[14] That such hyletic content acquires intentionality through being "interpreted" by or through the conceptual content of the act—which is how Williams, quite plausibly, interprets Husserl—does not obviously help matters.[15] For now the sensuous content is merely intending what the only real bearers of intentionality, concepts, have "told" it to intend (see Hopp 2020, 191). And while Williams does point out that, for Husserl, interpreting sensations isn't a matter of first objectifying them in the way that empiricists objectify their sensations and sense-data, that is not the relevant issue.[16] Whether sensations are on the left- or the right-hand side of the intentional act, the conceptualist must endow them with intrinsic epistemic powers while denying them intrinsic intentional powers. On the conceptualist Husserlian view, sensation contributes no intentionality to the act; it has no "epistemic aboutness" of its own (*EPMH,* § 29, 64). Yet, somehow, it plays not a minor but a central and foundational role in knowledge. That, I think, may be a bad version of the "myth." If a type of content borrows its intentionality from another type of content, how could it not also borrow its epistemic force from that content? How could it have intrinsic epistemic force without having any intentional content of its own?

(b) The Nonconceptualist Response

The nonconceptualist Husserlian view is clearly targeted by this horn of the dilemma. If only states with conceptual content can justify beliefs, and if perceptual states do not have that kind of content, then they cannot justify beliefs.[17] That it is targeted, however, does not mean that it is hit. Why, after all, think that all justifiers must have conceptual content?

One possible argument is that (a) only states with propositional content can be of states of affairs, and (b) propositional content is conceptual content. The second premise is fine. But the first is not obvious at all. That perceptual states and beliefs can have the same objects—and how else could we believe things about what we perceive if not?—does not entail that they have the same contents.[18] States of affairs are categorially structured relations among objects, properties, and relations. A proposition is a conceptual representation of a state of affairs. On a Husserlian view these are very different things. True, the relationship between them is intimate. As he writes, "Corresponding to a proposition is a state of affairs, precisely the one that is posited in it as obtaining. If the proposition is true, then the state of affairs actually obtains (and the object-about-which actually exists), and it does not obtain if the proposition is false" (*ILTK*, § 14, 52; also see Willard 1984, 189). Nevertheless, they have different constituents. Propositions are composed of simpler "meanings" or concepts; states of affairs are composed of entities, properties, and relations.

There does not seem to be any obvious reason why mental states with different kinds of content could not have the same objects. We find this to be the case with other representations. Sentences, for instance, conventionally represent states of affairs. But so can pictures, maps, and graphs (Crane 2009, 458). On a Husserlian view, these are differences in "content." There's no obvious reason, then, that perception and thought might not also differ in content while having the same objects.[19] And once it is granted that different kinds of states can have

the same objects, it is open to explain various relations among their contents by appealing to the nature of their objects. The thing that explains why propositions enter into intentional relations with one another is not primarily that they are propositions. Rather, it's that their objects, the states of affairs that they represent, necessitate, exclude, or are compossible with one another (see Hopp 2020, 192). The content of a perceptual experience of a cup's being on a table is compatible with the proposition <the cup is on the table> because they are of the same state of affairs. It is incompatible with the proposition <the cup is not on the table> because they are of incompossible states of affairs. Whether their contents are of the same type is not what primarily matters. What matters, rather, is whether their objects are.

Sellars does believe that only propositional or conceptual states can represent facts (deVries and Triplett 2000, 11). The reason hinges on his "psychological nominalism," which states that "all awareness of sorts, resemblances, facts, etc., in short, all awareness of abstract entities—indeed, all awareness even of particulars—is a linguistic affair" (*EPMH,* § 29, 63). Like Paul Snowdon (2009, 113), I have struggled to find an argument for this remarkable doctrine in *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind*. Nevertheless, for Sellars there is a web of intimate connections among knowing or being justified, intentionality, and conformity with linguistic norms. Consider his famous claim about knowledge: "In characterizing an episode or state as that of *knowing,* we are not giving an empirical description of that episode or state; we are placing it in the logical space of reasons, of justifying and being able to justify what one says" (*EPMH,* § 36, 76). Notice that the space of reasons is constituted by acts of justifying. And what is justified is "what one says." So language is essential to the space of reasons and justification for two reasons (Wasch 2021). First, having the capacity to justify what one says requires that one have a capacity to say something. Second, such justifications themselves will be expressed or expressible in language. The

picture that emerges, then, is that any serious contender for knowledge must be justified, and justification requires that the one justified be capable of justifying what they say to others. Brandom says that a claim "cannot have the status [of being justified] except when it is possible to redeem that claim to authority and epistemic privilege by engaging in the activity of justifying it" (1997, 157).

If we understand conceptual content to be, among other things, the kind of content that is both expressible and communicable linguistically, then we have a cogent argument for the claim that all epistemically effective mental states must have conceptual content. And Husserl, for what it's worth, does appear to believe this about conceptual content, at one point even characterizing a concept as "the self-identical meaning of the corresponding expressions" (*LI* Prol., § 59, 217). One Sellarsian argument, then, is this:

(1) If a belief is justified, the subject of that belief must be able to linguistically express and communicate (a) its content and (b) the contents of whatever mental states justify it.
(2) If a mental state's content is linguistically expressible and communicable, it is conceptual.
(3) So, if a belief is justified, its content and the contents of whatever mental states justify it are conceptual.

If I justifiably believe that the cup is on the table, then whatever reasons I have for believing so must be the kind I can state to others in the "game of giving and asking for reasons" (Brandom 1997, 140).

The weakest premise from a Husserlian nonconceptualist position here is premise (1). The main problem with it is that it threatens to rule out perception as a justifier of belief, effectively knocking it out of the "space of reasons." The reason is that the contents of perceptual states—or at least the contents which make them epistemically distinctive—are not linguistically

communicable.[20] When I successfully communicate my belief that the cup is on the table via the sentence "The cup is on the table," I express the proposition <the cup is on the table>. Whoever understands me will thereby be in a mental state whose content is that same proposition. But if I utter this sentence while perceiving the cup to be on the table, whoever understands me will not thereby perceive what I do, much less perceive it in the precise way that I do. And because of that, they will not thereby have the same reason to believe that the cup is on the table that I do. In perceiving the cup to be on the table, my belief that it's on the table is fulfilled. If I express my belief's content to someone far away over a phone, their belief is not fulfilled. If we insist that only those mental states whose contents are linguistically communicable do any justificatory work, then the person on the phone's reason for believing the cup is on the table is the same, and as good, as mine. But it isn't.

Furthermore, it's no help to say that there are other beliefs I have with conceptual content that they do not, since, being conceptual, I could communicate all of their contents to others as well. I might, for instance, believe the proposition <I perceive the cup to be on the table>. But then I could tell someone so over the phone, and they could believe the equivalent proposition <Walter Hopp perceives the cup to be on the table>. But they do not have the same evidence for that proposition that I have. My belief is fulfilled; theirs is not. If all contents are linguistically expressible, there's nothing to prevent someone in a different room or on the other side of the world from believing that the cup is on the table or that I perceive it to be on the table for all of the reasons that I do. But there is something to prevent that: they don't perceive it, and I do.

6. THE FIRST HORN: CONCEPTUAL STATES ARE NOT FOUNDATIONAL

The second horn of Sellars's dilemma does not succeed against the Husserlian nonconceptualist position, though it might against the conceptualist position. What about the first horn?

It states that conceptual states cannot function as foundations of knowledge. Obviously one aspect of Husserlian nonconceptualism is unthreatened by this, since on that view perceptual states are not conceptual. But acts of fulfillment are, and while on a Husserlian nonconceptualist view they are not the foundations of knowledge, they are the most foundational pieces of knowledge. Husserlian conceptualism, of course, is directly threatened by this horn of the dilemma.

What really underlies Sellars's argument is his holism about concept possession and the close connection between concept possession and knowledge. One feature of the "myth" is that one can acquire concepts on the basis of presentations of their referents—that one could, for instance, acquire the concept <green>, or at least <looking green>, by acquaintance with a green sense-datum. But this, thinks Sellars, is a mistake. More fundamental than the concept of looking green is the concept of being green. As he puts it,

> The point I wish to stress . . . is that the concept of *looking green,* the ability to recognize that something *looks green,* presupposes the concept of *being green,* and that the latter concept involves the ability to tell what colors objects have by looking at them—which, in turn, involves knowing in what circumstances to place an object if one wishes to ascertain its color by looking at it. (*EPMH,* § 18, 43)

Recognition is a form of fulfillment. So in Husserlian terms, the claim is that one could not undergo an experience of fulfillment that something is green unless one had the concept of being green and also had a body of knowledge about what conditions are favorable for determining whether something is or isn't green. Thanks to our knowledge, for instance, we will not conclude that something isn't green just because it doesn't *look green* at night, since we know these aren't the optimal conditions in which to determine something's color.

That we must have the concept of something's being green in order to know that it is green poses no problem to either the conceptualist or nonconceptualist Husserlian theory. The real trouble comes from the further claim that possessing the concept of being green requires that one have other pieces of knowledge. In fact knowing the conditions under which things look green is just the start. According to Sellars, "there is an important sense in which one has *no* concept pertaining to the observable properties of physical objects in Space and Time unless one has them all—and, indeed, as we shall see, a great deal more besides" (*EPMH,* § 19, 45). That sounds a bit overstated. Does one really need the concept <burgundy> to have the concept <F-sharp>? Coupled with his linguistic nominalism, the results are even less plausible. Not only must one have the concept <burgundy> to have the concept <F-sharp>, one must have the concept <burgundy> to *hear* an F-sharp—at least on the assumption that hearing is a form of awareness. After all, awareness requires concepts, and empirical concepts come in very, very large packages—you need them all to have any. But hearing an F-sharp not only doesn't require that one have the concept <burgundy>, it doesn't even seem to require that one have the concept <F-sharp>.

Moving on, one foundationalist version of the "myth" maintains that there are certain facts "such that (a) each fact can not only be noninferentially known to be the case, but presupposes no other knowledge . . . and (b) such that the noninferential knowledge facts belonging to this structure constitutes the ultimate court of appeals for all factual claims . . . about the world" (*EPMH,* § 32, 68–69). If Husserl's theory took this form, it would maintain that there are certain beliefs that could be fulfilled by a subject who had no other knowledge. But if Sellars is right, this could not be. Even knowing something as simple as that something is green requires a great deal of other knowledge.

This is surely one of the most interesting claims that Sellars makes. However, it doesn't threaten foundationalism

or Husserl's theory of givenness. In point (a) of the passage above, Sellars draws a distinction between knowledge that presupposes other knowledge for its (1) existence or for its (2) justification—and accuses advocates of the given of ignoring this distinction (*EPMH,* § 32, 68–69). Foundationalists, however, have caught on, and realize that the fact that knowledge presupposes other knowledge in the first way does not falsify foundationalism. To give Alston's example, it is likely a condition for believing that 2 + 3 = 5 that one know that 1 + 1 = 2 (1989, 63). But that doesn't mean that one cannot know that 2 + 3 = 5 on the basis of fulfillment rather than argument. James Pryor makes a similar point and helpfully compares the distinction between whether a belief is autonomous or immediate, on the one hand, with the distinction between whether it is innate or a priori, on the other. "When we ask whether a certain belief counts as an instance of *a priori* knowledge, we're not concerned with whether the subject *acquired the concepts* necessary to entertain that belief through experience. We're only concerned with the source of the subject's *justification* for the belief" (2000, 534). Similarly, it might require knowledge for me to possess concepts such as <cup> and <table>, but that doesn't mean that my present belief that the cup is on the table inferentially or evidentially depends on that knowledge.

The necessary conditions for givenness are not impediments to givenness. If it should turn out that having a vast body of knowledge is required to have a cup's being on a table given to one in fulfillment or even perception, the fact remains that when it is given, it is given. As Husserl succinctly puts it, "Givenness is givenness" (*TS,* 300; also see Fales 1996, 123). If what's required to have a cup on a table given to one is a distinctive biological makeup, a set of sensorimotor skills (Noë 2004), a body of concepts and knowledge, or knowledge of a conventional language, then so be it. Provided these operate not as "evidential" but as "nonevidential" justifiers (Lyons 2009, § 2.1), "sources" rather than "grounds" (Van Cleve 1979, 69), then foundationalism is untouched. In fact, one

thing that requires knowledge of a conventional language to know is which move has been made in a language game. But the fact that I must know English to have an utterance of an English sentence given to me in fulfillment, or even in perception, does nothing to eliminate the vast phenomenological and epistemological difference between just thinking or imagining that someone said something and hearing them say it.

The opponent of the given might, however, insist against the conceptualist version of Husserl's theory that all conceptual mental states require justification themselves. I think that is in fact true, since no mental state with intrinsically empty content, one which fails to present any object or state of affairs, can have intrinsic epistemic force. The Husserlian conceptualist, however, should and can resist this argument. The reason is that it eliminates perception as a justifier of belief and collapses into doxasticism. It's easy to see how one might provide additional support for one's perceptual *beliefs,* and believing or failing to believe in propositions fulfilled by one's perceptual experiences can be rationally appraised. But how would one go about justifying a perceptual experience or concluding that someone is or is not rational on the basis of their perceptual experiences? As Huemer points out, that doesn't even make sense (2001, 97). And again, while perceptual beliefs and reports that express their contents are fair game in the reason-giving language game, the epistemically distinctive contents of perceptual experiences themselves are not. It is also worth pointing out that such games typically terminate in ordinary contexts when all of the parties perceptually verify a contested or contestable statement. Once two people actually see the cup on the table, whatever dispute they may have had on this score is over—unless, that is, they are genuinely playing a game.

7. THE CATEGORIAL GIVEN

In later lectures, Sellars characterizes the "most basic form" of the "myth" as a commitment to the following principle: "If a

person is directly aware of an item which has categorial status C, then the person is aware of it *as* having categorial status C" (Sellars 1981, 11). He then adds, "*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*" (12). If the Husserlian Argument from Knowledge outlined in section 2 above is going to work, Husserl must be committed to the possibility of categorially structured objects such as states of affairs being given. Together with the view that givenness is an "*immediate contact* between subject and object" (Christias 2018, 515), this also means that he is committed to the world having the categorial structures that it appears to have in acts of fulfillment.

What could Husserl's reason for thinking that categorial objects are given be? Well, quite simply, the same contrast we find between merely thinking of an individual emptily and perceiving it can be made with respect to such things as universals, states of affairs, and other categorial objects (see, for instance, *LI 2/F,* §§ 1, 8; and *LI 6/F,* § 45). I can see an instance of green. I can also see the color green itself. If I look at three green objects, it possible to have the concept <green> fulfilled. Thanks to an "overarching act of identification" (*LI 6/F,* § 52, 800), I see the same color across acts with different individual green instances. And this really is an intuitive consciousness of the color green. It differs entirely, both phenomenologically and epistemologically, from an empty thought about the color green. "Talk of an *intuition,* and, more precisely, of a *perception of the universal* is in this case, therefore, well-justified" (*LI 6/F,* § 52, 800). And this same green is capable of being seen in acts with no existing individual objects, such as acts of phantasy (*LI 6/F,* § 52, 801).

The same considerations hold for states of affairs. Seeing a cup to be on a table is not a matter of seeing a cup, seeing a table, and emptily thinking of the relation that holds between them (see Hopp 2011, 67). It's a matter of seeing the cup's

being on the table. Similarly, if I see a round cup and a rectangular table, I don't perceive four unrelated items. The roundness belongs to the cup, not only in predicative thought but in the intuition that fulfills it. If that were not the case, then my experience could just as well fulfill the thoughts that the cup is rectangular or that the table is round.

But is this account guilty of the "myth of the categorial given" as Sellars characterizes it above (Christias 2018, 532)? Consider the first formulation: "If a person is directly aware of an item which has categorial status C, then the person is aware of it *as* having categorial status C" (Sellars 1981, 11). If being aware of something "as" something means that one must *conceptualize* it, then Husserl's view is not obviously committed to that, at least on the nonconceptualist reading. Perception doesn't require fulfillment. And even if it did mean that, as it must for the Husserlian conceptualist, that isn't obviously an argument against givenness. Why would conceptualizing something entail that it is not given? When I conceptualize the cup and table in front of me, I don't cease to see them. For the Husserlian conceptualist, concepts are necessary conditions for givenness, not barriers to it. Seeing something "as" something might also mean that one must not only conceptualize it but *recognize* it. And Husserl isn't committed to that. Perception, again, is not fulfillment or recognition.

How about the second characterization of the "myth," according to which "*the categorial structure of the world imposes itself on the mind as a seal imposes an image on melted wax*" (Sellars 1981, 12)? That is not something Husserl is guilty of believing. In fact the whole wax-seal model of intentionality is fundamentally at odds with Husserl's theory. Husserl believes that acts apprehend their objects in virtue of their own parts, properties, and structures. In the case of any object whatsoever, its givenness (or empty meant-ness) depends largely, or even entirely in some cases, on the inner configuration of the act—just as the representational properties of a sentence or picture depend, in part, on the configuration of its parts, and

just as, in general, the ability of things to relate to one another depends in part on how those things are. "A consciousness that would be entirely without organization is completely inconceivable" (*PAS,* 268). Some mental acts, such as fulfillment, are founded on other mental acts, including them as proper parts. Some objects can only be perceived in founded acts. In the case of states of affairs, for instance, we learn that "we are dealing with a sphere of objects, which can only show themselves 'in person' in such founded acts" (*LI 6/F,* § 46, 788). That objects "impose" themselves on minds, irrespective of those minds' constitutions, is almost certainly a myth. But it is also a myth to suppose that *if* something is given to a mind, the mind must receive it independently of its own configuration, or that its own properties, rather than enabling the givenness of things, somehow prevent their being given (see Willard 2000, 38; and Willard 2002). "Consciousness is not some sort of ontological odd-man-out over against everything else," writes Dallas Willard (2003, 170). Like everything else, it relates to other things in virtue of having properties and a nature of its own.

Christias finds another reason for Sellars's rejection of the categorial given, and that lies in Sellars's unique version of nominalism. "Sellars endorses a version of *linguistic* nominalism according to which abstract entities such as properties, kinds, relations, propositional contents, and facts are, in the last analysis, linguistic or, better, *conceptual* entities" (2018, 513). If givenness is supposed to be our "point of *immediate contact* between subject and object (the world)" (515), then it might seem clear that Sellars's linguistic nominalism rules out a categorial given.

That is not, however, altogether clear. First, a theory of givenness must be distinguished from *realism* about what is given. Givenness is immediate and originary access to what exists. Whether what is given exists independently of minds, consciousness, concepts, or language is a separate question. Unless we are given some reason to think that "linguistic" or "conceptual" entities do not exist *at all,* then the fact that the

categorial items above are linguistic or conceptual does not rule out their givenness. And to take linguistic items as an obvious case, they do exist, and they are given. One can read or hear a sentence, for instance, and playing language games would be quite a bit more challenging if we couldn't. And not only do such linguistic items exist; they have a categorial structure. They are lawfully structured wholes composed of repeatable elements. They are also the objects of scientific inquiry, provided the scientific realist is generous enough to allow linguistics to contribute to the "scientific image."

That response, however, does little to assuage the worry that the manifest image is a mere appearance. If the manifest image has, as it does, a categorial structure, and if that structure is a linguistic or conceptual construction, then the manifest image is not an image of how reality really is independently of us. There is insufficient space to discuss the merits of categorial antirealism, and so I'll end with the following *ad hominem:* if no world-image that ascribes to the world a categorial structure accurately represents the world as it really is, then neither the manifest nor the scientific image represents the world as it really is. Like the manifest image, the scientific image presents us with a world of individuals (atoms, cells), events (firings of neurons), properties (mass and charge), relations (covalent bonds), processes (biological evolution, planetary warming), parts and wholes (atoms in relation to molecules), and, yes, states of affairs (a quark's having spin). If categorially structured objects cannot be given because they do not really exist, then they cannot be accurately thought of or spoken about for the same reason. And if, somehow, the nonindependence of the categorial structure of the world does not spell trouble for the scientific image as recorded in scientific thinking, it shouldn't spell trouble for the manifest image as given in experience.

* * *

That wraps up this Husserlian defense of the manifest image by way of a defense of the phenomenon of givenness and its

epistemic significance. It does not, to be sure, measure up to the ideal of philosophical proof, leaves many questions open, and also leaves numerous places for a committed Sellarsian to respond. I do think, though, that Sellars's arguments do not contend with sufficient care to the power of an epistemological theory such as Husserl's.

A final point regarding the alleged conflict between the two "images" of the world: how confident should we be that they do conflict? Clearly the manifest image is incomplete. As for the scientific image and its claims to be, again, "a complete image" (PSIM, 20), it would help Sellars's case a great deal if he or anyone else could locate the experimental evidence for such completeness, or even any attempts to establish it. It would also help to find where, by whom, and by means of what methods it has been experimentally established that manifest objects like trees, rocks, cups on tables, money, Boston, and video games do not exist. Or as Willard asks, "Could one possibly find the place in some comprehensive and duly accredited scientific text or treatment, or some technical paper, where it is demonstrated or necessarily assumed by the science concerned that *all that exists* consists of particles or fields or strings—or whatever the proper subject matter of the science is?" (2000, 29). According to Willard there is no such place. Now perhaps such a momentous discovery has in fact been made and documented, one which either directly establishes or clearly entails that the manifest image of the world is false—that is, that the *manifest world* does not exist. But if it has not, and until it has, it is difficult to see how a Sellarsian scientific realist can support their position on the basis of the authority of science.

NOTES

1. Lee Hardy (2021, 439–40) helpfully points out that scientific realism of this kind is not the same thing as realism about the objects of scientific theories. The former, but not the latter,

entails antirealism or eliminativism about large portions of the manifest world.

2. I discuss Sellars briefly in Hopp 2020 (§ 8.2.5 and § 9.4.5) and in Hopp 2021.
3. Note that I will stick mainly to Sellars's treatment of the given. For a wider discussion of the given and its critics in relation to phenomenology, see Roy (2003).
4. Though see Heffernan (1998) for a much more detailed account of Husserl's conception of Evidenz.
5. For further discussions of Husserl's foundationalism, see Erhard (2012), Hopp (2012), Piazza (2013), Wiltsche (2015), Berghofer (2018 and 2020), and Hopp (2020, ch. 9).
6. Also see Hopp (2020, 102).
7. See Berghofer (2020) for a recent and excellent discussion.
8. Of course, Husserl also says, in the first part, that originary intuition is a source of *knowledge*. In § 9.4 of my 2020 book, I treated "the" principle as two principles whose unified formulation goes as follows: "If S's belief that P is fulfilled on the basis of an originary intuition, and if S's belief is undefeated, then S is justified in believing that P. If, in addition, that originary intuition is veridical, then S knows that P" (218). However, in large measure thanks to conversations with Zhongwei Li and Harold Langsam (see Langsam 2017), I am becoming increasingly persuaded that originary intuition is always veridical because it is relational and that the Principle of All Principles specifies sufficient conditions for knowledge and not merely justification, but will not press this controversial point here. Wiltsche's formulation is weaker and therefore more plausible, while also being a target of Sellars's argument.
9. See, for instance, Miller (1984); Cobb-Stevens (1990); Mulligan (1995); Welton (2000); Kjosavik (2003); Shim (2005); Dahlstrom (2007); Barber (2008); Hopp (2008); Mooney (2010); Leung (2011); Hopp (2011); Christensen (2013); Van Mazijk (2016, 2017a, 2017b, and 2020); Zheng (2019); Kidd (2019); and H. Williams (2021).
10. Alston (2002, 311) also agrees.
11. See *LI 5/F,* § 17, 579; Smith and McIntyre (1982, 6–9).
12. Also see Mulligan (1995, § 5). For a helpful treatment of what "interpretation" of such contents is, for Husserl, along with some of its problems, see Roy (1999, especially § 3.3.2).
13. See Hopp (2020, §§ 7.4–7.5). For a more sympathetic take, see Williford (2013).

14. Johnston rejects the Wallpaper View, quite correctly in my view, but rightly treats it as the position to which theories of perception like the one under consideration are committed.
15. H. Williams (2021, § 5). Also see *LI 5/F,* § 14, 568, where Husserl writes "the very same thing which, in relation to the intentional object, is called is *presentation* . . . is also called an *interpretation, conception, apperception* in relation to the sensations really present in the act."
16. H. Williams (2021, 6381); see *LI 1,* § 23, 309–10, and *PAS,* 55.
17. John McDowell (1994) and Bill Brewer (1999) endorse the first premise of this argument but conclude that perception must have conceptual content. For a clear formulation, of which the one above is modeled, see Brewer (2005, 218). Since defending conceptualism, Brewer has embraced and developed a form of naive realism which explains perceptual experience, not in terms of its contents but in terms of its objects. See Brewer (2011, especially chapter 5).
18. Michelle Montague writes that "the content of an experience is (absolutely) everything that is given to one, experientially, in the having of the experience, everything one is aware of, experientially, in the having of the experience" (2016, 30). That is not Husserl's view. For Husserl, at least in the *Logical Investigations,* the content of an act is an intentionality-bestowing property of it. Contents, including concepts, are "more-or-less complex intentional properties of more-or-less complex mental acts" (Willard 1984, 178; see *LI 1/F,* § 31, 330).
19. Heath Williams, however, writes, "It is assumed (within the current debate over whether Husserl is a conceptualist) that concepts are uncontroversially involved if categorial intuition is, paradigmatically during the perception of states of affairs" (2021, 6380). As an interpretive point that may be right, and it might explain why Husserl goes on such a desperate pursuit of the sensuous content corresponding to categorial moments in categorial intuition. But as a philosophical point it is highly suspect. Is a picture clearly a bearer of propositional content because it depicts not only things and properties but things as having properties? That whatever doesn't correspond with "sensation" must be the object of an intellectual, conceptual act is what prompts Merleau-Ponty to complain that on an intellectualist view "the judgment is everywhere that pure sensation is not, which is to say that judgment is everywhere" (2012, 36).

20. Even the Husserlian conceptualist should admit this since the content that makes them epistemically distinctive cannot just be their conceptual content. If it were, they would be indistinguishable epistemically from empty thoughts and beliefs.

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CHAPTER 3

HUSSERL'S LIFEWORLD AND SELLARS'S STEREOSCOPIC VISION OF THE WORLD

Danilo Manca

In recent years, scholars have begun to realize that Husserlian phenomenology is a significant counterpart to Sellars's thought and have been delving more deeply into the interaction between the two perspectives from a historical-philosophical and/or a theoretical point of view.[1] By integrating these two possible approaches to the issue, I would like to contribute to the debate by comparing Husserl's theory of the lifeworld with Sellars's distinction between the two conflicting images of the human being in the world: the manifest image and the scientific image.

More specifically, in the first section of this chapter, I will wonder whether Husserl's theory of the lifeworld can be considered one of the most sophisticated examples of the manifest image; in the second section I will discuss Sellars's scientific realism in terms of Husserl's conception of phenomenon; and in the third section I will tackle the issue of how the two images can blend together in a unitary view.

1. THE MANIFEST IMAGE AND THE THEORY OF THE LIFEWORLD

As is widely known, in "Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man" (PSIM), Sellars maintains that in the search for the unity of knowledge, contemporary philosophers are necessarily confronted "not by one complex many-dimensional picture" but "by two pictures of essentially the same order of complexity, each of which purports to be a complete picture of man-in-the-world" (PSIM, 4). Accordingly, his task is not to find a way to appreciate a pregiven unity but to fuse into one vision two conflicting overviews of the way in which humans live in their world. This is why Sellars makes use of the analogy with the stereoscopic vision of a complex painting, where "two perspectives on a landscape are fused into one coherent experience" (PSIM, 4).

Sellars designates these two conflicting views as the manifest image and the scientific image. In order to explain why he adopts the term "image," he refers to Husserl: "By calling them images I do not mean to deny to either or both of them the status of reality. I am, to use Husserl's term, 'bracketing' them, transforming them from ways of experiencing the world into objects of philosophical reflection and evaluation" (PSIM, 5).

The act of "bracketing," then, is what enables Sellars to take adequate distance from the everyday way of experiencing the world in order to transform this into a theme of philosophical reflection. In other words, the act of bracketing is a condition not only for embracing our way of living in its totality and complexity but for providing an idealization of the many ways we relate to the world. Both images are indeed, in Sellars's view, "idealizations in something like the sense in which a frictionless body or an ideal gas is an idealization" (PSIM, 5).

Most likely, a phenomenological reader would consider Sellars's use of the term "image" quite misleading. Indeed, the act of bracketing does not transform any experience into an image in the ordinary sense but rather into an "as-if experience." After carrying out the *epoché*, a perception remains a

perception, an imagination, and so on, with the sole modification that the objects of these experiences are not considered in terms of whether they exist or not but are investigated in their modes of appearing instead. Therefore the use of the term "image" risks strengthening the conviction that the idealization of a position toward the world as it is experienced (whether in ordinary life or in scientific investigation) is conflated with the production of a mental image.

To be sure, Sellars does recognize the ambiguity of the term "image," but he would nevertheless like to preserve it. He points out that on the one hand, the term evokes "the contrast between an object, e.g. a tree, and a projection of the object on a plane, or its shadow on a wall"; on the other hand, "an 'image' is something imagined," that is, the product of an act of imagination (PSIM, 5). In the first case, the image can be taken as something that exists even though it has a dependent status. In the second case, the image is unreal, "but the imagined *can* exist; as when one imagines that someone is dancing in the next room, and someone is" (PSIM, 5). Accordingly, insofar as the two images are idealized re-elaborations of our experience of the world, they are projections in the first sense but can jointly be taken as unreal representations of a state of affairs that we can only know in a mediated way. It is quite puzzling that in both cases Sellars focuses on the degree of reality that we can assign to the image, after having specified that he is using the term "image" in order to bracket the problem of their existence. Moreover, for Husserl, the world and the experience that we have of it cannot be regarded as a potential perception. It is rather an ideal fiction that cannot be reduced to a singular perception like that of someone dancing in the next room. This explains why Husserl insists on the need to carry out the act of bracketing in the most radical way. Without an all-embracing performance of the epoché, we cannot adequately make our general and widespread experience of the world an object of reflection. The epoché allows the phenomenologist to break with the natural attitude one straightforwardly adopts

in everyday experience and to do so precisely in order to investigate our general way of living in the world, which for Husserl involves positing the world (*Weltthesis*).

Although the analogy with Husserl's notion of "bracketing" is disputable, it is interesting that Sellars employs it to explicate his endeavor to grasp two ideal types of the much more varied views of humans in the world that philosophers have outlined over the course of history. Indeed, Husserl's own theory of the lifeworld arises from a similar strategy (albeit one that is more rigorous and articulated), and this theory seems to be the best candidate for our consideration, since it represents one of the most sophisticated examples of the manifest image.

In PSIM, Sellars does not mention Husserl's lifeworld, but he does in the 1981 essay "Mental Events." Introducing his reflection on the role that language plays in grasping the entire spectrum of the physical, he observes the following: "In Aristotelian terminology we move from the better known to us to the better known in itself. For although the manifest world—the *Lebenswelt*—has its own intelligibility, it also has its mysteries. It poses questions which it does not have the resources to answer" (MEV, § 4, 282). Notice that, quite correctly, he does not link the lifeworld with the manifest image but with the manifest world. Just a few lines after the reference to Husserl's lifeworld, Sellars emphasizes that "in the domain of the physical, then, the middle-sized objects of the Manifest Image are a priori in the order of knowing to microphysical processes" (MEV, § 5, 283). As is evident, the manifest world that Sellars identifies with Husserl's lifeworld is one with the domain of middle-sized objects, as this domain is made thematic by the manifest image.

To be clear, what is here being said to represent one of the most sophisticated examples of the manifest image is Husserl's *theory* of the lifeworld and not merely the general theme of this theory, that is, the lifeworld itself. This has to be adequately understood because when Sellars argues for the primacy of the scientific image over the manifest image, he is not opposing the

necessity of recognizing the sphere of the lifeworld; instead, what he is opposing is the theory that assigns this sphere a primacy over the depiction of humans in the world that science fosters.

Husserl's theory of the lifeworld seems to present all of the features of Sellars's manifest image. First of all, it is not uncritical, prescientific, naive: "the title 'life-world' makes possible and demands perhaps various different, though essentially interrelated, scientific undertakings" (*Crisis,* § 34, 124). In fact, Sellars clarifies that "the manifest image is, in an appropriate sense, itself a scientific image" (PSIM, 7). Besides, Husserl identifies his theory with an ontology aimed at seeking the invariant structure and the essential style of what we straightforwardly live.

Second, Sellars considers the conceptual framework of the manifest image to be a refinement of an original image in which "all 'objects' are persons" (PSIM, 9). In other words, all the things we bump into in ordinary experience originally appear as animated by an inner soul. However, with the historical advance of civilization and the development of a scientific attitude, we witness a gradual "'de-personalization' of objects" (PSIM, 10). In Husserl's terms, in the original animism, nature is experienced as a living person: "Man lives his spiritual life not in a spiritless world . . . but rather as a spirit among spirits" (*Hua XXIX,* 3).[2] In ancient Greece, the practical and religious attitude—which resorted to myths that provided motivation and orientation for ordinary life—is gradually replaced by a theoretical attitude characterized by wonder. This is the attitude of philosophy, which initially coincides with the willingness to know. Put differently, from being part of the life of the world, the human being becomes a disinterested onlooker.

The phenomenological reader is used to the insistence on the rupture between the conception that the human being has of herself and the position of the philosopher as a disinterested onlooker. Therefore she most likely remains surprised in reading that as an example of the manifest image, Husserl's theory

of the lifeworld has to be regarded as rooted in a refinement of the original image. And yet we must notice that Husserl himself criticizes the objectivist sciences insofar as they forget they are rooted in the lifeworld; accordingly, the task of philosophy is precisely to rediscover the continuity of science with the ordinary attitude of persons that provides human subjectivity with a motivation for making what we routinely take for granted into something enigmatic (see *Crisis,* § 53). Contrary to the objectivist sciences, which elaborate a particular method and language in order to focus on specific objects, the phenomenological theory of the lifeworld aims at investigating what is familiar to us but not fully and effectively known.

And finally, in line with how Sellars depicts the manifest image, the description of the lifeworld appears as intersubjectively constituted, as a "group phenomenon," in Sellars's terms (see PSIM, 17), whose features strictly depend on the capacities of the natural language we employ to account for it.

2. THE SCIENTIFIC IMAGE AND THE REALITY OF THE PHENOMENON

After having emphasized that the manifest image is itself scientific in a peculiar sense, Sellars clarifies that the conceptual framework he has initially defined as the "scientific image," in contrast with the manifest image, "might better be called the postulational or theoretical image" (PSIM, 7).

While the conceptualization of the manifest world underlying the manifest image proceeds by means of a generalization of the standard ways in which objects appear in the perceivable world, the theoretical image is determined by the only procedure that such an inductive approach to the perceivable world cannot take into account: this consists in postulating "imperceptible objects and events for the purpose of explaining correlations among perceptibles" (PSIM, 19).

Both conceptual frameworks pretend to deal with the only effectively real world. This is the core of their clash. In order to address this issue, Sellars identifies three lines of thought: "(1)

Manifest objects are identical with systems of imperceptible particles in that simple sense in which a forest identical with a number of trees. (2) Manifest objects are what really exist; systems of imperceptible particles being 'abstract' or 'symbolic' ways of representing them. (3) Manifest objects are 'appearances' to human minds of a reality which is constituted by systems of imperceptible particles" (PSIM, 26).

The philosophers who advocate the primacy of the manifest over the postulational image would evidently opt for thesis 2: the objects of experimental natural sciences would be instruments or constructs for explaining specific aspects of reality, but they could not grasp the world as it is in its concreteness and wholeness.

Regarding thesis 1, Sellars argues that there is nothing immediately paradoxical to think that "an object could be both a perceptible object with perceptible qualities *and* a system of imperceptible objects, none of which has perceptible qualities" (PSIM, 26). This is why systems can effectively have properties that their parts do not have. A condition for defending this is to recognize that the so-called emergent properties of a system depend on the properties of, and relations between, its constituents. Once we accept this, we are directly brought to endorse Sellars's thesis 3. Indeed, "if a physical object is *in strict sense* a system of imperceptible particles, then it cannot as a whole have the perceptible qualities characteristic of physical objects in the manifest image" (PSIM, 27). Thus we must conclude that "manifest physical objects are 'appearances' to *human perceivers* of systems of imperceptible particles" (PSIM, 27).

Sellars rejects G. E. Moore's appeal to the sheer experience that "we *know* that there are chairs, tables, etc." in order to contrast the reduction of manifest objects to "appearances" (PSIM, 27). In fact, what is at issue here is exactly the capacity of sheer experience to reveal to us what reality is. In the scientific approach, experience can only be seen as the place for experiments confirming or falsifying hypotheses postulated by observation and/or by mere theoretical imagination. Moreover, the aim of

the philosopher who endorses thesis 3 is not to deny a belief *within the framework* but to challenge the entire framework of the manifest image. Moore's objection simply disappears once we recognize that option 3 does not necessarily entail that the manifest world is false. Rather, on the one hand, this alternative grants that "the framework of perceptible objects, the manifest framework of everyday life, is adequate for the everyday purpose of life"; on the other hand, it suggests that the manifest image is "inadequate and should not be accepted as an account of what there is *all things considered*" (PSIM, 27).

This is Sellars's scientific realism. The manifest image retains its efficacy for practical life, but gives way to the scientific image when what is at issue is the need to account for what actually exists.

In "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind," Sellars had already defended this thesis by asserting that it is precisely because the scientific enterprise is "the flowering of a dimension of discourse which already exists in what historians call the 'prescientific stage'"—a dimension that it cannot take for granted and must instead supersede, namely, "the descriptive ontology of everyday life" (EPM, § 41, 172). Thus speaking as a philosophers, we should be prepared to say that "the common sense world of the physical objects in Space and Time is unreal—that is, that there are no such things." Accordingly, we should admit that "in the dimension of describing and explaining the world, science is the measure of all things, of what is that it is, and of what is not that it is not" (EPM, § 42, 173).

Turning our attention now to the phenomenological view of the world, we most likely would assume that Husserl would opt for the second line of thought. Too easily, however, I would dare to say. In my view, this inference derives from an erroneous reading of some famous passages of section 9 of the *Crisis*. In his reconstruction of the original meaning of Galileo's foundation of a new physics, which initiated the modern scientific revolution, Husserl demonstrates how the difficulty of mathematizing sensible qualities (colors, tones, and so on) brought

the new physics to express the laws discovered through algebraic formulas. This generates an automatism of the scientific way of proceeding that concealed the original picture of the world from which the revolution moved. Let me quote Husserl: "In algebraic calculation, . . . one calculates, remembering only at the end that the numbers signify magnitudes. Of course one does not calculate 'mechanically,' as in ordinary numerical calculation; one thinks, one invents, one may make great discoveries—but they have acquired, unnoticed, a displaced, 'symbolic' meaning" (*Crisis,* § 9f, 44–45). Is Husserl asserting here that systems of imperceptible particles are "abstract" or "symbolic" ways of representing manifest objects? I do not think so. Rather he is asserting that algebraic formulas are symbolic constructs for grasping the laws of natural processes.[3] Husserl would not deny that what we perceive as color is the result of the stimulation of photoreceptor cells by electromagnetic radiation. He would only notice that at the time of Galileo this was not taken for granted, as it is today—except for those who advocate alternative (2):

> What we experienced, in prescientific life, as colors, tones, warmth, and weight belonging to the things themselves and experienced causally as a body's radiation of warmth which makes adjacent bodies warm, and the like, indicates in terms of physics, of course, tone-vibrations, warmth-vibrations, i.e., pure events in the world of shapes. This universal indication is taken for granted today as unquestionable. But if we go back to Galileo, as the creator of the conception which first made physics possible: what came to be taken for granted only through his deed could not be taken for granted by him. (*Crisis,* § 9c, 36–37)

Let me emphasize a key phrase in this quotation: in term of physics, warmth and tone have to be considered, *of course,* as vibrations. What this almost unnoticed "of course" tells us is

that Husserl, too, takes this for granted, but he equally knows that the task of phenomenology is to lead back to the original motivation of those like Galileo, who, being simultaneously philosophers and physicists, *enabled* humankind to introduce this knowledge into the lifeworld and to take it for granted. Husserl is not opposing the picture of the world arising out of the modern revolution. He is simply highlighting that the decisive support that algebra gave to the scientific enterprise entails a "technicization" of the method of investigation, one that transforms what is only a method—that is, an art of measuring and calculating—into what one thinks has to be known, that is, into the object of investigation, instead of continuing to recognize it as a means to know what cannot be discovered through mere observation and ordinary language alone.

To be explicit, Husserl does not think that electrons do not exist. If that were the case, he would be as ingenuous as he thinks it is to believe that manifest objects do not exist. To Husserl, systems of imperceptible particles can legitimately pretend to have a specific degree of reality, just as manifest objects are also entitled to have a degree of reality.[4]

In contrast, when Sellars advocates for the option that manifest objects are "appearances" to human minds of a reality that is actually constituted by systems of imperceptible particles, he is transposing a metaphysical reading of the Kantian distinction between *phenomena* and *noumena* into his scientific realism:

> As I see it, in any case, a consistent scientific realist must hold that the world of everyday experience is a phenomenal world in the Kantian sense, existing only as the contents of actual and obtainable conceptual representing, the obtainability of which is explained not, as for Kant, by things in themselves known only to God, but by scientific objects about which, barring catastrophe, we shall know more and more as the years go by. (*SM,* IX, § 62, 173)

As is widely known, Husserl has strongly contested this reading of Kant throughout his reflections. In his view such a disparagement of the phenomena is a consequence of the technicization of the scientific method that both Husserl and Sellars see as the foundation of the dualistic view of the world defended by a conspicuous contingent of early modern philosophers. For Sellars, we inherit from Descartes the difficulty of conceding that neurophysiological processes are one with conceptual thinking. This leads us to retreat into the position that "reality is the world of the manifest image, and that all the postulated entities of the scientific image are 'symbolic tools' which function . . . to help us find our way around in the world, but do not themselves describe actual objects and processes" (PSIM, 31–32). In Husserl's eyes, such a dichotomy between nature and spirit is—as Sellars does after all acknowledge—a consequence of the erroneous philosophical distinction between primary and secondary qualities, where the former are described in quantitative terms and are directly mathematized while the latter are taken as merely subjective and as only measurable indirectly. In a way that is similar to the way in which he treats secondary qualities, Galileo "*abstracts* from the subjects as persons . . . from all that is in any way spiritual, from all cultural properties which are attached to things in human praxis" (*Crisis,* § 10, 60).

Thus from a Husserlian perspective, the conviction that manifest objects are only illusory representations of a reality actually constituted by systems of imperceptible particles is another possible outcome of the concealment that follows from Galileo's new discoveries. This is a version of the materialism that experimental scientists legitimately adopt while they are doing their job, whereas the philosophers see such a conviction as the only legitimate basis on which to outline a realistic picture of the world. Put differently: for Sellars, the manifest image is still a good way to dwell in the social, cultural, historical world of persons; correlatively, the scientific image is the best way to make what really exists intelligible. In contrast,

from a Husserlian perspective we must slightly (but in a very decisive way) emend the alternatives as follows: the picture according to which reality must be exclusively reduced to the postulated systems of imperceptible particles is a fruitful way to carry on the scientific enterprise, but at the same time it is not enough to account for concrete reality in its wholeness.

At the basis of Sellars's position, there is the assumption that every property of a system depends on the properties of, and relations between, its constituents. Sellars himself recognizes that this is a principle of reducibility that he has "accepted without argument." It makes impossible the view that "groups of particles can have properties which are not 'reducible to' the properties and relations of the members of the group" (PSIM, 35).

Husserl's opposition to reductionism does not necessarily entail that the postulated systems of imperceptible particles cannot be taken as bringing to light a dimension of reality that explains significant aspects of what appears. There are, however, other dimensions of reality exhibiting some emergent properties that cannot be completely reduced to their constituents without losing something of what they actually are. Of course, Sellars cannot accept this view. When he is considering the possibility that a system has properties that its parts do not have, he takes as a paradigmatic example a system of pieces of wood that could be a ladder, although none of its part is a ladder: "Here one might say that for the system as a whole to be a ladder is for its parts to be of such and such shapes and sizes and to be related to one another in certain ways. Thus there is no trouble about systems having properties which its parts do not have *if these properties are a matter of the parts having such and such qualities and being related in such and such ways*" (PSIM, 26).

Strictly speaking, in the Kantian tradition—and at a certain point of his inquiry, Husserl does place himself on this path (a move that helps him to introduce the theory of the lifeworld)—this would be a case of an aggregate and not of a

system. In an aggregate such as the ladder, the parts are put together by an external imposition. The ladder has the property of allowing one to reach a place that one could not otherwise reach (assuming that this can appropriately be considered as a property) because someone built it with this goal in mind. In contrast, in a system like an organism, every part acquires a meaning not just *in* relation to the others but *through* that relation. In this case the parts are not juxtaposed from without but integrated with each other in such a way that they become able to generate new properties. An example is the capacity of an organism to adopt symbolic behaviors, which allows it to plan for the future, to act on its environment, and to construct tools for pursuing its goals.[5]

The system of interrelated appearances that we experience is thus not an illusion that does not actually exist but is the shape that the concretum takes when it interacts with another system such as an organism like us.[6]

3. HOW THINGS BLEND TOGETHER

In PSIM, Sellars wants not only to defend his scientific realism but also to tackle an issue arising out of it. As Habermas (2003, 107) points out, "Sellars' followers misconstrued the aporetic thought experiment of their teacher as a research program." Here by "thought experiment" Habermas means Sellars's idealization of humans' ways of relating to the world in the alternative between the two conflicting images. Up to now, we have deliberately disregarded the beginning of Sellars's essay, that is, the metaphilosophical discourse from which he elaborates his thought experiment. But Sellars does indeed begin with an illuminating reflection on what philosophy is: "The aim of philosophy, abstractly formulated, is to understand how things in the broadest possible sense of the term hang together in the broadest possible sense of the term" (PSIM, 1). In other words, philosophy aims at an overall, preferably unitary, vision of the world as the space where things blend together.

For Sellars, philosophy is a form of "knowing how" rather than a "knowing that." Its aim is to acquire the capacity of "knowing one's way around in the scheme of things" in a reflective manner (PSIM, 2). A first consequence of this is that "philosophy in an important sense has no special subject-matter which stands to it as other subject-matters stand to other special disciplines" (PSIM, 2). Hence as philosophers figure out a new specific subject matter in their investigation, they turn it over to "a new group of specialists" (PSIM, 2), as they have done over the 2,500 years of the history of philosophy. The risk, however, is to confuse the activity of the philosopher with that of the specialist when reflecting on her own method, for Sellars stresses that what distinguishes the philosophical enterprise is the "eye on the whole" (PSIM, 3).

Likely Husserl would endorse this depiction of philosophy; it is even more significant that it was such a view of the philosophical enterprise that led him to see the analysis of the lifeworld as one of the most challenging tasks of philosophy. For Husserl, the lifeworld can never become the subject matter of a specific discipline because it represents the horizon within which all human experience occurs. Accordingly, philosophy has to focus on the lifeworld insofar as it attempts to gain an overall insight into how things blend together. The philosopher who examines the essential structures of the lifeworld is working for the progress of humankind by enhancing the capacity of knowing one's way around the world.

In light of this, I would now like to consider, first, how Sellars tries to solve the problem of the clash between the two images; then I will ask how we can modify his solution within a phenomenological perspective.

We have already encountered the first part of Sellars's solution: the manifest image has only a pragmatic role in the lifeworld, and it is not able to account for what really exists. This entails that the identification of thoughts with neurophysiological process is fully justified if the aim of the argument is the theoretical description of reality. However, insofar as the role

of conceptual thinking is to help one to live in the lifeworld with others, an analogy with manifest language is necessary.

Sellars is aware of an important limit of this solution: the dualism between the subjective and the objective elements of experience, which is something that Sellars objects to in modern philosophy, here only seems to have turned into a dualism between reality as it is graspable by science and reality as it is described in ordinary language on the basis of what appears to us: "Does the assumptions of the reality of the scientific image lead us to a dualism of particles and sense fields?" (PSIM, 36). If so, one could believe that the dualism could only be avoided "by interpreting the scientific image *as a whole* as a 'symbolic device' for coping with the world as it presents itself to us in the manifest image" (PSIM, 37). Yet Sellars thinks there is an alternative. It consists in circumscribing the conceptual framework of persons, where by a person he means "a being that has intentions" (PSIM, 40). In this framework we think of one another as "sharing the community intentions which provide the ambience of principle and standards . . . within which we live our own individual lives" (PSIM, 40). Sellars holds that this framework does not need "to *be reconciled with* the scientific image" but only "to be *joined* to it" (PSIM, 40). In fact, it does not imply another way of saying what is the case. It does not aim at explaining how reality is. The sole function of this conceptual framework is to define the standards of personal life in the world. Thus to complete the scientific image, all we need to do is "enrich it with the language of community and individual intentions, so that by construing the actions we intend to do and the circumstances in which we intend to do them in scientific terms, we *directly* relate the world as conceived by scientific theory to our purposes, and make it *our* world and no longer an alien appendage to the world in which we do our living" (PSIM, 40).

The phenomenological reader is surprised by these conclusions. She has likely embarked on a reading of PSIM with the conviction that Sellars's defense of the scientific image undermines

Husserl's theory of the lifeworld. At the end she realizes that this standpoint is quite disputable for different reasons.

We have already argued with regard to the first of these reasons: if defending the primacy of the manifest image over the scientific image amounts to interpreting the entire scientific image and not merely some of its tools, as a "symbolic device," this is not the case with Husserl.

Second, in elaborating his theory of the lifeworld, Husserl's main aim is not to strengthen what the ordinary picture of the world takes to be real. With the phenomenological epoché Husserl has suspended any attempt to express himself regarding the existence of the manifest world (as well as that of the scientific world). This has to be rigorously and carefully preserved during the entire development of the phenomenological analysis of the lifeworld. The phenomenological attitude problematizes the ordinary thesis concerning the essence of the world, the general thesis that we straightforwardly and unconsciously presuppose in everyday experience; thus once the phenomenological investigation comes to an end, the way in which Sellars concludes his essay—that is, by granting that the irreducibility of the conceptual framework of persons coexists with the defense of the primacy of the scientific way of accounting for what is real—is potentially still an option that one can endorse.

Third, although Sellars insists on the ontological primacy of the scientific image over the manifest image, he grants a methodological primacy to the manifest image. And it seems to me that this is often overlooked by his interpreters. Sellars acknowledges that "each scientific theory is, from the standpoint of methodology, a structure which is built at a different 'place' and by different procedures within the intersubjectively accessible world of perceptible things. Thus 'the' scientific image is a construct from a number of image, each of which is *supported by* the manifest world" (PSIM, 20). In Husserl's terms, the lifeworld is the soil that the scientific enterprise presupposes, that from which it starts, and that which the technicization of the system of inquiry conceals.

For Sellars, from the fact that "each theoretical image is a construction on a foundation provided by the manifest image, and *in this methodological sense* pre-supposes the manifest image," we improperly move to supposing that "the manifest image is prior in a *substantive* sense" (PSIM, 20). The task of philosophy is to unmask this unwarranted step and to "put things in order" by developing an overall vision of the whole, and in PSIM Sellars proposes such an order—even if from a phenomenological perspective, Sellars's stereoscopic view of the whole would not be the only possible option.

We have to consider what a phenomenological perspective would need to renounce if it were to accept some of these principles. It would have to reconcile the thesis of an irreducibility of the framework of persons to that of physical nature (even while granting the methodological primacy of the manifest over the scientific image) with Sellars's conviction that the scientific, postulational view of the world is the most appropriate way in which to tell us what reality is. My answer is that we would have to abandon the transcendental function performed by lifeworldly experience, and the natural attitude it entails, in the philosophical attempt at knowing one's way around the world.

His psychological nominalism leads Sellars to think that all awareness is a linguistic affair, and thus the passage from the methodological primacy of the manifest image to the ontological primacy of the scientific image coincides with a transition from one language game to another. The scientific, theoretical, postulational language is more fitting than the manifest one for describing what reality is. An outcome of this is that the legitimacy of the manifest language for the purposes of practical life is determined by the fact that it plays a role in the logical space of reasons, where we are able to justify what we say. I might also dare to claim that in Sellars's thought, the lifeworld and the space of reasons are one. Still limiting myself to the perspective of the *Crisis* (as I have in this entire essay), I might say that Husserl would agree with Sellars on the identification

of the lifeworld with the space of reasons and would thus agree with the conviction that the view of the world that is first for us but not in itself is decisively determined by our way of using public, manifest, intersubjective language. Yet Husserl would raise the issue of the genesis of this view. That is, he would insist on the need not only to understand how we become aware of unconsciously adopting a unitary attitude toward the world, the modes in which the things appear, and our way of experiencing them but also to understand which processes occurring within lifeworldly experience make the transition from the natural to the theoretical attitude possible and thus to make this transition itself the theme of an investigation.

At the end of PSIM, in addition to the claim that the conceptual frameworks of persons "is not something that needs to be *reconciled with* the scientific image, but rather something to be *joined* to it," Sellars admits that "we can . . . realize the incorporation of the scientific image into our way of life only in imagination" (PSIM, 40). From a phenomenological point of view, we might say that the impression of a unitary view approachable only asymptotically derives from the difficulty of seeing the scientific image as arising out of the manifest world—and not out of the manifest image, which is the alternative, as we have sufficiently stressed. That is, it is precisely for those who straightforwardly trust the natural attitude we spontaneously adopt that the change of paradigm is difficult to accept as something we can effectively actualize; in contrast, for those like the phenomenologist who bracket both the manifest and the naturalistic worldview, and in such a way gain the position of a disinterested onlooker, the point is not to incorporate the scientific image into our way of life—after all, it arises out of lifeworldly experience. Instead, the point is to be able to recognize the element of continuity between the two frameworks. What this means is above all that philosophy has to bring to light the presence of a scientific intention existing in the prescientific stage and thus expressing itself within the rational structure of the lifeworld as the dimension of persons

ruled by the language of intentions. In other words, the goal is to comprehend how the lifeworld makes possible the formation of the scientific picture of the world.

Sciences know their subject matters and elaborate their method for justifying themselves in the space of reasons from the perspective of these matters. But once a new image of the world arises from an older one, both as a continuation of it and as a radical change of paradigm, philosophy is required to delve more deeply into what reality is.

Let me conclude by recasting one of Sellars's metaphors: what characterizes a phenomenological perspective—which is certainly not opposed to the task of articulating the reasons for the scientific enterprise—is the conviction that the artificial, stereoscopic view of the world that philosophy outlines in the attempt to blend things together presupposes the natural, binocular, synoptic view of the world that unconsciously allows humankind to live and to nourish its ancestral will to know.

NOTES

1. See the debate around the possibility that phenomenology could be considered a version of the Myth of the Given. Consider, in particular, De Santis (2019, 177–90), as well as De Santis (2015, 45–62); Sachs (2014), as well as Sachs (2020, 287–301); Soffer (2003, 301–37). See also Manca (2021, 73–92), where I argue that Husserl's phenomenology does not fall under the Myth of the Given, but his point of divergence with Sellars lies in a different conception of the spontaneity of thinking.
2. The quotation is taken from a manuscript dated 1934 and is translated into English by Moran (2012, 157).
3. Christias (2020, 261–86) argues that the categorial framework of the lifeworld entails scientific instrumentalism, according to which "unobservable objects and properties postulated by science could be understood as 'calculational devices,' the value and the status of which consist in their systematizing and heuristic role with respect to confirmable generalization (i.e., occurrences of actual and possible experiential phenomena) formulated in more originary 'lifeworldly' terms" (269). In my view, this reading erroneously neglects the difference between

the algebraic formulas and the objects they designate. On the other hand, I agree with Christias that throughout his career, and most unfortunately, "Husserl remained blind to the possibility of establishing a 'dialectical' relation between lived experience as it is lived through and conceptualized within the manifest image and the theoretical-postulational explanatory framework of the scientific image" (274). See also Christias (2018, 511–39).

4. For a discussion of Husserl's conception of science in light of his account of the lifeworld, see Kerszberg (2012). Furthermore, see Trizio (2021) for an accurate investigation into the relations Husserl's phenomenology entertains with the natural sciences, with their conception of reality and nature, and with the underlying metaphysical outcomes; see chapter 5 in particular, where the author focuses on the notion of the lifeworld and its relation to the world of scientific truth. Let me also refer to Manca (2022, 49–71). Here I assess whether the notion of "life-world" could be helpful for a philosophical theory that assigns a primacy to the scientific view of the world when it comes to establishing what exists. By considering the image of nature proposed by the standard "Copenhagen" version of quantum physics, I challenge both Sellars's assumption that the term "phenomenon" has merely to be meant as "illusory appearance," and Husserl's conviction that the "technization" of science entails a philosophical loss of meaning of the scientific image of the world.
5. See especially Merleau-Ponty (1995). For a comparison between Merleau-Ponty's image of nature and Sellars's, see Manca (2014, 115–36). On Kant's theory of the system associated with the organism as a model for reason, see Ferrarin (2015, 31–33).
6. See especially the following passage of *Hua XXIII*, translated and discussed in Staiti (2014, 154): "Every individual being, then, exists only as a totality of moments belonging together, to which corresponds the idea of a total concept related to all the moments of the object as the concept's individuation [*Vereinzelung*], i.e., the concept encompasses [*begreift*] the object according to all its moments. In this way we obtain the first ideas of concretum and concrete concepts. Every individual being must be called concretum to the extent that it entails a manifold of inextricably 'intergrown' moments and exists in their overall intergrownness (*concrescere*)."

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CHAPTER 4

BEYOND THE MANIFEST IMAGE

The Myth of the Given across Determination and Disposition

Roberta Lanfredini

There are two main theoretical dimensions in which phenomenology and Sellars's approach critically confront each other: the so-called Myth of the Given and the supposed clash between scientific image and manifest image. My contribution aims to show that this contrast is, at least in part, more apparent than real. This is due to the fact that, although there are many relevant differences between Husserl and Sellars, the two thinkers do share a certain image of the relation between theory and experience, and especially of the relation between language and experience—that is, what we could call a certain basic phenomenology from which the two authors' positions effectively diverge.

As is well known, Sellars's approach is a particular brand of naturalism (Christias 2018) that combines nominalism and scientific realism, expressed in the famous Sellarsian *scientia mensura* principle, according to which "in the dimension of describing and explaining the world, science is the measure of

all things, of what it is that it is, and of what it is not that it is not" (EPM, § 41). Sellars regarded phenomenology as a strategy for clarifying the manifest image.

This is certainly true. As Husserl acknowledges, phenomenology aims at providing a description (and not an explanation, whether causal or of any other kind) of what manifests itself exactly as it manifests itself. For Husserl, describing means making explicit what is actually contained in the phenomenon in order to investigate its internal structure.

As has been noted (Soffer 2003), we can advance doubts about how phenomenology falls into the "framework of givenness" based on Husserl's and Sellars's fundamentally different conceptions of givenness itself.

For Sellars, the given corresponds to the immediate (or unlearned): that is, a type of awareness that does not presuppose language or inferences. The essence of the Myth of the Given resides in the belief in a nonlinguistic, nonconceptual, and noninferential awareness (deVries and Triplett 2000).

To show this, Sellars proposes a thought experiment. John is a salesman working in a tie shop. After electric lighting has been installed in the shop, John notices a tie that appears green under the lamp is blue when exposed to natural light. However, with the passing of time, he learns to recognize the color of the tie inside the shop by saying that it is blue, although it appears green. The predicates "seem" and "appear" are meaningful in relation to assertions within a linguistic practice. Thus we cannot speak of the recognition of properties except by referring to the observational statements through which this recognition is expressed, and the concept of sensory impression, or given, is justified by this linguistic practice.

Sellars's psychological nominalism, then, holds that the recognition of observational properties (such as being colored, having a certain shape, etc.) is possible only if we refer to observational statements by means of which this recognition is expressed. In this sense, any perceptual observation, as well as any recognition of similarities (i.e., in Sellars's terminology, any

way of categorizing stimuli), has epistemic connotations and depends on theoretical acquisitions (Leher and Stern 2000).

To be able to say that something is blue, for example, it is necessary to know: (1) the correct circumstances for the attribution of a property (e.g., the fact that colors are correctly observed in the sunlight); (2) the fact of being in the right circumstances for the attribution of that property (e.g., the fact of being in the natural light and not in an artificial light).

The second point is what distinguishes true linguistic ability from the disposition to produce appropriate but automatic verbal reactions in response to certain stimuli, as is the case with a parrot that says "blue" on the basis of mere repetition or a sensor that emits a signal when it picks up a frequency that corresponds to blue.

What corresponds to the myth of data in this perspective is not so much the existence of immediate contents; rather, it is the idea that this type of awareness can serve as evidence for the recognition of the given, for such recognition implies a linguistic, conceptual, and inferential dimension.

The phenomenological framework of data recognition, however, does not seem to correspond to Sellars's "mythical" model of data. Indeed, none of the phenomenological meanings of data reflect the character of immediacy in the crude and naive sense of being utterly without structure.

First of all, the given for Husserl is what is experienced as it experienced. The idea is that the notion of the given (or phenomenon) should not be reduced to the notion of appearance (*Schein*), understood as an illusory appearance—that is, as something that is opposed to reality. The phenomenon (*Erscheinung*), or manifestation, enjoys a full effectiveness and positivity that cannot be reduced to a deceptive dimension, a mere shadow of the actual reality of things. The datum has stability, autonomy, and nonemendability. The relationship between data and concepts must be interpreted not as a normative difference but as a difference in function and destination.

Moreover, there is an important distinction in phenomenology between the discrimination and the identification of the given. If by recognition of the data we mean its identification, then the conceptual, linguistic, and even inferential dimension is decisive.

If, however, by recognition of the datum we mean the discrimination of something (e.g., with respect to a background), then the conceptual dimension is greatly reduced. In phenomenology as in the Gestalt tradition, perception has its own laws (such as the law of contrast, or the law of sufficient stability and differentiation) that are impermeable to the conceptual and linguistic dimension.

Thus immediacy does not denote simplicity or even ineffability (as in Schlick 1938): on the contrary, the given is immediate and at the same time structured (i.e., endowed with its own and autonomous internal lawfulness), articulated, and even, as we shall see, partly signitive or empty.

1. DISCRIMINATION, IDENTIFICATION, AND MOTIVATION

The phenomenological notion of the given refers to three fundamental notions.

The first notion corresponds to essence (*Wesen*), understood as invariance in variation. Invariants are incorporated into increasingly general fields of variation. For instance, crimson red does not correspond to any mere individuality but to an eidetic singularity capable of unifying a certain spectrum of perceptual variations (including purple red and vermilion red, for example).

Such a singularity fits into a broader spectrum of variation that corresponds to the species red and then into an even broader spectrum of variation that corresponds to the genus color. Colors, as John's example shows, transform as they pass from one shade to another. The singularity of crimson red can change into the hue of carmine red or purple red and still be within the spectrum of variation of red; crimson red or

carmine red can change (e.g., due to a change in lighting conditions) into blue or green in accordance with the possibility of variation corresponding to the color genus.

However, it is impossible for a color to be transformed into a violin sound (see *Ideas I*), because this would violate the ontic structure relating to the region of color. To return to Sellars's example, John can see the tie first as blue and then as green, but he cannot see green or blue transforming into a high or low sound.

The second notion corresponds to the material a priori, understood as the foundational relation between nonindependent parts of a whole. That the color spreads across the extension is a law proper to the given as it presents itself, independently of any theoretical inference. In other words, the foundational relation does not imply any further principle with respect to the direct relation between the parts, or to any unifying function of a conceptual or intellectual kind, for it is the very components of the given that—in a completely intrinsic way—mutually establish each other, giving rise to perceptually independent wholes.

Only in some cases (e.g., when a succession of sounds is united in a melody) is it possible to abstract an independent and autonomous sensible form (the melody). In such cases, however, the relations of connection between the "pieces" or independent parts of a whole are factual and nonessential relations, unlike the foundational relations between nonindependent parts (as in the case of sound and pitch).

The third notion corresponds to the concept of adumbration (*Abschattungen*).

The phenomenological given is divided into a visible dimension and an invisible dimension that is an integral part of the given itself. The datum therefore involves a necessary integration between fullness and emptiness, as well as an incessant transfer between these two dimensions.

For Husserl, perception is tending-toward (*tendenziös; Hua XI*), which implies not only the character of openness but also

the character of indeterminacy and provisionality that the given contains—that is, the fact that it is itself not only what does the verification but also what is verified, an object of verification. Thus elementary utterances like "I see a red surface" or the even more minimalist report "Red here now" also contain an implicit dimension that remains unfulfilled.

The phenomenological given further makes the distinction (also proposed by Gibson 1979) between the visual field and the visual world—between our optical point of view and what is beyond our point of view—entirely legitimate. If we look at the landscape outside the window while the rain forms rivulets and drops on the glass, we do not perceive the visible deformations caused by the water as deformations of the things that make up the landscape. And when we put a newspaper in our coat pocket, we do not see the newspaper gradually disappearing into the coat. What we actually see is the newspaper slipping into the coat, and the hidden part is as real as the visible part.

In conclusion, the immediacy of the datum does not imply its ineffability but an autonomous structural complexity. Singularity as invariant (e.g., red), the foundational relations between nonindependent parts (e.g., color and extension), the integration between the intuitive or full dimension and the empty or signitive dimension, the distinction between field and visual world—each of these steps is immediate and internal to experience. No concept is needed to grasp red as an invariant; no concept is needed to see its connection to the extensional dimension; no concept is needed to see drops as attributes of the glass and not of things beyond it; no concept is needed to incorporate the "hidden side" of things into perception.

Thus the structural complexity of the phenomenological given is not inferential, unless one interprets the recognition of the datum not as perceptual discrimination, but as identification (as when I claim, for example, to see a detector of particles such as the Higgs boson). This type of recognition does in fact require the natural inclusion of the object in a categorial,

conceptual, and linguistic apparatus that goes beyond mere perceptual discrimination.

Identification, however, is based on discrimination and not vice versa (*Ideas I/K,* 117).[1] In phenomenology, which here advocates a radical form of empiricism, there is a motivational link between the two modalities. What is currently given motivates further appearances of the thing, from the sensuous (the unseen side of the thing) to the more abstract and conceptual. The notion of motivation makes it possible to interpret the relations between the manifest thing of experience and the scientific thing of physics in a way that is diametrically opposed to Sellars's argument. The thing of physics is motivated by the thing of experience, not vice versa.

Moreover, the notion of motivation finally provides an indirect answer to John's example. For Sellars, the hypothesis of the different sensations especially explains illusions, as when someone reports that they see a green object while looking at a blue one. But in the phenomenological perspective, the constitution of the object is an infinite process synthesizing its alternative ways of giving itself, each of which is valid and adequate in itself (*LI 2/F,* 470).

The oasis that appears to me in a mirage, the stretch of water that appears to me on part of the asphalt, the stick in the water that appears broken to me—in subsequent experience, all of these can turn out to be illusory, just as happens to John when he realizes that the tie he has been perceiving as green is actually blue. But for a phenomenologist, even in the case of "healthy" or "normal" (i.e., not illusory or hallucinatory) experiences, the object depends on certain modalities, and the constitution of the datum is in any case based on the cohesion and systematicity of the appearances.

Discrimination, identification, and motivation are therefore the three functions of sense-bestowing (*Sinngebung*) that make explicit the phenomenological notion of the given, an explication that can hardly be seen to correspond to a "mythical" conception of the given. The notion of *das Wie des Gegebenheit*

is crucially connected to this explication in all its various exemplifications: invariance in the eidetic reduction; the foundation in the material a priori; partial views and their syntheses; the identification of the object; and the motivational bond that links data discrimination to its categorical, theoretical, and linguistic recognition.

2. THE LINGUISTIC RECOGNITION OF THE GIVEN

Sellars's formulation of the Myth of the Given implies two orders of problem: the first relates to the justification of beliefs, and the second to the justification that a perception can provide for using a certain word on a certain occasion. With regard to the first problem—the epistemological one concerning the justification of the given—Sellars's antifoundationalist thesis is that there are no entities of which we have immediate, direct, transparent, and infallible awareness; there are no explicit beliefs expressed in observational judgments that do not presuppose other beliefs.[2]

While Husserl is not committed to the Myth of the Given in its basic and naive form, it is nevertheless unquestionable that "for Husserl the category of the given serves to thematize the subjective elements of experience (the immanent) and to show how what is taken by us to be knowledge presupposes and emerges out of these subjective elements" (Soffer 2003, 310).

With regard to the second problem, the semantic one concerning the linguistic recognition of the datum, Sellars's thesis is that this recognition involves the association of a predicate with a set of details that are similar to each other through an epistemic act that takes place within language.

There is accordingly no structured logical space whose access is prelinguistic; that is, there is no awareness of types and similarities that precedes (or is independent of) the acquisition of a language. Compared to Wittgenstein—who, like Schlick, denies the knowability of sensory impressions (and more generally of private episodes) by emphasizing the public nature

of language—Sellars emphasizes the linguistic and therefore intersubjective nature of sensory impressions. Thus Sellars's thesis does not affirm the inexpressibility of sensory impressions because of their private character, but it does affirm the expressibility of sensory impressions on the basis of their intersubjective nature. Linguistic statements about sensory impressions (such as "X appears to F at time T") are the result of inferences.

On both sides of the issue, the epistemological and the semantic, the phenomenological and Sellarsian traditions seem to diverge radically. In the former case, the distinction between discrimination and perceptual identification allows phenomenology to focus on the complexity of the datum regardless of its inclusion in a conceptual categorization. In the latter case, for Husserl a sign acquires meaning when it expresses a signifying experience (i.e., expresses a thought). For Sellars, on the contrary, a sign has meaning when a rule governs its use.

For Husserl, if something is a conscious state, it must have a first-person experiential aspect—there must be something that it is "like" to be in this state—and it is precisely this aspect that distinguishes mental states from physical ones.[3] For Sellars, a spot of color can only be seen by linguistically and conceptually mature persons. Seeing a spot of color is the result of a combination of sensation, language, and concepts. This is because the right model to account for the feeling of a patch of color is not seeing the patch of color but the colored surface itself.

> Here it is essential to note that the analogy is between sense impressions and physical objects and not between sense impressions and *perceptions* of physical objects. Failure to appreciate this fact reinforces the temptation to construe impressions as *cognitive* and *conceptual* which arises from the assimilation of the "of-ness" of sensation to the "of-ness" of thought. It is also essential to note that the analogy is a trans-category analogy,

> for it is analogy between a state and a physical thing. (Sellars 1963, 93)

The analogy proposed by Sellars excludes all consideration about *what it is like* to have a sensation. But in phenomenology, the question of *what it is like* is essential to define the concept of sensation: it is its most important distinguishing feature. Sellars argues that the sense impression "green" is not itself green but is a property formally analogous to a physical thing. Many interpreters have emphasized the profound divergence between Husserl and Sellars on this point, and some (e.g., Soffer 2003, 322) have pointed out that the main problem with Sellars's thesis is that it does not account for the attentive perception of individual objects that is present in prelinguistic children and intelligent animals.

My attempt will not be to underline the profound divergences between the two authors but rather to thematize the scenario they share beyond these divergences. This scenario can be found in a certain explication of experience in terms of manifestation. To show this, I will mainly focus on one of the two aspects of the Myth of the Given: namely the one concerning linguistic expression.

For Husserl, in contrast to Sellars, language is not the precondition for the basic form of the perceptual awareness of objects. As we have seen, Sellars's psychological nominalism holds that it makes sense to speak of property recognition only by referring to the statements through which such recognition is expressed. Any ability to categorize stimuli has epistemic connotations and depends on language acquisition. Seeing is cognitive, and cognition requires concepts and language.

The reflection on language in phenomenology refers to two distinct orders of problems: that relating to the nature of the sign, and that relating to the nature of linguistic expression (see Husserl 1970). For Husserl, the sign of a thing is everything that characterizes it, distinguishes it, and makes it recognizable to others. The phenomenological structure of the sign,

in its extreme generality, therefore resides in the concept of referral—that is, in its referring to something else. In other words, the sign fulfills an indicative function and does so according to an extremely wide range of modes. In this regard, in the *First Logical Investigation* we read:

> Of the two concepts connected with the word "sign," we shall first deal with that of *indication*. The relation that here obtains we shall call the *indicative relation*. In this sense a brand is the sign of a slave, a flag the sign of a nation. Here all marks belong, as characteristic qualities suited to help us in recognizing the objects to which they attach. But the concept of an indication extends more widely than that of a mark. We say the Martian canals are signs of the existence of intelligent beings on Mars, that fossil vertebrae are signs of the existence of prediluvian animals etc. . . . If suitable things, events or their properties are deliberately produced to serve as such indications, one calls them "signs" whether they exercise this function or not. Only in the case of indications deliberately and artificially brought about, does one speak of standing for, and that both in respect of the action which produces the marking (the branding or chalking etc.), and in the sense of the indication itself, i.e. taken in its relation to the object it stands for or that it is to signify. (*LI 1/F,* 183–84)

The expression, unlike the sign, is not characterized by an indexical or referential function: while through its function of indicating, the sign has an external (and therefore in many cases conventional and arbitrary) relationship with the indicated object, the expression has an internal, constitutional relationship with the expressed object.

The link between sign and thing (or fact, or event) expresses a merely associative link, and in most cases (though not all, as we shall shortly see), a conventional and arbitrary one. The

case of a word is different: it is not a conventional sign in the sense in which, for example, a flag is the sign of the nation, but neither is it a conventional sign in the more "natural" sense in which fossil bones are the sign of antediluvian animals or smoke is the sign of fire or the mark is the sign of slaves or, finally, the volcanic phenomenon is the sign of the magmatic state of the earth's interior.

The link between linguistic sign and meaning is not in fact a link between two externalities: the sign *has a meaning,* and its expressive power lies in this meaning. The expressive word does not merely *indicate* its meaning but *expresses it.* And it does so by activating an *Erlebnis,* that is, an experience of consciousness with respect to which the word is not an arbitrary instrument but an original attribution of meaning.

The basis of expression is therefore the experience of consciousness. And it is on the basis of the return to the original ground of expression, to what we might call the gesture of speech, that the phenomenological distinction between expression and communication is played out.

3. THE PARADOX OF PHENOMENOLOGICAL EXPRESSION

Index and expression, communication and signification, are essentially (in the sense of eidetically) distinct functions. The task of phenomenology is therefore to describe not so much the conventional and arbitrary dimension proper to semiotics as the essential and expressive dimension of semantics.

The structure of expression is composed of two elements: the physical aspect (the sign on the paper, the articulated phonetic complex, etc.) and a certain complex of psychic experiences, which, associated with the signs, make them intentionally directed toward something. What characterizes expression is therefore the intentionality that the sign conveys through the activation of an intentional experience.

As is well known, one of the main characteristics of intentionality is its perspectival character: every object manifests

itself only in perspectives and never in its entirety (Berghofer 2020). Moreover, understanding an object, in the sense of intentionality, means conceiving of it in certain ways rather than others. The perspectival character is realized in a certain cluster of determinations (characteristics, distinguishing marks), which is how the notion of perspective can be made explicit phenomenologically: when we change perspectives, the cluster of features changes and reorients itself, offering a new arrangement.

If the essential dimension of expression is intentionality; if intentionality is in turn defined by the indefinite perspectives through which it is expressed; and finally, if perspective is only realized through a cluster of characteristics, it follows that it is the characteristics (*Merkmale*) that are the defining element of expression.

However, we have seen how the category of the sign understood as a signal includes, for Husserl himself, the concept of a characteristic. The concept of signal is in fact broader than, but inclusive of, the concept of distinguishing marks, understood as a set of characteristics "suited to help us in recognizing the objects to which they attach." If this is true, the concept of expression contains within it, as an essential characteristic, precisely the dimension of indication, or signal.

The expressive phenomenon, as intentional, thereby attributes sense through the notion of determination. Determination, however, may be considered not as original experience but as a sign of experience itself.

If analyzed from this point of view, the Husserlian theory of expression comes very close to Sellars's perspective: anchoring expression in intentionality means reading experience in a certain sense in linguistic terms.

The reason for this unexpected proximity lies in the shared starting point from which the paths of Husserl and Sellars diverge. Here I am referring to a *certain* interpretation of experience in terms of a datum or manifestation. For both Husserl and Sellars, the starting point is the manifest image,

and it is precisely the interpretation of experience in terms of manifestation that—once translated into the notion of the given—introduces the centrality of the notion of *Merkmale* and consequently of the notion of the sign. Sense-bestowing is not as alien to language as Husserl believes.

Determination (*Bestimmung*) is perhaps the most pervasive concept in phenomenology. Husserl's whole approach actually revolves around this notion. From it derive practically all the concepts that allow us to describe experience phenomenologically: datum, phenomenon, manifestation, evidence, distinction, perspective, part, ideation.

The point of intersection between Husserl and Sellars thus lies in the idea that experience is made explicit in terms of manifestation, and that therefore the manifest image constitutes an essential starting point.

4. MANIFESTATION AND DISPOSITION

We have seen how the principle of manifestation reintroduces (through the notion of intentionality and the subordinate notion of distinguishing mark) the linguistic dimension of reference into the phenomenological explication of perceptual experience.

The phenomenological description of experiencing, conveyed by the concept of intentionality, determines the object that manifests itself through the identification of distinguishing marks. It is possible to interpret distinguishing marks not as real parts of the thing of experience but rather as symbols in which the thing itself is expressed.

In order to return to the things themselves, and thus restore due distance between Husserl and Sellars, it would be necessary to provide an alternative phenomenological explication of experience to that conditioned by the concept of distinguishing mark. This alternative seems to be found in the replacement of the concept of determination by the concept of disposition.

To understand this, it will be useful to return to the notion of intentionality. Essential features of this concept include

grasping something and grasping something in certain ways. In this regard Husserl makes an important distinction between *the object in the How of its determinations,* or *Sinn,* "including undeterminednesses which for the time being 'remain open' and, in the mode, are co-meant"; and *the object in the How of its modes of givenness* or "the sense in the mode belonging to its fullness" (*Ideas I/K,* 314, 316). In the former case, what we consider are the attributes, or the properties, or even the known characteristics of the object (e.g., its being red, or smooth, or sounding); in the latter case, what we consider are the ways in which those attributes offer themselves in experience (with greater or lesser clarity, intensity, etc.).

This important phenomenological distinction has recently been reproposed in terms of the distinction between intentional content and phenomenal content. The relationship between these two types of content, between what it is and *what it is like* (or how it is with me), is the focus of much of the contemporary phenomenological debate (Kriegel 2007, 2013).

Intentional content is what guarantees the two definitions of intentionality—namely, directionality and aspectuality. We have seen how a state of consciousness can be said to be intentional when it is directed toward something—and it is always directed toward something according to certain aspects or points of view. Phenomenal content is what gives a qualitative character to the intentional act, the *what it is like to be* in a certain state of consciousness. The former directs and determines; the latter fills and qualifies.

With regard to the relations between intentional content and phenomenal content, it is also usual to distinguish between strong and weak intentionalism. With strong intentionalism, the phenomenal character of an intentional experience is entirely determined by the manifest content. With weak intentionalism, the phenomenal character of intentional experience is determined both by its manifest content and by nonintentional content, which means that the phenomenal character is not entirely reducible to the manifest character.

Suppose we compare two visual experiences of the same object changing color every thirty seconds. In the first case, we have a visual experience of the object as red, and thirty seconds later as green. The first experience, E1 (at t1), has the manifest content <O as red>; the second, E2 (at t2), <O as green>. The two visual experiences present the same object according to different aspects, that is, different observable properties, and thus with a different manifest content. The change in manifest content determines the consequent change in phenomenal content: having a visual experience of a red object is different from having a visual experience of a green object (in the sense that it has a different effect). The manifest content fully determines, in this case, the phenomenal character of the experience.

This theory offers the possibility (in the view of both Husserl and Stein) of reading experience, if not in terms of quantitative (numerical, measurable) determinations, then at least in terms of qualitative (phenomenological) determinations.

Thus in the natural continuum of experience, a color may pass into another color (as in John's case), or it may lose or acquire brightness or intensity, but it cannot transform itself into a sound or a noise or a smell.

Both strong intentionalism (according to which the manifest content fully determines the phenomenal content) and weak intentionalism imply the same theoretical hypothesis, which we intend to discuss here. This is the thesis that states the absolute primacy, in the phenomenological explication of experience, of the notion of determination, or characteristic distinguishing mark, and the consequent secondary role (or residuality) of the properly intensive and qualitative dimension (the phenomenal content).

In this sense, Husserl's distinction between the object in the how of its determinations and the object in the how of its modes of givenness marks the difference between *extensive qualities* (objective determinations, even if essentially qualified) and *intensive qualities* (such as intensity, clarity, or darkness). For Husserl, the latter depend, by virtue of an essential law, on the former.

Indeed, intensity always refers to something: we can talk about a bright color, a sharp sound, a smooth surface, thus taking it for granted that this color, this sound, and this surface maintain their identity when varying, for example, the degree of intensity with which they are experienced.[4]

We have seen how the concepts of determination, characteristic distinguishing mark, appearance, perspective, synthesis, and essence can be regarded on closer inspection not as parts of experience but as parts of the symbolic translation of experience. It is in this distinction between pure description and symbolic transcription that the standard approach to the relations between manifest content and phenomenal content is superseded.

The problem is that if we consider that the determinations of the thing of experience are not effectively parts of it but parts of signs that stand for experience, what then is experience as such composed of? The hypothesis we intend to uphold here is that these actual parts are not determinations, but dispositions.[5]

There are two ways of understanding the concept of disposition. According to the first, dispositional properties are ones that express the disposition to behave in a certain way, such as fragility, rigidity, malleability, ductility, and elasticity. These are properties that we cannot experience directly: we can perceive the breaking of glass but not its fragility.[6] In this case, the disposition has a functional character, being connected both to the variation and intrinsic fluctuation of experience and to the settling of this variation into invariants, so that experience and not chaos is given.

The second way of understanding the concept of disposition refers not to the static concept of invariance in variation, but to the dynamic concept of power or force, thereby emphasizing not the concept of determination (the qualitative/categorical dimension) but the concept of force (forceful qualities) (Banks 2014; Molnar 2003; Mumford 1998).[7]

Dispositions thus understood are in turn interpreted as "power or capacity" (Heil 2005, 343) and satisfy the following theses (Heil 2005, 2010, 2013):

(1) They are real conditions of objects. What is merely potential is the manifestation of the disposition (e.g., the breaking of the glass), and not the disposition itself.
(2) They are intrinsic properties of the objects that possess them. Most dispositions could never be manifested.
(3) Their nature is not entirely reducible to conditional analysis. The glass would be fragile even if the conditional "the glass is fragile if it breaks when struck by something solid" were false.
(4) They are not contingent but essential characteristics of the world.

Every property is dispositional and qualitative at the same time.

In this profound transformation of phenomenological description (found in Merleau-Ponty in the wake of Bergson and Whitehead), quality as *what-it-is-like* (or *how it is with me*) is no longer residual but primary, and sensation is no longer amorphous hyletic material but more properly action, movement (i.e., power). In this perspective, the relation to determination is reversed: intensive determination is not primary but secondary to the *tension* that characterizes sensation understood as forceful quality. And tension is in turn ascribable to intensity, that is, to those modes of the given conceived not as secondary but as the real material of which experience is made.

* * *

Husserl and Sellars undoubtedly differ with regard to many essential points on which the debate is still open. But these profound differences are not as radical as they might seem at first. Indeed, the two thinkers share an important starting point: a certain clarification of experience in terms of manifest image that in turn can be related to the concepts of determination and characteristic distinguishing mark. From this common starting point the two paths move in very different directions.

But the common starting point remains an insufficiently problematized scenario shared by both. It could be argued that the clarification of experience in terms of determinations does in fact constitute an excellent basis for making the further transition (so significant for Sellars) from manifest image to scientific image—or perhaps it would be better to say to *a certain* scientific image, ultimately that of the Cartesian and Galilean matrix in which the notion of extension (which founds the concept of manifestation) plays a crucial role.

This is the essential point that brings Husserl closer to Sellars's perspective. Once the sensation is connected to the determination, the sensory impression can hardly be separated from the linguistic enunciation that expresses its recognition. This is what we have called the paradox of phenomenological expression, which reintroduces, through the notion of characteristic, the signitive dimension that Husserl considers inessential.

The scenario changes if we consider the concept of the distinguishing mark not as primary, but as derivative. The determinations and the resulting points of view are different in nature from the thing itself, and the synthesis of perspectives (which can be realized in a cluster of different determinations) becomes not a description of actual experience but rather a transcription of it by means of signs.

We have identified a further phenomenological clarification of the concept of experience centered on the concept of disposition (or force). In such a perspective, primary properties are also qualities, and the qualities, in turn, are powers. To adopt this perspective is to call into question precisely the common premise that Husserl and Sellars seem to share, namely, the idea that experience is represented by manifestations—that is, through distinguishing marks, and ultimately, through signs.

On this new ground, Sellars's relationship with phenomenology opens up further challenges that concern not just the legitimacy of the manifest image but also the legitimacy of a certain way of conceiving of the scientific image.

NOTES

1. In this sense, the genetic-motivational link is opposed to the causal link: "It is therefore contradictory to connect the things of the senses and those of physics causally" (*Ideas I/K*, 132). For the relationship between phenomenology and realism see Sparrow (2014).
2. This thesis can be traced back to Peirce's criticism of intuition. For Peirce, as later for Sellars, it is not possible to distinguish intuitively between an intuition and a cognition determined by other cognitions; to put it another way, the determination of a cognition as intuitive is not part of the immediate content of that cognition. The conclusion, for Peirce as much as for Sellars, is that if all knowledge results from inference, there is no need to suppose intuitive knowledge (Peirce 1868). See also Sachs (2014).
3. This makes it possible to state that even preverbal children and animals really have intentionality. See Brandom (1994), who unfortunately forgets to mention Husserl's analysis of pre-predicative judgment. See also Brandom (2000), and for a critique of the so-called Pittsburgh school, Rockmore (2012).
4. This distinction follows, albeit in a modified form, that between primary and secondary qualities.
5. This ontological transformation can be found, albeit with different meanings, in both Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty (1968, 2002, 2003, 2004). But Bergson (1921, 1946) is the author outside of phenomenology who has especially supported this transformation.
6. Dispositional concepts are present in the phenomenology of passive syntheses. An extreme example of the functional character of dispositions can be found in Ryle's so-called conditional analysis, in which dispositions are entirely reducible to relations between events. Solubility, for example, is reduced to the fact that if a given substance (e.g., salt) is immersed in a liquid, it dissolves; fragility is reduced to the fact that if a given substance (e.g., glass) is struck, it breaks. In this case, ascribing a dispositional property amounts to nothing more than asserting the truth of a conditional.
7. See in particular Mumford's apparently almost oxymoronic concept of physical intentionality in Mumford 1998.

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CHAPTER 5

THE STATUS OF PHENOMENOLOGICAL REFLECTION

A Reassessment Inspired by Wilfrid Sellars's Philosophy

Karl Mertens

"Back to the things themselves" (cf. *LI 2/M,* 178, 228; *Ideas I/K,* 35)—this was the philosophical motto at the beginning of phenomenology. It is meant to programmatically distinguish phenomenological philosophizing from all philosophical and scientific avenues resorting to constructions or speculations. In contrast, according to its self-understanding, phenomenological research is urged to make things visible in their phenomenal content, that is, to analyze how meaning manifests itself in our originary experience, how it is constituted in such different acts as perceptions, judgments, actions, feelings, imaginations, and so on. To give an example, whereas scientific theories of perception investigate how perception comes about by exploring the processing procedures of the visual system, phenomenology focuses on analyzing how we originarily experience perceptual appearances and how it is possible, for instance, that we can perceive and recognize objects as identical in and

through their changing modes of appearance. To analyze such phenomena is the task of phenomenology.

The field of originary experience is phenomenologically understood as the field that is subjectively given to us. This is to be described without prejudice in order to provide an insight on how the abovementioned kind of intentional objects come about.[1] The tool phenomenologists use in order to analyze the field of originary experience is phenomenological reflection. In what follows, I would like to focus on this latter subject, more precisely by reassessing phenomenological reflection in the light of some of Wilfrid Sellars's insights, developed within the framework of his nonphenomenological philosophy. My suggestion is that some crucial aspects and implications of phenomenological reflection as a method can be sharpened when played against Sellars's considerations on both observational and theoretical language as well as his concept of scientific realism. In the first part, I argue that, although often neglected, phenomenological reflection has a constructive character and that it can be reassessed as a theoretical language in Sellars's sense. In the second part, I discuss the distinctive features of the phenomenological language of theory. Also in this respect Sellars's contributions are helpful—in that they mainly allow, by contrast, to better pinpoint the defining features of phenomenological reflection. I emphasize in particular two aspects: (1) Unlike other languages of theory that are understood in purely functional terms, phenomenological language essentially relies on subjective experience and what can be called the for-me-ness of phenomenological reflection. (2) Moreover, phenomenological reflection addresses a given world, which—unlike in Sellars's naturalistic conception—is understood as a world that can be experienced in a process of infinite consistent probation (*Bewährung*). Based on these two considerations, phenomenology attempts to do justice to its programmatic target of an intuition-based philosophical description.

1. THE CONSTRUCTIVE CHARACTER OF PHENOMENOLOGICAL REFLECTION

Granted that originary experience is the field allowing an elucidation of our ordinary experience, then it follows that originary experience cannot simply coincide with ordinary experience. At the same time, however, originary experience must be related to ordinary experience. This twofold perspective on originary experience is obtained by means of a specific reflection. Husserl notably examines this point in his theory of phenomenological *reduction*. Phenomenological reduction is supposed to enable us to show how the meanings and senses of our natural attitude are subjectively constituted. However, what distinguishes phenomenological reflection from everyday experience is not so much the topic of reflection—the emphasis on the life of consciousness of the experiencing subject. Rather, Husserl points out that phenomenological reflection designates a radical change of attitude. His main claim is that, if we are to elucidate the structures of our natural attitude, we cannot remain within such an attitude. Phenomenological reflection, then, should take a completely new look at the natural attitude, and this new look requires what Husserl terms *epoché*—that is, the bracketing of the general assumptions underpinning our natural attitude, namely the naive belief in the independent reality of what is given. The bracketing metaphor should be understood as signifying that nothing is to be lost from the natural attitude when we reflect on it (cf. *Crisis*, 151–52). However, a change concerning our participation in the assumptions characterizing such an attitude occurs: rather than taking them for granted, we suspend them and analyze whether and how they can be considered to be legitimate. Phenomenological analysis requires to fully thematize the claims that we make within the framework of our natural attitude.

The elucidation of the subjective conditions to the claims of our natural attitude meets with a fundamental problem: the thematization of the subjective conditions of all senses and

meanings is the task of a self-reflection of subjectivity itself. Phenomenological reflection thematizes subjective experience from the standpoint of subjective experience. In the reflective elucidation, then, our originary experience can only be investigated by being at the same time objectified. Consequently, the question should be raised whether reflection can actually grasp the constituting consciousness or only an inevitably falsifying objectification.[2]

Husserl deals with the above outlined issue several times in his work (esp. *Ideas I/K,* 174–90; *Hua VIII,* 86–92). In his *Ideas I,* reflection is understood as the simple grasp of an experience that before reflection is not conscious: "When living in the cogito we are not conscious of the cogitatio itself as an intentional Object; but at any time it can become an Object of consciousness; its essence involves the essential possibility of a *reflective turning of regard* and naturally in the form of a new cogitatio that, in the manner proper to a cogitatio which simply seizes upon, is directed to it" (*Ideas I/K,* 78; cf. *Ideas II,* 107–8).

That which is grasped in reflection, the "cogito," is the same before and in reflection. It is understood "as something which exists and endures while it is being regarded perceptually but also as something which *already existed before* this regard was turned to it" (*Ideas I/K,* 98). Reflection does not fundamentally change the essence of the experience or the experiencing I to which reflection is directed (cf. *Ideas I/K,* 154–55). In this determinacy, "*the possibility of an originary self-grasp, a 'self-perception,'*" is anchored as a precondition of the intuitive and descriptive character of phenomenological analysis (*Ideas II,* 107; cf. *Ideas I/K,* 180). Husserl assumes that it is possible to gain an intuition-based direct access to structures of our originary experience that are to be found as pregiven to our analysis and can be described with the help of phenomenological reflection. The concept of description implies this structure inasmuch as *describing something* presupposes that the described already exists.

Husserl also holds onto the possibility of this reflection in later works. In his lectures on *First Philosophy,* while discussing phenomenological reduction and in particular the specifically phenomenological problem of reflection, he refers to the "self-forgetfulness" (*Selbstvergessenheit*) of the reflecting ego, which belongs to natural reflection. In higher-level reflections, the reflected ego can be identified in principle with the previously anonymous ego, the "patent" with the previously "latent" ego (*Hua VIII,* 89–91).

In the *Cartesian Meditations,* Husserl explicitly thematizes the modifying and objectifying character of every reflection, be it natural or transcendental phenomenological (cf. also *Ideas II,* 108; *Ideas I/K,* 178): "Natural reflection alters the previously naïve subjective process quite essentially; this process loses its original mode, 'straightforward,' by the very fact that reflection makes an object out of what was previously a subjective process but not objective" (*CM,* 34). Husserl, however, understands this objectification merely as the result of a turning of regard. Since the apprehension of the originary unreflected experience is not affected by this modification (cf. *CM,* 34–35), the epistemic value of reflection remains untouched: "When the Ego is objective or again not objective, what changes phenomenologically is not the Ego itself, which we grasp and have given in reflection as absolutely identical, but the lived experience" (*Ideas II,* 109).

Concerning their reflective account of consciousness, phenomenologists like Husserl, Fink, and Merleau-Ponty meet an increasingly pressing challenge. While pointing to the production or even construction of ideas and essences in his later investigations on this topic (*Hua VIII,* 218, 456, 504; *Crisis,* 304), Husserl is led to point to constructive moments of phenomenological analysis. In his *Sixth Cartesian Meditation,* Fink even develops a way of doing phenomenology introduced as "constructive phenomenology" (Fink 1988, esp. § 7, 61–74).[3]

But it is Merleau-Ponty who highlights this issue when he critically examines the status of phenomenological reflection

in the preface to his *Phenomenology of Perception*. According to Merleau-Ponty, while achieving the goal of providing a clarification on the role of the reflective subject concerning its subjective consciousness, reflective analysis becomes entangled in the issue for which reflective self-clarification is only possible by means of a reflective objectification. For example, whenever we try to explain how we open a door when we are drunk, how we experience violent anger, how we develop a philosophical thought, and the like, each explanation has, so to speak, already structurally intervened in the presentation of this experience. What is reflected on cannot be grasped as a preobjective event. This is why Merleau-Ponty claims that the thematization of the originary life of consciousness (i.e., of something that is in itself unreflected) *always* has the character of a making, a "true creation" (*une véritable création*). This means that the unreflected given is first of all produced by the creative activity of reflective analysis. In this respect, what is thematized in phenomenological reflection is a construction. As Merleau-Ponty writes: "When I begin to reflect my reflection bears upon an unreflective experience; moreover my reflection cannot be unaware of itself as an event, and so it appears to itself in the light of a truly creative act [*une véritable création*], of a changed structure of consciousness" (Merleau-Ponty [1945] 2005, [iv] xi).

In order to spell out the consequences of the constructive character of phenomenological reflection, I suggest to understand phenomenological reflection in the light of Sellars's distinction between "language of *observation*" and "language of *theory*" (cf., e.g., EPM, § 51, 180–82).[4] According to Sellars, a language of observation talks about observable entities, facts, circumstances, and so on. Therefore, sentences in this language are true or false depending on whether they correspond to what they are or are not speaking about. Differently, theoretical language has another status. It is assessed not with regard to the truth and falsehood of its statements but rather with regard to its theoretical potential, its explanatory power. A

language of theory is assessed using categories such as appropriateness, success, fruitfulness, and so forth. Let us apply this distinction to the discussion of the status of phenomenological reflection. If we understand phenomenological reflection as dealing with given structures of our consciousness and phenomenological analysis as truthfully talking about processes and moments of our consciousness—in short, if we understand phenomenological language as observational language—then we run into fundamental problems. Particularly, if we are not familiar with doing phenomenology, it is not clear what phenomenological analysis is referring to and whether there are conditions for being true or false at all. To give an example, in his analysis of the inner time-consciousness as the most fundamental structure of phenomenological constitution, Husserl understands time-consciousness as a homogeneous flow of subjective time experience. Constantly living in the now, our experience of time is formed through the continuous transition of expectation into memory. In this context, Husserl introduces concepts like, for example, *protention, retention, reproduction,* to name a few; he works with metaphors like "continual flow" and "first time-point," namely, the "source-point" of a temporal object, or speaks figuratively of a "formation no longer animated by the generative point of the now but continuously modified and sinking back into 'emptiness'" (*PhCIT,* 25–26, 30). In this context, we find sentences like the following: "The tone-now changes into a tone-having-been; the *impressional* consciousness, constantly flowing, passes over into ever new *retentional* consciousness. Going along the flow or with it, we have a continuous series of retentions pertaining to the beginning-point. Beyond that, however, each earlier point of this series is adumbrated *in its turn* as a now in the sense of retention" (*PhCIT,* 31). We also find drawings of crossing lines that attempt to accurately analyze the temporal structure of our experience (*PhCIT,* 29). However, do we really experience what these concepts, metaphors, and drawings designate? What we experience are things, events, movements,

social constellations, facts, memories, and so on. We also experience temporal characters like the duration of an event, its being present, past, or future. We expect a joyful event or remember a pleasant evening with friends, and so forth. And in this sense we can refer to something that can be observed as "object" of our experience in a narrower but also in a broader sense. Such "objects" are "experienced" or even "given" in a simple and uncontroversial sense (cf. EPM, § 1, 129). However, protentions, retentions, the flow of consciousness, and so on, are not "experienced" or "given" in this sense. Although I can understandably say that I remember the nice meeting with my friends yesterday evening, it would be strange and even incomprehensible if someone were to claim that they perceive the contents of a temporally structured consciousness in the way Husserl talks about it.[5] Yet if we understand phenomenological language as a theoretical language—that is to say, not as a report on the events and contents of our consciousness but rather as a language introduced in order to establish a science of the structures of conscious experience—the picture changes. In this case, what phenomenological analysis reveals does not agree or disagree with the observation of our consciousness nor with what is grasped in a kind of inner perception or experience. Rather, phenomenology constructs a conceptual framework for the explanation of our everyday experience. While the usual descriptive self-understanding of phenomenology takes phenomenological language as straightforwardly representing our subjective experiences as they are, an explanatory self-understanding of phenomenology acknowledges the explanatory power of phenomenological language. Accordingly, phenomenological language has to be measured against pragmatic categories: What can we do with phenomenological tools? How do phenomenological explanations prove to be fruitful in further work? To what extent can they be connected to previous philosophical research? And so on. In this sense, while performing a phenomenological analysis of experience, we are dealing with the entities of a theoretical or explanatory

language. For instance, going back to the structure of our inner time-consciousness, phenomenology claims to be able to better grasp our everyday experience by taking into account the subjective presuppositions of the abovementioned judgments in general and the temporal character of our experience in particular. Therefore, if phenomenologists interpret the experience of our consciousness and their particular temporal moments as "now," "retention," "protention," and so on, these concepts are part of a theoretical language that is to be verified with regard to its contribution to a better understanding of the key features of our experience. If we follow this line, phenomenological analysis should not be tested against one particular object, say, the structures of our subjectivity. What it delivers is in fact not a simply observable something but a full construction that can be used in order to gain deeper insights concerning the structure of our usual experience.

2. THE DESCRIPTIVE CHARACTER OF PHENOMENOLOGICAL REFLECTION

From a phenomenological point of view, the previous considerations are, at first glance, certainly problematic. They seem to question the methodological foundations of phenomenology altogether. Just to mention the biggest issue, by assuming that phenomenological language is a theoretical language, its reliance on intuition cannot be taken as phenomenology's methodological basis, or so it seems. Clearly, we could not accept Husserl's famous *Principle of All Principles* outlined in *Ideas I* and elevating intuition to the methodological basis of all phenomenological knowledge.[6] For this principle refers to a particular observation as the basis of every justified description of structures of consciousness. However, I will argue that the phenomenological recourse to intuition and description as a whole does not need to be called into question. This is so inasmuch as one holds onto the idea that the phenomenological recourse to intuition and description does not provide us with knowledge of the structural features of consciousness, which is

supposed to be verified or falsified on the basis of a particular observation. Rather, in the context of the constructive theoretical framework of phenomenological analysis, an alternative understanding of the binding relation between phenomenological work and intuition-based description is needed.

In the following, I want to spell out this understanding. Again, a look at Sellars's philosophy may be helpful. This time, however, the differences between Sellars's philosophy and phenomenology, rather than their analogies, help elucidate what is specific to the phenomenological method. There is one point in particular that challenges the above outlined understanding of phenomenology and that concerns the theoretical language of phenomenology itself. How can a constructed language of theory satisfy the phenomenological demand for an intuitive justification of phenomenological description? In short, my answer is as follows: any use of the phenomenological language of theory must be understood from the perspective of those involved in the processes and experiences under investigation. A phenomenological explanation, in this respect, is always an explanation relying on what can be understood as part of our experience. Such an explanation, however, stands in contrast to Sellars's emphasis on the primacy of a scientific language for which our involvement as speakers is not constitutive.[7] In what follows I would like to explain this idea in two respects. First, I explain the difference between a purely functional and a phenomenological understanding of the language of theory; second, I discuss the different ways in which Husserl and Sellars consider the pregivenness of the world, to which all science and philosophy is directed. Both considerations should help point out the particular experiential character and the descriptive meaning of an intuition-based phenomenology.

2.1. A Phenomenological Understanding of the Language of Theory

Let us begin with a brief look at the relation between the language of theory and the language of observation, as Sellars presents it. Obvious examples for Sellars are here those of

scientific explanations, such as the explanation of empirical statements about the behavior of gasses in the kinetic theory of gasses by "theoretical statements specifying certain statistical measures of populations of molecules" (EPM, § 51, 181). The construction of a theory and the introduction of theoretical entities connected with it is done from a purely functional perspective. Explanation here is introduced solely with a view to its pragmatic suitability: it makes it easier to comprehend certain contexts and trace certain relations concerning what is to be explained. In this sense, the realm of the things and affairs to be explained is traced back to something else, which allows relations to be derived in the realm of what is to be explained. However, no further requirements are associated with explanations—and certainly none concerning what area can provide an explanation. In this respect, everything that is suitable for the purpose of deeper insights into what is to be explained can be used in principle as an explanation. As Sellars states: "A good theory (at least of the type we are considering) 'explains' established empirical laws by deriving theoretical counterparts of these laws from a small set of postulates relating to unobserved entities" (EPM, § 51, 181). Regarding the correlation between theoretical and empirical or observable statements, only the explanatory power of the theory in question is relevant here. What a good theory is and in which respect a theory is good are exclusively questions of scientific practice. The goodness of a theory depends on what one can do with an explanation, how the explanation can be applied, how it can contribute to the solution or also discovery of further problems, and so on. Therefore, the connection between theory and observation is very loose and in principle open to other concrete assignments. We are dealing with two areas, the area of observable empirical facts and the area of postulated theoretical entities, which have to be assigned to each other on the basis of additional considerations. Precisely for this reason it is necessary to introduce "correspondence rules" (LT, § 4, 108) that deliver a way of interpreting the connection between

empirical and theoretical entities in question. Even more carefully Sellars characterizes the function of correspondence rules as follows:

> Correspondence rules typically connect defined expressions in the theoretical language with definable expressions in the language of observation. They are often said to give a "partial interpretation" of the theory in terms of observables, but this is at best a very misleading way of talking; for whatever may be true of "correspondence rules" in the case of physical geometry, it is simply not true, in the case of theories which postulate unobserved micro-entities, that a correspondence rule stipulates that a theoretical expression is to *have the same sense* as the correlated expression in the observation language. The phrase "partial interpretation" suggests that the only sense in which the interpretation fails to be a translation is that it is partial; that is, that while *some* stipulations of identity of sense are laid down, they do not suffice to make possible a complete translation of the theoretical language into the language of observation. It is less misleading to say that while the correspondence rules *coordinate* theoretical and observational sentences, neither they nor the derivative rules which are their consequences place the primitives of the theory into one-one correspondence with observation language counterparts. This way of putting it does not suggest, as does talk of "partial interpretation," that if the partial correlation could be made complete, it would *be* a translation. (LT, § 6, 109)

This purely functional approach, which requires in each case a new determination of the correspondence between theoretical and observational language, is essentially different from how we should conceive of the task of phenomenological language. The concepts introduced in phenomenological language are

not to be determined depending on the respective phenomenological context and question; their specific explanatory power is not limited to particular problematic situations. In contrast, theoretical language in the case of phenomenology aims from the start to contribute to a better understanding of our experience of usual meanings, senses, claims, and so on. Therefore, we measure the explanatory power of the introduced phenomenological concepts in order to more thoroughly clarify the constitution of our experience. And even more, experience in a broader sense—including usual and phenomenological (that is, originary experience)—is the common dimension of phenomenological analysis.[8] Therefore, there is no need for correspondence rules that determine the respective relationship between the language of theory and the language of observation. The correlation is already determined in phenomenology by the reference to experience. Experience in the sense of ordinary experience is the *explanandum* in phenomenology; the recourse to experience in the sense of originary experience is the dimension of phenomenological explanation. In light of the previous considerations, we can characterize the difference as follows: our usual experience can be confirmed or denied by observations, whereas originary experience referred to by phenomenological reflection must be proved by the praxis of a theoretical analysis. I would like to elaborate on this a bit more.

Why does phenomenological reflection, which includes essentially constructive aspects, take recourse to an originary *experience?* My answer is simple: the introduction of the theoretical language of phenomenological reflection can be understood only by referring back to our involvement in our experiences. For example, when it comes to the framework of the phenomenology of internal time-consciousness and the distinction of different moments in terms of impressions, retentions, or protentions, these concepts are not accessible as objects of a particular kind of observation called inner perception or something of the like. Nevertheless, these aspects of our consciousness are "experienced" or "given" inasmuch as we

phenomenologically understand them as something we—that is, we as experiencing subjects—are familiar with. To put it differently, two ways of dealing with experience-related concepts can be distinguished. On the one hand, there are concepts that refer in a broad sense to observables, which can be the object of a report. In this respect we can answer questions like "How many cups are on the table?" "What do you remember about our last trip?" or "Do you perceive the broken stick in the water?" by reporting based on the observation of things, the memory of an event, or the perception of a visual scene. On the other hand, it does not make sense to report things like impressions, retentions, or protentions. Rather, already due to their abstract character, the moments of our inner time-consciousness are not observable at all, not even in a broader sense. And yet we are quite able to identify what phenomenologists are referring to when they point out such moments and aspects simply by taking recourse to our experience. In other words, it is ultimately possible to confirm or to contradict the use of such concepts because we know what it is like to have temporally structured experiences.

To understand how such confirmation or correction of the terms of phenomenological reflection is possible, we need to distinguish two levels: the thematic reference of phenomenology and the performance of phenomenological reflection. Thematically, phenomenological analysis is concerned with investigating the experience of subjects who know what it is like to have such experiences, such as the experience of a temporal passing. When thematizing this experience, the conceptual tools of phenomenological analysis must prove helpful or, in case they prove inappropriate, they must be discarded. As already mentioned, however, in phenomenological reflection phenomenological concepts do not (or do not primarily) prove suitable because they descriptively characterize observable moments of experience as they actually are but because they help in gaining a better understanding of our experience. In order to decide about the suitability of phenomenological concepts,

one of course needs some knowing how, which is gained while practicing phenomenology itself. One does not come into the world as a phenomenologist; one rather becomes a phenomenologist by exercising a particular practice of reflecting. In this respect, phenomenology, like, for that matter, every scientific activity, is a skill to be gained while performing a particular scientific practice. This is indeed practical knowledge, comparable to the knowledge of a native speaker concerning grammatical correctness. As a native speaker can identify a grammatical mistake without knowing the violated linguistic rule, we can make use of phenomenological concepts in order to better understand our usual experiences without being able to explicitly identify what they are referring to. The particularity of phenomenological reflection and theorizing, however, is that this knowing how is related to the successful thematization of our experience. Every concept auditioning to play a role in phenomenological reflection must therefore prove to be a concept connected to the knowledge of what it is like to be an experiencing subject. This amounts to saying that, even if we do not have an observation-based *knowing that* regarding phenomenological concepts like *impression, retention,* or *protention,* being involved in our experience, we do possess a *knowing how* these concepts are correctly used in the context of a phenomenological analysis of time-consciousness in reference to our experience.

As a result, the usefulness of the explanations offered by phenomenology is not restricted to a simple correspondence to certain observable aspects, relations, and behaviors of our experience. Rather, these explanations involve more than mere functional connections between *explanans* and *explanandum.* They also bring into play the dimension of our originary experience as such because we ourselves are already involved in the sphere that phenomenological analysis is about. The recourse to originary experience in this sense is an invitation, an instruction for the comprehension of phenomenological considerations. It is a plea for doing phenomenology in general—or,

more precisely, for constructing tools in order to develop an explanation of experience that can be understood *only inasmuch as* we are *already* involved in our experiences.

Following this line, the recourse to intuition is required in order to examine whether the theoretical vocabulary of phenomenology is appropriate to describe experience. However, what the phenomenologists bring into play as originary experience is not the object of knowledge to be confirmed or falsified by simply looking at it. Rather, phenomenological theories offer conceptual tools aiming at reconstructing our originary experience in an understandable way. And the appropriateness of these tools needs to be constantly measured against our everyday experience, and against the way we ordinarily understand each other about such experience. Thus, for example, the metaphor of retentional adumbrations (*retentionale Abschattungen*) (cf., e.g., *PhCIT,* 98) appeals to something that is familiar to us from the experience of an immediate past, of what has just been, as associated, for example, with hearing a melody or the fresh memory of an event that has just passed. The concept highlights a moment that is understood as constitutive of our experience of time, because without it we cannot experience temporal passing, the duration of permanent objects, or the possibility of memory. We cannot simply see in a kind of self-observation such retentional adumbrations. By using this metaphorical concept in phenomenological analysis, however, we notice that it allows us to elucidate the whole process of temporal experience. On such an understanding, phenomenological intuition can be considered as the other side of phenomenological reflection. While phenomenological reflection offers a theoretical-conceptual framework for the reconstruction and analysis of experience, the reference to intuition means that the tools of reflection are contributing to a better understanding of our experience, which should be considered as the (normative) measure for the appropriateness of every language of theory.

The distinctive feature of phenomenological reflection can be called its *for-me-ness,* that is, its irreducible subjective

character. At variance with Sellars's understanding of a theoretical language, the theoretical language of phenomenology necessarily relies on aspects of our subjective experience. If the possibility of self-attributing what is developed in phenomenological analysis is essential to this reflection, then the constructive aspects of phenomenological investigations are also to be understood as explications of subjective structures. However, the decisive reference of phenomenological reflection to our subjective experience is connected with a fundamental limitation: the theoretical work of phenomenological analysis refers to something that is experienced as pregiven to us.

This limitation seems to be confirmed by Merleau-Ponty's remarks in the preface to his *Phenomenology of Perception*. For despite sharing an essentially constructive character, scientific and phenomenological accounts differ significantly from one another. Phenomenological self-clarification presupposes a critique of constructive scientific analyses. Therefore, phenomenological reflection on something unreflected "has to recognize, as having priority over its own operations, the world which is given to the subject [*sujet*] because the subject [*sujet*] is given to himself" (Merleau-Ponty [1945] 2005, [4] xi). Unlike scientific construction, then, phenomenological construction is not to be measured solely against its explanatory power but must in turn be justified in the context of our pregiven experience. In this regard, Merleau-Ponty presents the appropriate methodological approach to the originary experience, that is to say the object of phenomenological reflection, as description. His method is in fact based on something we find in our experience, something that is not produced by reflection but that, being pregiven, is presupposed by reflection. However, the object of phenomenological reflection is necessarily produced by the phenomenological approach. Therefore, the description must not be understood in the ordinary sense. Unlike pure construction, phenomenological analysis as description takes into account the preobjective, prereflective character of the phenomenon it addresses; this can be

achieved only by going back to what is given in our own experience. In Merleau-Ponty's words, "Reflection is truly reflection only if it is not carried outside itself, only if it knows itself as reflection-on-an-unreflective-experience, and consequently as a change in structure of our existence" ([1945] 2005, 72). However, this means that the productive moment of reflection, the construction of the philosophical object, in turn remains tied to prereflective experience, which reflection is never able to take full possession of. There is something to which reflection is related, which is given to it. In this sense, all reflective construction is limited, limited by something pregiven that must be recognized and accepted as such. Phenomenological analysis is accordingly directed at that which can neither be presupposed as a static object of description nor understood as a mere product of reflection. In this sense, phenomenology is essentially ambiguous; it unfolds simultaneously as a constructive and descriptive enterprise.

2.2. The Phenomenological Concept of Probation (Bewährung)

The pregivenness of our experience, ordinary as well as originary, confronts phenomenological reflection with a fundamental problem. On the one hand, phenomenology thematizes the constitution of our ordinary experience by showing its dependence on constitutive achievements of our consciousness. On the other hand, all phenomenological constructions and conceptualizations face the limitations of our constructive power—that is, aspects of our experience that are not available to our theoretical grasping. Phenomenological analysis presupposes something that grounds the receptive and passive character of all experience (both ordinary and originary), and that cannot be grasped by reflection precisely due to the creative and productive character of all reflection. This is the reason why the constructive aspects of phenomenological reflection are to be bound to a pregiven structure of our experience which is addressed in the descriptive program of phenomenological reflection.

Oscillating between these poles of the phenomenological explication of our experience is like going back to a borderline. On the one hand, every explainable meaning of experience is necessarily dependent on a framework that provides the conceptual background for verifying the respective philosophical or everyday insights. On the other hand, the concept of experience reminds every theoretical enterprise of its peculiar task, that is to say, to gain insights into the structures of the world. In this context, one key aspect of the phenomenological concept of intuition comes into play. Every intuition is intuition of *something* (that is, it is essentially related to a pregiven field). Although this field can never be completely explored, the experiences that one can make in it—despite all modifications, corrections, and revisions—are experiences (*in* and) *of* the world.

Against this background, phenomenology has to take into account both the necessary conceptualization entailed by an epistemic approach (be it everyday, scientific, or philosophical) and the necessary limitations of this conceptualization as a conceptualization *of* a preconceptualized world. Husserl's solution to this problem can be found in his distinctive characterization of the goal of the phenomenological acquisition of knowledge. This goal lies in the infinite, inasmuch as the process of knowing can never be brought to an end. However, as Husserl explains in the context of his account on the concept of adequate givenness as a regulative idea, which is linked to Kant, this process is in principle to be understood as a progress, as an increasing approach *to* the world—and here one could add to the world as it is given, preconceptual and pretheoretical: "But *perfect givenness is nevertheless predesignated as 'Idea'* (in the Kantian sense)—as . . . an a priori determined *continuum of appearances* . . . , in which the X, given always as one and the same, is more precisely and never 'otherwise' continuously-harmoniously determined" (*Ideas I/K,* 342).

Concerning this point, and despite all differences, we are reminded of some striking similarities between Husserl and

Sellars. For, also according to Sellars, we have to take into consideration both the conceptualist results, as he explains in his famous critical reflection on the "Myth of the Given" (EPM), and the reference *to* the world prior to all conceptualization.[9] In this sense, the philosophical account provided by Sellars's criticism of the given must be reconciled with a kind of realism—or in more provoking terms, with a kind of recourse to the given. Significantly, Sellars presents his solution to the here outlined problem among others within the framework of his interpretation of Kant.[10] This solution displays some structural parallelism with Husserl's remarks. What Husserl and Sellars draw from Kant is in fact a strategy to bridge the gap between, on the one hand, the simple idea of truth understood as correspondence between our knowledge and its objects and, on the other hand, our necessarily conceptualized account of the world. Both philosophers suggest that this reconciliation is achieved by epistemic progress in the long run. However, the background to Husserl's and Sellars's considerations is not the same. While Husserl, as outlined above, develops his idea of consistent probation (*Idee einstimmiger Bewährung*) referring to Kant's notion of regulative idea, Sellars takes up Kant's idea of things in themselves and adds a twist of scientific realism to it: "As I see it, in any case, a consistent realist must hold that the world of everyday experience is a phenomenal world in the Kantian sense, existing only as the contents of actual and obtainable conceptual representings, the obtainability of which is explained not, as for Kant, by things in themselves known only to God, but by scientific objects about which, barring catastrophe, we shall know more and more as the years go by" (*SM*, 161).[11]

In a way, the difference between Husserl's and Sellars's account of Kant corresponds to the difference between a primarily methodological and a primarily ontological understanding of the problem and of its solution. While Husserl, in his reference to Kant's concept of the regulative idea, presents his solution from the point of view of our available knowledge—that

is, from the point of an experiencing subject—Sellars develops his solution in a critical examination of Kant's ontological concept of the things in themselves. However, this difference between a methodological research program and an ontological account pointing out that we have no access to an unconceptualized reality in itself merely shows a different accentuation of one and the same problem. Both the methodological and the ontological formulations essentially emphasize the limiting aspect of any philosophical thematization of a world that is given to us only through necessary conceptualizations and that cannot grasp the unconceptual world as it is in itself. Otherwise stated, Husserl and Sellars are equally confronted with the question as to whether our conceptualizations can capture their proper objects. While embracing a skeptical answer to this question, both authors assume a self-obligation to theoretical correspondence in their epistemological reflections. This amounts to saying that, in Sellars's words, although the Myth of the Given is to be dismissed, it nonetheless contains a moment of truth in that it ties the coherent context of our experience to what McDowell has called the "tribunal of experience" (1998, xii, xv–xvii).

We can also say that the claim of our knowledge, as formulated by classical correspondence theories, is that all cognition is related to something that is pregiven to cognition. According to this, cognition is able to fulfill its claim only if what it says about the world corresponds to the world as it is. However, by emphasizing that conceptualization is a necessary condition of the possibility of our knowledge, this claim becomes fragile and even fundamentally questionable. In Kant's formulation, therefore, the limiting concept of things in themselves is introduced, which designates an object of knowledge constructed as independent of the conceptualizations that are necessary for us and whose knowability is reserved for a divine mind. The concept of the thing in itself is clearly a borderline concept, inasmuch as it constructs a kind of accessibility for something that is not accessible under the conditions of human knowledge.

The skepticism associated with this idea marks the finitude of human cognition in negative terms. At the same time, however, it requires a positive complement, insofar as all human cognition remains connected to a world that is pregiven. In this context, both philosophers offer a positive but different answer. Since the possibility of knowledge via correspondence to the things themselves is reserved to God, both Sellars and Husserl reject this ontological concept as a viable solution to the problem. However, both Sellars and Husserl try to find a counterpart of this divine knowledge on the level of our knowledge. And both agree that our ordinary, necessarily conceptualized knowledge cannot deliver this counterpart. The point of divergence between Husserl and Sellars concerns their positive answer. Husserl finds the kind of knowledge he is looking for at the level of our experience, but this experience needs to be taken in its infinity by definition. As a result, he postulates a kind of ideal convergence of all revisions, corrections, and modifications of our experience to an ultimately consistent probation (*einstimmige Bewährung*) that is actually never reachable. Differently, by way of answer, Sellars introduces another stage of cognition. He does not find the knowledge that overcomes the limitations of our conceptual knowledge in a certain perspective on our ordinary cognition but rather in a more fundamental form of cognition that is offered by scientific realism.[12] From a functional perspective, this kind of knowledge takes the role of divine cognition. But unlike God's knowledge, scientific knowledge is embedded in the process of research, which is, by definition, infinite. This makes the acquisition of scientific knowledge essentially temporal. In this respect, Sellars's and Husserl's considerations proceed in a structurally comparable direction. Although Sellars shares with Husserl the firm belief that as cognizers we are necessarily and systematically involved in the process of cognition in terms of time, he does not share the phenomenological claim of spelling out the temporal involvement in terms of the involvement of an experiencer for whom it is like to experience something. Instead of Husserl's

concept of a process of consistent probation thought from the perspective of experiencing subjects, Sellars resorts to the notion of an objective scientific knowledge, which is also thought as a temporal process but is independent of the perspective of experiencing subjects.

In short, although there are relevant differences between Husserl and Sellars, they ultimately deal with the same problem: elucidating the conceptual contexts of our experience (or to put it otherwise, overcoming the Myth of the Given) can never be totally successful, inasmuch as there is a sense of the pregiven—or, to say it otherwise, of reality—that ultimately cannot be conceptualized. Regarding the idea of a systematic progress of knowledge, Husserl and Sellars develop functionally similar answers. While Sellars leans toward scientific knowledge, Husserl's concept of knowledge leans toward what we are always already familiar with. This divergence defines the main difference between the phenomenological account provided by Husserl and his successors, on the one hand, and Sellars's philosophical enterprise, on the other hand.

* * *

We can summarize the result of this discussion concerning phenomenological reflection as Merleau-Ponty would probably do, namely by emphasizing its essential ambiguity. Phenomenological reflection thematizes how the meanings and claims of our ordinary experience are constituted in the sphere of an originary experience. Thereby, phenomenological reflection introduces a theoretical language constructing the meaning of the originary experience as the basis of phenomenological analysis. From this point of view, phenomenological reflection proves to be creative and productive. However, at variance with a mere functional understanding of the theoretical language of phenomenology, I have maintained that phenomenological reflection is related to intuition and description in a double sense. First, it goes back to the familiarity of our subjective experience, to our knowing what it is like to be an experiencing

subject. At the right angle, we can approach this for-me-ness of our experience by intuition and description. We have a direct access to this sphere (insofar as we can characterize this access as intuition) and we find it as something we can refer to (that is why one speaks of a description). Second, regarding the latter descriptive aspect, phenomenological reflection recognizes a second character of intuition insofar as intuition refers to something that is not available to us and can be found only via analysis. On this ground, phenomenological reflection should be seen as embedded in a theoretical context, which acknowledges the fact that all philosophical analysis always remains related to a world pregiven to it. Therefore, phenomenological reflection should be understood as an enterprise oscillating between activity and passivity, spontaneity and receptivity, creation and intuition, construction and description.[13]

NOTES

1. For a more detailed characterization of the methodological program of phenomenology, cf. Mertens (2018, 470–72).
2. Cf. to the following Mertens (1996, 153 ff.; 2018, 481).
3. Cf. Schnell (2007).
4. Interestingly, Farber, from whom Sellars was introduced to phenomenology (cf. Nunziante, in this volume), sees phenomenology as a "constructive program of philosophy as a rigorous science" (1940, 20) or as "an attempt to realize one of the perennial aims in the entire history of philosophy, to construct a thoroughly scientific philosophy" (1945, 9).
5. This argument follows the ordinary language approach as developed in Ryle (2000, esp. in chap. 3, 62–82). Ryle's approach is notably directed against the theory of volitional acts.
6. The methodological principle claims that "*every originary presentive intuition is a legitimizing source of cognition,* that *everything originarily* (so to speak, in its 'personal' actuality) *offered* to us *in 'intuition' is to be accepted simply as what it is presented as being,* but also *only within the limits in which it is presented there*" (*Ideas I/K,* 44).
7. Worth mentioning is that the outlined contrast between Husserl's phenomenology and Sellars's philosophy can be seen as

the result of a phenomenological self-understanding which is principally directed against the program of a naturalization of phenomenology and scientific realism. On this interpretation, cf. Belousek (1998, part. 80–81); Soffer (2003, 302–3); Moran (2012, 293). However, as mentioned above, from a historical point of view, this may be questioned, inasmuch as Sellars's account of phenomenology is mediated by Marvin Farber's reading of Husserl, mainly of *Experience and Judgement*. Farber understands phenomenology in itself as a philosophy that programmatically reconciles philosophy and the natural sciences. In this regard, Husserl's phenomenology even seems to anticipate Sellars's program of naturalizing philosophy and his scientific realism. On this interesting historical line of reception, see again the insightful article by Nunziante in this volume. An account on the compatibility of the phenomenological approach with scientific realism from a systematic point of view can be found in Gutting (1978).

8. This reference to experience must be distinguished from the reference to models or commonsense forms of reasoning that are necessary for understanding how theoretical sentences may explain observation sentences (EPM, § 51, 182; cf. deVries and Triplett 2000, 132–34). While the familiarity with our experience is altogether the dimension of phenomenological analysis (of the *explanandum* as well as the *explanans*), the recourse to familiarities in a scientific explanation is only part of the *explanans* in order to make the theoretical proposals comprehensible.
9. Moreover, Sellars refers to "*conceptual analysis*" as "just another term for phenomenology" (cf. SRP, 328).
10. In this context, it could be of interest to ask whether such a moment of givenness can be seen in Sellars's discussion of the ambiguity in Kant's concept of intuition and receptivity. On the one hand, Sellars emphasizes that Kant understands intuition as an already conceptualized intuition; on the other hand, Sellars points out that there is also a quite different understanding of intuition in the sense of sheer receptivity: "All this suggests that Kant's use of the term 'intuition,' in connection with human knowledge, blurs the distinction between a special sub-case of conceptual representations of individuals which, though in some sense a function of receptivity, belong to a framework which is in no sense prior to but essentially includes general concepts, and a radically different kind of representation of an

individual which belongs to sheer receptivity and is in no sense conceptual" (*SM*, I, § 17, 14). Again this program can philosophically and historically be traced back to Farber, who aims to take into account both the conceptual mediation of the given and the priority of the natural world (cf. Nunziante in this volume). As mentioned above, the following remarks are based on the assumption of a fundamental controversy between phenomenology and Sellars's philosophy.

11. Regarding Sellars's interpretation of Kant, see the enlightening article of O'Shea (2018).
12. Sellars has treated the relation between our conceptual knowledge and scientific realism more accurately in his remarks on the "manifest" and the "scientific image" (PSIM; cf., e.g., O'Shea 2007, 10 ff.).
13. Once again, I would like to thank Michela Summa for her critical comments on an earlier version of this article.

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CHAPTER 6

THE SPACE OF MOTIVATIONS, EXPERIENCE, AND THE CATEGORIAL GIVEN

Jacob Rump

This chapter outlines a Husserlian, phenomenological account of the first stages of the acquisition of empirical knowledge in light of some aspects of Sellars's critique of the "Myth of the Given." The account offered accords with Sellars's view that epistemic status is attributed to empirical episodes holistically and within a broader normative context but disagrees that such holism and normativity are accomplished only within the linguistic and conceptual confines of the space of reasons and rejects the limitation of the relevant normativity to the cognitive domain. Attention to the phenomenological notion of motivations in our mapping of the structure and acquisition of empirical knowledge reveals a form of weak categoriality given in experience, one outside exclusive mediation by language and concepts but also not merely causal.

Section 1 outlines some basic aspects of Sellars's account of empirical knowledge in *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind* (hereafter *EPMH*), including a regress objection that arises due to his claim that empirical knowledge presupposes knowledge of general facts about perception. Section

2 examines Sellars's later revisiting of the objection, via his critique of Roderick Firth, in "The Lever of Archimedes" (hereafter LA), focusing on his analysis of the "Myth of the Categorial Given" and his use of the notion of ur-concepts. Section 3 looks at Sellars's psychological nominalism and his rejection of the explanatory primacy of experience in light of the strict dichotomy between the space of causes and the space of reasons and shows how Firth's account aligns with phenomenology in its advocating for an irreducible and noninferential role for experience. It also raises an important objection to Sellars's account concerning the categorial givenness of causality. Section 4 turns to Husserl, arguing that his conception of motivation in the *Logical Investigations* and *Ideas II* reveals a third explanatory or logical space "between" that of causes and that of reasons. Section 5 further develops this account with regard to the explanatory role of lived experience. Section 6 revisits the regress objection to Sellars from the phenomenological standpoint just developed and argues that a Husserlian account of empirical knowledge offers a viable alternative to Sellars's that overcomes the regress objection and gives proper explanatory weight to the evidence of lived experience vis-à-vis scientific presuppositions about causality.

Among the most frequently cited ideas of Sellars is the claim that "in characterizing an episode or state as that of *knowing,* we are not giving an empirical description of that episode or state; we are placing it in the logical space of reasons, of justifying and being able to justify what one says." This passage appears in *EPMH,* section 36, in the context of Sellars's general critique of foundationalism, which in that work takes the more specific form of a critique of sense-data theories that would seek to ground empirical knowledge in basic and self-evident experiential content.

One major undercurrent of appeals to the myth is the seeming necessity of some manner of foundationalist approach in order to account for the way that knowledge not only occurs in experience but is in some sense grounded in it. As Sellars notes,

for many philosophers, if we were to bypass this foundationalist concern in favor of a holist or coherentist antifoundationalism, we would be left with the problem of explaining how the system of interconnected beliefs or other propositional states constituting our knowledge not only is internally coherent but also has the "epistemic authority" of direct contact with the world, and not just with other beliefs (LA, §§ 125–26). Coherentism risks becoming nothing more than, in McDowell's apt phrase, "moves in a self-contained game" (1996, 5). The foundationalist emphasizes that if beliefs are *about* the world in a way that has conditions of success or failure (which they must be, since we indisputably sometimes have false beliefs), then there must be some epistemically prior level at which the world itself determines—justifies by *giving* as self-evident foundation—the conditions of such success or failure.

Sellars attacks this foundationalist inspiration and the specific forms of the Myth of the Given that it generates in the first of his 1977 Carus Lectures, which is entitled "The Lever of Archimedes." LA is directed against a broad class of "direct apprehension" accounts of empirical knowledge, including but not limited to sense-data theories (§§ 125–26). In that context, it revisits, some twenty years later, important claims about the Myth of the Given from *EPMH* that Sellars no longer finds satisfactory, foremost among them his response to a regress objection that can be raised against his characterization of empirical knowledge.

1. THE REGRESS OBJECTION TO SELLARS'S ACCOUNT OF EMPIRICAL KNOWLEDGE

The regress objection arises in response to Sellars's insistence that, in order for an observation report about perception ("*Konstatierung*" in the passage below) to count as an expression of empirical *knowledge,* the knower not only needs observational knowledge of the particular perceptual fact at issue (the condition the traditional foundationalist is most keen to

secure) but also needs knowledge of *general facts* of the form "X is a reliable symptom of Y":

> To be the expression of knowledge, a report must not only have authority, this authority must in some sense be recognized by the person whose report it is. And this is a steep hurdle indeed. For if the authority of the report "This is green" lies in the fact that the existence of green items appropriately related to the perceiver can be inferred from the occurrence of such reports, it follows that only a person who is able to draw this inference, and therefore who has not only the concept green, but also the concept of uttering "This is green"—indeed, the concept of certain conditions of perception, those which would correctly be called "standard conditions"—could be in a position to token "This is green" in recognition of its authority. In other words, for a *Konstatierung* "This is green" to "express observational knowledge," not only must it be a symptom or sign of the presence of a green object in standard conditions, but the perceiver must know that tokens of "This is green" are symptoms of the presence of green objects in conditions which are standard for visual perception. (*EPMH,* § 35)

Sellars reasons that this requirement that the knower possess general facts of perceptual reliability alongside facts about particulars "requires an abandonment of the traditional empiricist idea that observational knowledge 'stands on its own two feet,'" since such general facts could never result from individual perceptual episodes whose content is limited to particulars (*EPMH,* § 36). Hence the claim that attributions of knowledge are not empirical descriptions. But in line with this reasoning, the requirement also threatens a regress: Sellars's claim is that I cannot know particular perceptual facts without knowledge of general facts about perceptual reliability. But surely I cannot acquire general facts about perceptual reliability without some

knowledge of prior particular perceptual instances, which would then presuppose other general facts, and so on.[1]

In *EPMH* Sellars raises the regress objection but brushes it off in a mere two paragraphs. He does so by claiming that, in a current state in which they possess the requisite general facts as well as the requisite particular facts, a knower can appeal to the memory of what they *now* know to have been *at a prior time* reports of particular facts (but which *at that previous time* were merely their exercise of "verbal habits" caused by perceptual stimuli). Such reports are appealed to retroactively as the basis from which the general facts of perceptual reliability were arrived at, though they were not particular facts for the knower at the time. The general facts are thus said to be acquired via a sort of inductive reasoning on the basis of previous non-epistemic states: "While Jones's ability to give inductive reasons *today* is built on a long history of acquiring and manifesting verbal habits in perceptual situations, and, in particular, the occurrence of verbal episodes, e.g. 'This is green,' which is superficially like those which are *later* properly said to express observational knowledge, it does not require that any episode in this *prior time* be characterizable as expressing knowledge" (*EPMH,* § 37, my emphasis). Sellars's response to the regress objection relies on a temporal distinction, relative to the subject, between abilities and states of the (now) knower and of the (then) mere perceiver, on the basis of which we, as it were, "bootstrap" our way into the cognitive and epistemic domain.[2] In their commentary on *EPMH,* deVries and Triplett nicely sum up the major theoretical commitments involved in Sellars's strategy here:

> Synchronically speaking, the raw materials of which our knowledge is composed are responsive and correlational abilities that are, individually considered, noncognitive. But structured in a certain way, those abilities have cognitive properties they could not have in isolation. . . . Knowledge *supervenes on* states of organisms that have

> acquired a sufficiently complex set of such abilities. Our attributions of knowledge are normative evaluations of the states of individuals with such abilities. To insist that the individual states and abilities that furnish the empirical objects of such evaluations must themselves be epistemically evaluable individually and independently of the overall context within which they occur is simply to beg the question in favor of the given. (2000, 103)

Note that this response to the objection involves several important further constraints that Sellars places on any account of empirical knowledge (I will return to these in comparison with Husserl later in the paper):

(1) Holism: Sellars's account relies on the notion that perceptual states *in combination* have a cognitive status and thus may be epistemically relevant in a way that those states taken individually do not. For Sellars, having any one concept always presupposes a "whole battery of concepts of which it is one element" (*EPMH,* § 19).

(2) Normativity: The general facts about perceptual reliability that Sellars thinks are required for perceptual knowledge alongside the perception of particulars are required insofar as they provide for a kind of normativity; they provide the conditions of success and failure against which we measure individual perceptual episodes. In order to perceive something in the visual field *as* green, I must have knowledge of a *general fact* of the form "X is a reliable symptom of greenness." As this "perceiving-as" formulation suggests, the normativity constraint as met by knowledge of general facts can also be understood in terms of a *categorial* requirement for knowledge. (The issue of categoriality is dealt with further in the next section.)

(3) Minimal perceptual basis: Implicit in Sellars's account is the presumption that *certain minimal relevant aspects*

> of noncognitive perceptual states as they are present precategorially in some sense *inform* the later, cognitive states through which we gain awareness with the help of conceptual categories. This presumption is necessary in order for Sellars to maintain that there is some sort of relationship—not an isomorphism but a relation nonetheless—between knowledge, at the categorial level, and the (prior) basic perceptual states to which it pertains.[3] In the terms used by DeVries and Triplett above, individual perceptual states and abilities must still somehow provide the "raw materials" that "*furnish* the empirical objects of such evaluations." And such furnishing is only possible on the basis of—to use Sellars's own terms in the block quote above—a "superficial likeness" between verbal episodes in mere perception and verbal episodes that express observational knowledge.[4] Even for the antifoundationalist, that superficial likeness must *in some way* be based in the perceptual states themselves, such that those states can accomplish the necessary furnishing, however sparse it may be.[5]

The challenge is to explain such furnishing via a middle course that avoids both the Scylla of coherentism-*qua*-moves-in-a-self-contained-game and the Charybdis of the given. Taken too strongly, the requirement that there be some sort of relationship between the precategorial states of the (mere) perceiver and the categorial states of the knower would put Sellars back in the camp of foundationalism and a return to the Myth of the Given. The requirement is acceptably weakened, on Sellars's account, with the proviso that the relationship between the precategorial and the categorial must be construed (1) holistically and (2) within a normative context.[6] LA takes up these issues in light of Sellars's dissatisfaction with *EPMH*'s "inductive reasons" response to the regress. The essay attempts to give a further genetic account of the sort of protoconceptual states and abilities of a perceiver that are the basis

for the "verbal episodes" that later become inductive reasons. Thus, LA navigates a middle course that allows those states and abilities a certain sort of epistemic import (thus meeting constraint [3]) without ceding to them the individual and independent epistemic evaluability that would accord them such import outside the space of reasons (thus running afoul of Sellars's commitment to [1] and [2]).

2. UR-CONCEPTS AND THE MYTH OF THE CATEGORIAL GIVEN

Sellars constructs his revised response to the regress objection in LA via critique of a 1964 paper by Roderick Firth.[7] In "Coherence, Certainty, and Epistemic Priority," Firth interprets C. I. Lewis's notion of the epistemic priority, according to which "statements that have independent, noninferential, warrant . . . serve as the ground of all the rest of our empirical knowledge" (557), and contrasts Lewis's foundationalist view with several different versions of coherentism (about truth, about justification or warrant, and about concepts) (546). On Firth's Lewisian account, statements about certain perceptual states or episodes serve as foundations for knowledge by means of *primitive concepts* through which we have direct awareness, independent of and prior to inferential relations.

The appeal to primitive concepts is an attempt by Firth to get around a problem that arises for foundationalist accounts that insist on the epistemic priority of "looks" concepts over "is" concepts. Such accounts insist that, from a genetic perspective, a child must acquire the concept "looks red" prior to the concept "is red," since the child's earliest expressions of "red" do not reliably differentiate between actual cases of red and cases where there is only the *appearance* of red. In Sellars's terms, the child does not yet possess the general facts about perceptual reliability or have the (propositional) knowledge of standard conditions requisite for possession of the concept "is red." On a coherence theory not just of justification but of concepts, Firth points out, it would be impossible to have the

concept of "looks red" before that of "is red," since insofar as they are contrasting concepts, the two would have to be acquired together (1964, 547). Firth thus provides a genetic account of more primitive concepts to argue that there is, for example, a primitive concept of red epistemically prior to *both* "is red" and the contrasting "looks red" (LA, §§ 7–11). For Firth, it is this primitive concept—what Sellars, in LA, calls an "ur-concept"—that serves as the foundation upon which, once they have *later* acquired the linguistic resources to distinguish between is-talk and looks-talk, the child can arrive at the contrasting concepts of "looks red" and "is red."

Sellars's criticism of Firth focuses not on the notion that such ur-concepts exist—Sellars does not deny this as a basic ontological claim[8]—but on the idea that they can somehow function noninferentially as a "lever of Archimedes." For Firth, this noninferential function of ur-concepts allows one to move up from the level of experiences as directly apprehended givens to the level of basic beliefs and thus explains how sense experience can serve as an ultimate justification for knowledge claims. Sellars rejects this explanatory move as an appeal to the Myth of the Given: "The fulcrum is the given, by virtue of which the mind gets leverage on the world of knowledge" (LA, § 1). In light of (3) the "minimal perceptual basis" aspect of his response to the regress objection in *EPMH,* in the later consideration of these issues in LA, Sellars seeks to distance his account of perceptual knowledge from that of Firth and Lewis, whom he ultimately finds guilty of the Myth of the Given. He argues, in contrast to Firth, that the child has an ur-concept of "is red" genetically prior to the concept of "looks red" *and* genetically prior to the (non-ur-) conceptual contrast between "is red" and "looks red."[9]

How is Sellars's ur-concept "is red" supposed to be better than Firth's protoconcept "red" as attributed to an experience? Sellars's idea is that categoriality—the status of something *as* something—is an *epistemic* concept, whereas what it is for that something *to be* a case of that something is an *ontological*

concept (LA, §§ 152–68). The problem with theories such as Firth's is not the presupposition of an *ontological* given but the assumption that an *epistemic* (and thereby, for Sellars, *cognitive*) given comes along with it for free. They ignore the gap between something *being* a certain way and the epistemic status of that something *as* being that way. Firth's appeal to a primitive concept of red "prior" to the is/looks contrast is thus problematic for Sellars not in its appeal to a primitive concept but in its appeal to the idea that red can be directly apprehended (self-evidently given) *as* an experience of red, which for Sellars presupposes (*per impossible*) some kind of direct, unmediated apprehension of general facts about, for example, the reliability of experiences of color. To attribute a protoconcept of red to experiences is problematically to allow unmediated perception a kind of epistemic status it cannot have.

Expressed as a principle, the criticized view says:

> [Principle of Categorial Givenness:] If a person is directly aware of an item which has categorial status C, then the person is aware of it as having categorial status C (LA, § 44).

Sellars writes, "This principle is, perhaps, the most basic form of what I have castigated as 'The Myth of the Given.' . . . *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*" (LA, §§ 44–45, emphasis in original). The Myth of the Given is thus, at its core, a myth concerning the givenness of the *categoriality* of experience, or, in terms of the conditions highlighted above, of the idea that we can get (2) normativity directly from experience. For Sellars, experience, independent of conceptual mediation, can never provide knowledge of general facts and thus can never fulfill this categorial role and ipso facto can never be given *as* playing this role. To think that it could is precisely to conceive of knowing as an "empirical description

of [an] episode or state," rather than to situate it in the space of reasons. Knowledge of such categorial facts, due to their generality, cannot be gained from singular perceptual episodes all in one go. Knowing general facts about the reliability of putative perceptions of red is a conceptual, propositional affair; it is not like a particular episode of perceiving red. So it does not make sense to analyze this sort of knowing of it in terms of a description of direct experience.

Sellars takes it that on his own account, the ur-concepts involved in perception do not harbor such hidden epistemic and categorial status, insofar as he explicates the ur-concepts in relation not to experiences but to physical objects:

> Whereas the Firthian account explicates this contrast in terms of an ur-concept of red in which it is experiences rather than physical objects which are red, the ur-concept of red which I have sketched is the concept of a redness which, along with other colors, is the very stuff of which physical objects are made. Thus my ur-concept of red is prior to the concept of a physical object's being red only in the sense in which the concept of a slab of marble is prior to the concept of a marble table. (LA, §§ 65–66)

Sellars seems to mean that, although his ur-concept of red is genetically prior to the concept of a physical object's being red, it is not thereby an ur-concept that attributes redness to phenomena putatively *other than or prior to* physical objects—phenomena such as, according to the view Sellars attributes to Firth, experiences themselves. Rather, "the concept of a red physical object is simply that of an individuated volume of red stuff which behaves in generically stuffy ways; and, specifically, in the manner characteristic of a determinate thing kind" (LA, § 62). The child's ur-concept of red, while not a concept of a property of physical objects as such, is a concept of "red stuff" that, once the child reaches a suitable degree of

conceptual maturity (enters the space of reasons as a suitably mature language-user), will *come to be seen as* the concept of a property of physical objects. There is, for Sellars, no other viable candidate for what the concept of red could ultimately be a property *of:* "The only available determinate concept in terms of which to grasp the redness which is *somehow* present in the experience, is that of redness as a physical stuff, the redness of physical objects in the spatio-temporal-causal order" (LA, § 92).

This original grasp of redness in a causal register is none other than, in Sellars's original response to the regress objection in *EPMH* as discussed above, the "perceptual situation" that is the impetus for our "verbal episodes." *Later,* once we enter the space of reasons, we recognize that situation to have provided the basis for the linguistic categoriality that allowed us to gain observational knowledge (*EPMH,* § 37, cited above). Since in the case of the child such a grasp is *not yet* in the space of reasons, it does not need to meet the (*epistemic*) justificatory requirement of the co-possession of knowledge of general facts about the perceptual reliability of red sensations under standard conditions. And yet, insofar as it is what will *later* come to be recognized as belonging in the space of causes, it is in an *ontological* sense already available to the child even though they cannot yet have knowledge of it insofar as they have not yet entered the space of reasons.

3. PSYCHOLOGICAL NOMINALISM, EXPERIENCE, AND THE CAUSAL GIVEN

As this account implies, the central characteristic of the epistemic and cognitive domain to which categoriality belongs, according to Sellars—the domain in which we acquire general facts about perception—is its articulation via propositions and concepts. In the case of perceptions of color, to be aware of a case of blue *as* a case of blue requires having both the concept of blueness and the propositional knowledge *that* the item is

blue. It is this conceptuality and propositionality that allows the case of blue to stand in an inferential relation to other conceptually and propositionally articulated items and thus to be situated "in the logical space of reasons, of justifying and being able to justify what one says" (*EPMH,* § 37, cited above). The bare ontological fact of something being a certain way lacks this conceptual and propositional status: sensing is a nonconceptual state, a "being experienced in the mode of sensing," whereas "taking" (i.e., taking something *as* something) is a conceptual state, a "being experienced in the mode of conceptualization" (LA, §§ 114, 144).

This connecting of categoriality and normativity to concepts and propositions, and thereby to linguistic capacities, is paradigmatic of Sellars's "psychological nominalism": the claim, expressed without qualification in *EPMH* § 29, that "*all* awareness of *sorts, resemblances, facts,* etc., in short, all awareness of abstract entities—indeed, all awareness even of particulars—is a linguistic affair." Sellars justifies this position via a genetic story about "verbal behaviorism": the idea that the intentionality and categoriality of thought is to be explained in terms of the intentionality and categoriality of language, rather than the other way around. In *EPMH* §§ 48–50 this is presented in the myth of "Our Rylean Ancestors," according to which the existence of inner thoughts is first posited on the basis of conceptually prior overt public linguistic behavior. According to the myth, thought is still prior to and indeed the cause of overt expressions of language ontologically, in terms of the *order of being* (as on the "classical view"), but it is *secondary* to them epistemically, in the order of *conceptual explanation.*[10] While the *existence* of linguistic content may presuppose the existence of impressions or thoughts as its cause (as explained within the space of causes), our *awareness* of impressions or thoughts (in the space of reasons) is itself dependent on our language.[11]

But what if we think—with phenomenologists—that there must be, in perceptual knowledge, a role for *experience itself,* which is not ultimately reducible to the propositional or

conceptual content contained in inferences about experiences or to the effects of causal properties in disguise? This is, in effect, the core commitment of Firth that Sellars attacks: in allowing that there may be something like a content of experience that is neither simply causal nor already in the space of reasons, Firth is according to experience an irreducible role.

For Sellars, this means that Firth's account ultimately presupposes the *categorial givenness of experience itself*:

> The idea that our ur-concept of red is that of a manner of experiencing strikes me as most implausible. I can only account for the fact that philosophers have talked themselves into it by attributing to them the following line of thought[:] When a child has an experience of the kind which it is useful to baptize by saying that "O looks red to Junior," what is really going on is that O is causing Junior to sense redly. Junior is *directly aware* of this sensing redly. Therefore, he is directly aware of it *as* a sensing redly. (LA, § 43)

What is implicitly assumed in Sellars's attribution is as revealing as what is explicitly critiqued. Sellars writes that he "can only account for" the claim he is criticizing in terms of a further *causal* claim: outside the conceptual and propositional domain of explanation in the space of reasons, the appeal to experience *simply must* amount to an explanation in which the item of experience somehow *causes* the awareness of that item as red. Given that Sellars does not deny there is some ontological givenness in play in color perception and yet takes it to be an error to allow apprehensions characterized by such givenness a place in the space of reasons, and thus the epistemic or cognitive domain, he places them in the only other explanatory domain he recognizes: the logical space of *causes and effects* (hereafter "space of causes").[12]

Instead of "causes," in most of the lecture, when referring to Firth's account, Sellars uses the broader formulation "is

responsible for," as in "the child believes the object to be responsible for the existence of an expanse of red, i.e., for his *seeing* this expanse *to be an expanse of* red" (LA, § 53, emphasis in original). Neither the word "causes" nor its cognates occur in Firth's original paper, so the imposition of this vocabulary is clearly Sellars's own. He also characterizes his own account of such being-responsible more specifically in terms of causal properties.[13] The explication of the object's "responsibility" for ur-concepts in terms of causation is of a piece with Sellars's broader commitment—most famously presented in "Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man" to granting ultimate explanatory priority to the "scientific image" in terms of causal properties of scientific objects over the "manifest image" in terms of properties partly attributable to the mind.[14]

But this commitment to ultimately causal explanations opens Sellars's account to an obvious challenge. Sellars finds Firth committed to the myth of the categorial given in assuming that the child will have an ur-conceptual repertoire that includes the ur-concept of experience, such that the child is capable not only of experiencing red but of being aware of that experience *as* an experience of red.[15] Sellars also characterizes his own version of the child's ur-concept in terms of such an as-structure: "Junior has an ur-concept of a physical object *as an individuated volume of color stuff which is endowed with certain causal properties*" (LA, § 61, my emphasis).[16] It would seem, then, by parity of reasoning, that Sellars's own account would be similarly guilty of the myth of the categorial given in assuming that the child will have an ur-conceptual repertoire that includes the ur-concept of causality, such that the child is capable not only of experiencing red stuff but of being aware of that stuff *as causing* their perception of redness.

It thus appears that *both* Sellars *and* Firth presuppose the Principle of Categorial Givenness that Sellars criticizes: "If a person is directly aware of an item which has categorial status C, then the person is aware of it as having categorial status C" (LA, § 44, cited above). But the ur-concept of causality is

not criticized by Sellars in the same way as the ur-concept of experience he attributes to Firth: Sellars notes with approval that the attribution of a concept of causal properties to colored stuff would be "a natural move by a proto-theory *uncontaminated by the Myth of the Given*" (LA, § 97, my emphasis).

Why this privileging of the categorial givenness of causality when that of experience has been excluded? Again, the answer ultimately leans on the space of reasons / space of causes dichotomy: there is, as such, no logical or explanatory space belonging to *experience* for Sellars. Thus an appeal to experience that is categorially articulated must be, at some level, a disguised appeal to an explanation that is ultimately either causal or inferential.[17] Insofar as that experience is by definition noninferential, Firth's account ultimately *cannot but* amount, for Sellars, to a sort of disguised appeal to a causal explanation. Sellars's own categorial appeal to *causality,* by contrast, wears no disguise. Insofar as it is an appeal to a given, noninferential state, it belongs ipso facto to the explanatory space of causes, which is non-epistemic—a mere *ontological* givenness. But insofar as that appeal is *categorial,* it seems that Sellars is surreptitiously allowing causality's *epistemic* givenness to come along for free—no mediated apprehension of general facts about causality required.

4. THE SPACE OF MOTIVATIONS

While there may be good reasons to be suspicious of Sellars's acceptance of the myth of the categorial given in the case of causality, it may seem that, insofar as we take sense experience to rest outside the domain of explanation via inference and reason, we have no other option. But this is the case only if we reject the phenomenological appeal to experience as noted above and endorse Sellars's exclusive dichotomy of explanatory spaces. If this is a false dichotomy, what alternatives are obscured by it? In this section I sketch the outlines of an answer by appeal to Husserl's phenomenological account

of *motivation* and argue that it points to a *third explanatory space*.[18]

Husserl identifies a domain of the normativity of experience outside of traditional logic and determinative judgments—that which correlates with inference and what Sellars calls the "space of reasons"—but also outside explanation in terms of law-governed nature in the sense of Sellars's "space of causes."[19] Husserl first describes motivations in the *Logical Investigations* (hereafter *LI*) and expands on the concept in later works, especially *Ideas II*. In *LI,* this domain is introduced via an analysis of signs, such as a country's flag: when we see the flag, it serves as a mark whose intended purpose is to call to mind the nation it indicates. When this occurs for a subject—when I see the flag and think of the nation—a "*belief in the reality of the one is experienced* (though not at all evidently [*einsichtiges*]) *as motivating a belief or surmise in the reality of the other.* This relation of 'motivation' establishes [*herstellen*] a descriptive unity among our acts of judgment in which indicating and indicated states of affairs become constituted for the thinker" (*LI 1/F,* § 2, translation modified). Judgment is here conceived as a specific type of intentional act involved in knowledge, and the relation of motivation through which the content is brought to awareness is clearly located in the domain of experience itself.

Furthermore, although Husserl takes such motivation to be an act of the subject experienced by that subject, he explicitly notes that it need not be experienced *evidently* or with *insight* [*einsichtiges*] by the subject—that is, the subject need not be self-consciously aware of motivation *as* motivation, as this passage from the later, more-developed account of motivation in *Ideas II* makes clear: "In some cases it can be perceived. In most cases, however, the motivation is indeed actually present in consciousness, but it does not stand out; it is unnoticed or unnoticeable ('unconscious')" (*Ideas II,* 234). The parenthetical is not an allusion to psychoanalysis but rather an appeal to the notion—largely developed in the period between *LI* and

the *Ideas*—that intentionality is operative not only in moments of explicit (more technically, "thematic") awareness but also *nonthematically* in the background or as part of the intentional horizon of our lived experience. One act of judgment may motivate another within this broader nexus without my being aware of this relation *as* motivation. And in such cases, although it is a relation between a subject's intentional acts and constitutes content for a thinker, motivation may be said to be unconscious and *noncognitive*.

At the same time, despite the fact that it is conceived as noncognitive in this way, motivation is not conceived as an external relation of causation. This is a clear departure from Sellars, for whom "noncognitive" essentially implies "causal" in the context of perceptual explanation. For Husserl, even if we *can* tell a purely physical, causal story about how the flag caused me to think of the nation it indicates, this is not what we are describing when we say our belief or surmise is motivated in our experience of the flag. In *Ideas II,* Husserl does refer to "motivational causality," which suggests a relationship between motivation and causation, but the passage immediately makes clear that such motivational causality is "not real causality" and still has a "fully proper sense" (227). Subsequently in the passage Husserl clearly distinguishes motivation as an intentional relation ascribed to experience from "real psychophysical process" and "all recourse to brain processes, nerve processes, etc." (229). Relations of motivation on Husserl's account thus cannot be assimilated to causal relations à la Sellars's space of causes.

But nor, for Husserl, are these phenomena thereby to be assigned to what Sellars would call the space of reasons: Already in *LI,* Husserl explicitly distinguishes the phenomenon of indication from "demonstration in the strict logical sense in the case of an inference which is or could be informed by insight." Strictly logical inferences are distinguished from cases of mere indication, governed by motivation, in that logical inferences are "bound up with the fact that there is an objective syllogism

or proof, or an objective relationship between ground and consequent, which corresponds to our subjective acts of inferring and proving. These ideal unities are not the *experiences of judging* in question, but their ideal 'contents,' the propositions they involve" (*LI 1/F,* § 3, my emphasis). While motivations are introduced via an analysis of signs in the *Logical Investigations,* Husserl's more-developed account in *Ideas II* makes clear that the unique status of relations of indication and the motivations that occur on their basis is ascribed to *experience itself,* rather than to the propositional and conceptual terms in which they appear in inferences. Just as there may be a corresponding causal explanation, though that is not the primary phenomenon in Husserl's description, so may there be a corresponding explanation in terms of propositions, syllogistic inferences, and ideal conceptual contents, without that being the primary phenomenon in the description either.[20]

5. EXPERIENCE AS GIVEN

Of course, Sellars's distinction between the space of reasons and the space of causes is not a distinction between kinds of content but rather between the explanatory paradigms in which we situate content. If we take motivations to delineate a third logical space, they should thus point not to a different kind of content but to a different form of explanation—ultimately, for the purposes of this essay, a form of explanation involved in the justification of empirical knowledge. To understand how and why one might think that there is "room" for such a third explanatory space, it helps to note how Sellars's differential treatment of experience and causality as discussed in section 3 is rooted, ultimately, in a presumption about explanatory priority that differs radically from that of the phenomenologist.

In much contemporary philosophy of mind, inference to the best explanation has essentially come to mean inference to the best *causal* explanation.[21] But this according of ultimate priority to the causal order often appears to be—to echo

Wittgenstein—not a result of investigation but a requirement. The same methodological commitment to the ultimate priority of causal explanatory schemes is evident in Sellars's privileging of the scientific over the manifest image (though Sellars does, it should be noted, go to great lengths to attempt to justify the requirement in this case), and in his well-known appeal to the *scientia mensura:* "In the dimension of describing and explaining the world, science is the measure of all things, of what is that it is, and of what is not that it is not" (*EPMH* § 41). For phenomenologists, by contrast, ultimate descriptive and explanatory priority is accorded to *experience itself,* analyzed according to distinctions that become evident via the investigation of intentionality.[22] I contend that this is no more problematic a methodological starting point than Sellars's antecedent commitments to the priority of causal and ultimately scientific explanation or to the complete linguistic and conceptual mediation of thoughts and impressions. (It is, I think, significantly less problematic, but I won't argue for that stronger claim here.)

The key to defending this contention is to make plain both the full theoretical weight phenomenologists accord to experience and its intentional structure, and what motivates this methodological stance. Note first that the central notion, on a Husserlian phenomenological account, is *experience,* rather than perception more narrowly construed.[23] While perception is the paradigmatic case of experience, for Husserl the content of an experience is not strictly synonymous with perceptual content, both because there can be nonperceptual experiences (such as rememberings and imaginings) and—especially important in this context—because even perceptual experiences involve nonthematic horizonal and anticipatory contents that are not directly perceived (more on this below).

Furthermore, experience is analyzed ultimately in *intentional* rather than *conceptual* or *linguistic* terms. On the Husserlian account I am sketching, intentional acts themselves, rather than language, are the ultimate vehicle of content, and

that content is best understood outside traditional externalist *and* internalist paradigms, not in terms of mental states but in terms of *lived experiences*.[24] The meaning of our judgments about our lived experiences, upon phenomenological analysis and reflection, may appear conceptually and propositionally, and in that sense they may be said to belong to what Sellars calls the space of reasons, but the *judgings themselves* ("experiences of judging") are *acts* belonging to experience.[25] For Husserl, as the above discussion of motivations shows, judgings may be analyzed on their own experiential terms, independently of the categories of rationality or causality.[26] Such analysis focuses not on propositions or concepts but on the intention-fulfillment structure of intentional acts. It is this domain in which the content of empirical knowledge is ultimately given—in which the mind connects with the world.[27]

How can an intentional act delimit a domain of givenness? According to Husserl's later, transcendental account of intentionality, as developed beginning in the *Ideas,* intentionality is not a property of an "inner" mental state, nor of an "outer" perceptual cause of our ideas, but rather the co-relational structure of experience itself, on the basis of which we distinguish inner from outer. From the standpoint of phenomenological description, we do not first have "inner" mental states that only then get related to external objects via representations.[28] Nor do we first have external objects that in special cases are related to mental states by causing them. The "first thing" is *the correlation itself*. Rather than antecedently construing this as a relation between inner and outer episodes, Husserl, in his later work, considers it to be a fundamental *co-relation* that can be further analyzed, in phenomenological reflection, from the side of the subject (in Husserl's terms, noetically) or from that of the object (noematically).[29] It is on this basis that Husserl will later flesh out his claim from *LI,* noted above, that motivations are ultimately responsible for the "descriptive unity among our acts of judgment in which indicating and indicated states of affairs become constituted for the thinker"

(*LI 1/F,* § 2). The "rays" through which intentional acts structure and give meaning to experience can be analyzed in both directions—from noesis to noema ("subject to world") but also from noema to noesis ("world to subject"): "Apprehensions of things and of thingly nexuses are 'webs of motivation:' they are built through and through from intentional rays, which, with their sense-content and their filled content [*Sinnes-und Füllegehalte*], refer back and forth, and they let themselves be explicated in that the accomplishing subject can enter into these nexuses" (*Ideas II,* 236). Compare this to Sellars's account, cited above, of an ur-concept pertaining to color as an "individuated volume of red stuff which behaves in generically stuffy ways; and, specifically, in the manner characteristic of a determinate thing kind" (LA, § 62). Whereas for Sellars, outside the space of reasons, the ultimate priority of ur-concepts is accorded to physical objects, for Husserl, as for Firth, it is accorded to the experiences through which objects (physical or not) appear with sense.[30] Husserl's account of intentionality as a correlation, rather than a unidirectional relation, means that the noema (in the case we have been examining, the state of affairs the child experiences that motivates our adult conception of "looks red") is as much responsible for the content of the experience as any putatively linguistically or conceptually mediated noetic contribution from the side of the subject. And that responsibility is genuinely *constitutional*—contributive of content—and not merely causal. It is experience itself that is given.[31]

6. THE REGRESS OBJECTION REVISITED

But is not Husserl's account then committed to the Myth of the Given? To answer this question, it will be useful to compare aspects of Husserl's account with the three aspects of Sellars's account identified in my treatment of his response to the regress objection in section 1. First, as Husserl emphasizes in the passage above, motivations are always situated in a broader

intentional "field" or "space": they do not occur in isolation but rather in holistic nexuses, horizons, or webs of correlational intentionality. In effect, Husserl's account of the epistemic role of perception is holistic, in a way that parallels constraint (1) in Sellars's account noted above, but with a crucial difference: for Husserl such holism is already operative "below" the level of propositions or concepts, in the content of lived experience itself, such that epistemic import is not only not limited to the thematic or cognitive domain but is also possible independent of linguistic mediation.

Second, the space of motivations is, like Sellars's space of reasons, *normative,* and Husserl's account thus meets constraint (2). As I have argued at length elsewhere, Husserl's later phenomenology recognizes a version of what Hannah Ginsborg dubs "primitive normativity": a form of normativity operative directly in embodied perceptual experience, below the level of our language and concepts, and paradigmatically exhibited in the child's prelinguistic and preconceptual but still meaningful responsiveness to the world.[32] In terms of the example of the perception of color, on Husserl's account, the child does not need conceptual or linguistic mastery, and does not need to see (or "take") a state of affairs "as" anything, in a conceptual or propositional sense, in order to implicitly anticipate that the backside of an object will look roughly the same as the front, or that it will not suddenly stop appearing to their eyes (via what adults would categorize as color perception, with its attendant general facts and propositionally articulated norms) and begin appearing to their ears (via what we would categorize as sound perception).[33] If the child's experiential awareness suddenly shifted from seeing an object to hearing one, without another interceding visual experience, such as another object obscuring the view or the closing of the eyes, the child would not think that the visual object suddenly *became* a sonic one but rather that they were now experiencing a *different* object.[34] On the view I am advocating, this change in the child's thinking (a change in intentional acts as governed by their horizons)

is explained not *inferentially,* in terms of the norms entailed by the child's system of propositions or concepts (indeed, they may not even have acquired the requisite battery of concepts or capability to hold propositionally structured beliefs), but *motivationally,* in terms of norms given in embodied perceptual experience itself.[35]

Such norms affect our experience by modally structuring what Husserl calls "anticipation" (*Antizipieren*): "The change of apperceptive sense takes place through a change of the expectation-horizon of the multiplicities anticipated as normal (i.e., as running on harmoniously)" (*Crisis,* 162).[36] Such anticipation may remain nonthematic, and in that sense may not feature among the explicitly recognizable contents of perception, but it is nonetheless present in *experience*[37] and mediates it in the sense of partially determining our future perceptual possibilities: "If the sense of a thing is determined by the instances of givenness of the perception of it . . . then it . . . necessarily refers us to continuously unified connections of possible perceptions that extend from any implemented perception in infinitely many directions in a *systematically and firmly rule-governed manner,* and, to be sure, in each direction without end, constantly dominated by a unity of sense" (Husserl 2014, 78, my emphasis).[38] On the Sellarsian account, of course, such normative structuring cannot be unpacked in terms of *anything but* our language and concepts as the sole structurers of the content of our experience, and that normative structure will, qua linguistic, be located in the space of reasons. The only alternative, for Sellars, is explanation in terms of the nonnormative, noncognitive, and ipso facto *causal.* And causal explanations, as non-epistemic, are not capable of accounting for the normativity necessary for knowing.

The Husserlian account differs in that, as noted above, such normative structuring is ultimately unpacked in terms of intentional acts and insofar as the structuring or determining relation itself is explained neither causally nor inferentially but motivationally: "The unity of motivation is a nexus founded in

the relevant *acts themselves,* and when we inquire into the 'because,' into the grounds of a personal behavior, we seek to know nothing but precisely this nexus" (*Ideas II,* 241). This nexus belongs to experience itself, and is thus ultimately explained via appeal to the space of motivations, even if our accounts of it are expressed in and refined with the help of our language and concepts, and even if the patterns of behavior pertaining to it, viewed from a third-person standpoint, can be explained naturalistically in causal terms by our best natural science.

Does this analysis of normative structuring outside the space of reasons amount to an appeal to experiencing-as, and thus rely on the sort of categoriality that Sellars has ruled out in his critique of the myth of the categorial given? Yes and no.

It does, in the sense that motivational contents are more than just causal phenomena: the Husserlian conception of the normative function of anticipations in perceptual experience shows that they do in some way present the world as given and as *categorially structured in a weak sense.* The child may be said to be aware of red even if they are not aware of it *as* red (in the Sellarsian sense that they have mastery of the *concept* [or the *ur-concept*] red), insofar as, outside the space of reasons, they still have norm-governed perceptual experiences and not simply causally governed behavioral responses to states of affairs that adults would characterize in terms of redness. Anticipations play the normative epistemic role that Sellars assigns to the (for him conceptual and propositional) knowledge of general facts about perception, such as its reliability under standard conditions. They guide our sensemaking and are thus epistemically relevant, but they do not present the world as structured categorially in the stronger Sellarsian sense according to which categorial structuring is a linguistic, conceptual, or propositional affair belonging to the context of inferential justification.[39]

Nor does this account conflict with our commonsense intuition that our adult (conceptually or linguistically mediated; cognitive) conception of the same state of affairs is in a sense

more refined than the child's. *Pace* Sellars, the child may not be able to make inferences on the basis of that state of affairs in ways that we would expect of an adult perceiver fully initiated into our linguistic and perceptual norms. But motivations do not cease to be relevant upon our achievement of adult conceptual and linguistic mastery. In order to be able to accept that, as adults, we may have more *refined* conceptions as a result of perceptual experiences, we must accept some more primary level of conception which is open to refinement.[40]

This shows how the phenomenological account I have been sketching answers to constraint (3) identified in Sellars's response to the regress objection. For it retains the idea that *certain minimal relevant respects* of perceptual states as they are present precategorially (in the sense of being prior to conceptually or propositionally articulated categories, as for the child) are retained or translated into the explanation of those states of which we are later aware with the help of conceptual categories, thus avoiding the problem of an internally consistent but empty coherentism that fails to make contact with the world.

But the later Husserl's account still recognizes an underlying normativity that we can think of as a sort of "proto-" or "anticipatory" categoriality;[41] it is still epistemically relevant in its (admittedly sparse) furnishing of the sort of primitive normativity necessary to get the game of knowledge off the ground. *Contra* Sellars, the fact that the child may not be able to locate a state of affairs in the space of reasons does *not* force an explanation of the child's actions as no more than non-epistemic "behavior" or their utterances as mere "verbal behavior" in a separate space of causes. The child is already making sense of the world, and not just being causally influenced by it, in that the fulfillment (or nonfulfillment or frustration) of intentional acts still *motivates* additional thoughts and bodily actions in a way that the underlying states, considered as purely physical phenomena rather than as experiences, do not *cause*. The child's awareness may be motivated without them being aware that it is motivated, and without them being aware of

the experience *as* an experience. The motivation remains in this sense noncognitive (but not thereby causal), even if it is only genetically *later,* on reflection, and when equipped with linguistic mastery and the requisite conceptual repertoire, that the child can recognize it as such.

How does this version of the claim that a conceptual as-structure is imposed on perception *only later* fare any better than that offered by Sellars in his "inductive reasons" response to the regress in *EPMH* (which, as noted above, he eventually came to regard as unsatisfactory, leading him to revisit the issue in LA)? The Husserlian version of the claim does not rule out that the child's awareness now or in its "living present" is already a *legitimate form of awareness.* It is not yet categorial awareness, in the strong Sellarsian propositional or conceptual sense, and is not yet thematic or reflective awareness that will issue in propositional knowledge claims, but it is still "awareness" in the sense of being a form of normative responsiveness not reducible to natural-scientific or causal criteria.[42] Accepting that there can be such awareness goes hand in hand with accepting an explanatory space of motivations.

Indeed, Sellars himself might be interpreted as moving in such a direction, insofar as, in his later revisiting of the regress objection in LA, his account of awareness no longer appears to be so strictly limited by the notion of the space of reasons. As opposed to the unqualified characterization of all awareness as linguistic in *EPMH* section 29, cited above ("*All* awareness of *sorts, resemblances, facts,* etc., in short, all awareness of abstract entities—indeed, all awareness even of particulars—is a linguistic affair"), in LA section 154 Sellars allows that a case of "blue experience" "may *in some justifiable sense* be . . . a blue awareness" (my emphasis). The Husserlian account that I have offered above may be understood as *justifying precisely this sense* by further attention to the intentional structure of experience itself as explained or described via the space of motivations.

* * *

The above phenomenological sketch of the first stages of the acquisition of empirical knowledge agrees with Sellars in the "abandonment of the traditional empiricist idea that observational knowledge 'stands on its own two feet.'" It rejects the givenness of perceptual particulars that are epistemically relevant independently and individually, and it accords with Sellars in the view that epistemic (as opposed to merely ontological) status is only to be accorded (1) holistically and (2) within a normative context. But it disagrees that such holism and such normativity are accomplished only within the linguistic and conceptual confines of the space of reasons, and it rejects the limitation of normativity to the cognitive domain. Our mapping of the epistemic role of perception is opened up to include a space of motivations, as distinguished from *both* the space of reasons *and* the space of causes. The notion of a space of motivations makes clear how, while general or categorial facts necessary for knowledge could never result from individual and independent perceptions whose content is limited to particulars, the requisite categoriality may still be given in the broader context of intentional lived experience. And experience, understood in this phenomenological way, provides (3) the minimal perceptual basis necessary for our empirical knowledge to be not only internally consistent, but also more than a set of moves in a self-contained game.

With these Husserlian modifications, the regress that threatened Sellars's account of empirical knowledge dissolves. It may indeed be the case, as Sellars argues, that empirical knowledge requires both a categorial component pertaining to general facts about the reliability of perception, and a particular component pertaining to individual perceptual episodes. But if these sorts of knowledge *arrive on the scene together,* in the primacy of experience, then the regress generated by the conflicting claims of epistemic primacy does not get off the ground. The notion that they *could not* arrive on the scene together except as mediated by language was the result of Sellars's insistence that categorial knowledge must take cognitive and conceptual or

propositional form; his psychological nominalism; and his reliance on the space of reasons / space of causes dichotomy. But from the phenomenological perspective outlined here, these were not results of investigation but assumed requirements. I have argued for the rejection of these requirements and the embrace, instead, of a third explanatory space evident in experience itself—the space of motivations.

NOTES

1. *EPMH,* § 36; cf. O'Shea (2007, 127–28).
2. For a defense of Sellars from "epistemic bootstrapping," see O'Shea (2007, 128–36).
3. A similar claim is in the background of Fales's critique of Sellars on this point for ultimately relying on justifications from memory. Fales argues that memories must themselves count as a form of noninferential knowledge: they must amount to knowledge since it is not enough for such memories to be mere beliefs about previous perceptual episodes, and that knowledge must be noninferential since the genetic role it plays in Sellars account is such that there can be no prior knowledge (1996, 133).
4. Cf. O'Shea's claim that for Sellars there must be some kind of "superficial similarity" between the child's protoperceptions and the adult's perceptions based on "intrinsically similar sensations" (2007, 128).
5. For more on this idea, see McDowell (2009).
6. This is the crux of DeVries and Triplett's (2000, 101ff.) defense of Sellars against the objection from Fales referred to in a note above. I am not convinced that appeal to these two aspects ([1] and [2] in my treatment) are enough to save Sellars from this objection, for reasons that are implicit in the phenomenological position developed below but that I cannot further discuss directly here.
7. The idea that LA can be seen as a revisiting of Sellars response to the regress appears in O'Shea (2007, 125–36). My account in the following paragraphs is indebted to his discussion, though I disagree with his evaluation of Sellars's success on this point, for reasons that will become clear below.
8. Cf. Fogelin (1981).

9. Cf. the footnote added in 1963 to the end of *EPMH,* § 19, where Sellars claims that his argument in that section can admit of such a distinction between "rudimentary concept" and a "richer concept" of "green."
10. Cf. Marras (1973, 154).
11. DeVries and Triplett put the point succinctly: "Sellars does not think that we *automatically* or *innately* have the idea of either an impression or a thought. We must *acquire* these ideas in order to be able to *notice* impressions and thoughts. (Notice that this necessity does not mean that one must acquire the idea of impressions or thoughts in order to *have* impressions or thoughts.)" (2000, 123).
12. As Christias notes, "The space of reasons is a logical space whose 'objects' are concepts (propositions, beliefs) that stand in normative (material inferential) relations to each other," while "the space of causes is a logical space whose 'objects' are non-conceptual, non-normative states of affairs that stand in non-normative relations to one another" (2014, 361). Sellars uses the phrase "space of reasons" in *EPMH* (§ 36) but not the term "space of causes," though it does appear in later works. While the notions of inference and logic are not identical, due to their closeness and to avoid confusion, I prefer the adjective "explanatory" to "logical" as a general descriptor the different spaces at issue, only one of which is inferential.
13. See, for example, LA, §§ 47, 58, 97.
14. Sellars (2007b). See also LA, 242n6, where Sellars specifically frames the child's prototheory as a manifest image conception.
15. See LA, § 48. This is the most charitable interpretation of Sellars's reading of Firth. At other points in LA (including, arguably, § 43, quoted above) he attributes to Firth the much stronger "adverbial" view that the redness is actually a property of the experience.
16. The awkward phrasing of "which is endowed with" might be seen as an attempt to get around the sort of objection I am raising, insofar as it could be taken to place the final phrase outside the scope of the "as" clause ("as an individuated volume of color stuff [and that object/stuff, independent of how it appears to the child] is endowed with certain causal properties"). But a reading of that phrase as within the scope of that as-clause seems more natural and better fits with its placement as only the third step (and the first containing an "as"-clause) in the

genetic progression Sellars outlines as an alternative to that of Firth in LA § 61.

17. Cf. Alston's (2002, 81ff.) critique of Sellars's appeal to a strict distinction between causal and justificatory relations.
18. The notion that the phenomenological account of motivation might point to a sort of third explanatory or logical space has already received some attention in the literature but primarily with a focus on Merleau-Ponty (Dreyfus 2005, Wrathall 2005, O'Conaill 2013, O'Conaill 2014). In what follows, I focus instead on Husserl's account of motivation, which differs in important respects (Carman 1999). For another recent treatment of Husserl on motivation (though not specifically as constituting an explanatory logical space), see Walsh (2017).
19. Cf. Wrathall (2005) and Walsh (2017).
20. This of course does not rule out motivations standing in close relation to reason. As Husserl puts it in *Ideas II,* reason need not "reign" in motivations, but it is not excluded either (232). Cf. O'Conaill (2014) on the way in which reason may be involved in the space of motivations.
21. Meixner (2016, 400).
22. Meixner (2016, 400); Sachs (2014, 165).
23. This is one important point of difference between Husserl and Merleau-Ponty. Whereas Merleau-Ponty may be said to further unpack the phenomenological fidelity to experience by broadening the notion of perception, Husserl may be said to do the same by insisting—especially in his later work—that the account of experience—even perceptual experience—must be widened to include elements beyond perception strictly construed.
24. Alweiss (2009).
25. For Husserl's account of the role of reflection in the phenomenological method and its relationship to language and predication, see Rump (2021b).
26. To put the point differently, for Husserl the theory of meaning is ultimately a theory of intentionality, which encompasses but is not limited to a philosophy of language, whereas for the analytic tradition to which Sellars belongs, both meaning and intentionality can be thought of as subtopics within the philosophy of language.
27. See Hopp (2011) for a detailed defense of the Husserlian notion that fulfillment stands at the center of perceptual knowledge.
28. Drummond (2012).

29. Cf. Zahavi (2004).
30. For Husserl's conception of *Sinn* as a primary level of meaning, as distinguished from linguistic meaning (*Bedeutung*)—a view I argue was developed between *LI* and the *Ideas,* and which became central to Husserl's later work—see Rump (2018).
31. Cf. Sachs (2014, 160ff.).
32. Rump (2021a).
33. See the explanation of Husserl's technical sense of "anticipation" below.
34. This is because there is a basic or "primitive" normativity built into lived experience itself, even in nonlinguistically mediated modes. This normativity is indeed still intersubjective, but it arises from a context of social practices and embodied habits, including but *by no means limited to* habits of speaking and writing (Rump 2021a).
35. While I further unpack this claim below with reference to Husserl's conception of anticipation, it should be noted that it could also be explained via his conception of preconceptual types. Husserl's type theory is, in many ways, the more apt point of comparison with Sellars on ur-concepts as discussed above, but explication of this important notion would exceed the scope of this essay. For a recent account of Husserl on types, see Diaz (2020).
36. For the connection to the holistic criterion identified above, see Husserl's discussion in *Cartesian Meditations* of "a multiform horizon of unfulfilled anticipations" (*CM,* 61ff.).
37. See my claim above that for Husserl the contents of perception do not exhaust the contents of experience.
38. Compare Sellars's claim that "the phenomenal world, thus conceived, of public physical objects, sounds, flashes, etc., exhibits a lawfulness which is formulable in phenomenal terms, i.e., in terms of the directly perceptible qualities and relations of these objects" (PH, 334–35).
39. As nonconceptual and nonpropositional, the conception of "epistemic" invoked here corresponds most naturally with an anti-intellectualist conception of knowing how. My characterizations below of the child's anticipatory awareness as broadly epistemically relevant may be taken in the same vein; Sellars may be said to anticipate this sort of response to his position when he claims, in *EPMH,* that the issue cannot be solved by an appeal to knowing how as opposed to knowing that (§ 36). I do not have space to address this response here but would

like to note it in passing as a locus for continued work on this issue, for which it would be particularly important to sort out the difference between conceptual and propositional epistemic contributions in a way I have not been able to here.

40. Cf. Firth's description of the child's maintaining of primitive concepts even upon acquisition of more sophisticated ones (1964, 547–48).
41. Cf. Drummond (2003) and Rump (2022).
42. Compare Brandom's characterization of the relevant kind of awareness in terms of "conceptual classification" (2000, 48).

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CHAPTER 7

IS IMAGINATION A "NECESSARY INGREDIENT OF PERCEPTION"?

Sellars's and Husserl's Variations on a Kantian Theme

Michela Summa

In a 1978 paper, "The Role of Imagination in Kant's Theory of Experience," Wilfrid Sellars proposes to "give a sympathetic account of Kant's theory of the role played by what he calls the productive imagination in perceptual experience" (RIKTE, 454). His purpose in this is not exegetical; rather, Sellars's aim is that of "constructing an ostensibly independent theory which will turn out, it just so happens, to contain the gist of the Kantian scheme" (RIKTE, 454). This theory builds on Sellars's critique of sense-data theories of perception, already developed in his 1956 lectures on *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind*. In general terms, according to sense-data theorists, the contents of perception are sense data, which are connected to a propositionally structured belief about the object (see, e.g., Ayer 1940; Moore 1953). Sellars's main criticism of the "sense-data plus belief" approach touches on the assumption that perceiving something—say, a brick as a brick—and believing that

it has some properties means having a mental state of the form: "This is a brick which has a red and rectangular facing surface" (RIKTE, 455). This misconstrues the structure of perception and perceptual belief for two reasons. First, it wrongly takes the object of perception (the subject in the sentence) as a bare "this"; secondly, it considers the determination of the "this" as a brick and a propositional belief-structure, expressed by the relative clause, as necessary for the epistemic value of perception. Against this view, Sellars argues that the structure of perception is nonpropositional and has the form of a complex demonstrative phrase: "This brick with a red and rectangular facing surface" (RIKTE, 456). Accordingly, we need to distinguish between "a perceptual *taking* and what is *believed about what is taken*" (RIKTE, 456). Perceptual taking is more complex than what sense-data theorists accept: what we perceive are not bare "thises" but objects grasped as objects of a certain kind and as having certain properties. Understood as being structured in this way, perceptual taking is a condition for any propositionally structured belief. On Sellars's reading, the imagination, as Kant understands it in the *Critique of Pure Reason,* is a constitutive moment of perceptual taking. Thus, if we are to account for how perceptual taking is structured in such a way that it can ground belief, we need to consider how imagination is involved in perception.

The claim that perceptual taking is much richer than the experience of bare "thises" and that it grounds propositionally formed belief is in line with the phenomenological approach to perception. Notably, Edmund Husserl, in the section of his 1904–5 lecture course "Main Themes of the Phenomenology and Theory of Knowledge" devoted to perception, contends that perceptual belief, which posits the perceived as existing, is a moment that accompanies the perceptual act. However, objectual identity does not lie in belief and is not constituted by it: "Belief believes something objectually identical, because this appears as such, and belief is not what brings about the appearance; it rather presupposes it" (*Hua XXXVIII,* 46).[1]

Furthermore, in the later lecture course published as *Analyses Concerning Active and Passive Synthesis* (1920–21), Husserl recognizes Kant's "brilliant insights" in the Transcendental Deduction, which are to be found particularly "in his profound but obscure doctrine of the synthesis of productive imagination" (*PAS,* 410). Since the passive syntheses that make perception and perceptual cognition possible are a central topic of inquiry in these lectures, we can assume that Husserl is here also thinking about how Kant conceives of the role of productive imagination in perception.[2]

On the face of it, then, Sellars and Husserl agree in recognizing not only that perception has a nonpropositional but nonetheless articulated structure but also that this structure is indebted to mental activities that we can somehow trace back to the functions that Kant attributes to productive imagination.

Given this underlying agreement, it is all the more remarkable that, when it comes to the question of whether imagination plays a role in perception, Husserl and Sellars have divergent views: while Sellars maintains a sympathetic account and attributes a crucial role to imagination in perception, Husserl ultimately rejects the claim that the constitution of perceptual objects relies on imagination.[3] Given that Husserl's and Sellars's background assumptions seem to be quite similar, how should we understand this divergence? There seem to be two main reasons (section 1). First, Husserl and Sellars have different appraisals of Kant's transcendental faculties: while Husserl rejects the theory of the faculties as psychologistic and therefore also rejects attributing specific functions to specific faculties, including the imagination, Sellars emphasizes the transcendental significance of this theory. Secondly, when Husserl opposes the view that imagination plays a role in perception, he is concerned not so much with Kant but rather with empiricist interpretations of perceptual modifications, notably temporal modifications.

Emphasizing these divergences, however, only gets at the surface of the problem. For if we look more closely at Sellars's

and Husserl's respective analyses, we can see that the problems they address are quite similar. Notably, both want to address problems related to perceptual presence (section 2) and to the normativity of perception in relation to conceptual determination (section 3). In what follows, I will try to show how the two approaches can be mutually enlightening and can contribute to a transcendental account of perception and perceptual cognition. In particular, I will argue that, while Husserl's approach is probably based on a restricted understanding of Kant's transcendental psychology, it departs from the theory of faculties; I will also argue that Husserl's methodological focus on the descriptive analysis of intentional acts allows him to develop a more convincing account of what is specific to the syntheses involved in perception, which Kant and Sellars somewhat problematically consider to be imaginative. Conversely, both Kant and Sellars more explicitly emphasize the normativity of perception in a way that may also be valuable within the phenomenological theory of perception.

1. FACULTIES AND ACTS

With the claim that "the imagination is a necessary ingredient of perception itself" (*CPR*, A 120n), Kant is responding to what he considers to be some mistakes in the psychology of his time, notably the assumptions that the imagination is a merely reproductive faculty and that perceptions are only representations of the senses. Kant contends that perception is more than mere sensible representation, and that imagination is not only a reproductive faculty that represents objects when they are absent but also a synthetic productive faculty that mediates between sensibility and understanding.[4] These brief remarks already introduce the background against which Kant understands both perception and imagination: the distinction among the cognitive faculties, and notably, the claim that in order for experience and cognition to be possible we need the

work of both sensibility and understanding (*CPR,* A 51 / B 75). Kant understands perceptions as *conscious* appearances: "The first thing that is given to us is appearance, which, if it is combined with consciousness, is called perception" (*CPR,* A 119–20). That is to say, appearances are perceptions only insofar as they are subject to the conditions of consciousness (Horstmann 2018, 13–15; Prauss 1971, 119–22). One necessary, but not sufficient, condition for appearances to be *conscious* appearances or perceptions is the order of space and time as forms of intuitions: it is thanks to these forms that a synopsis of appearances is possible (*CPR,* A 94 / B 126).[5] However, conscious appearances that count as perceptions also incorporate perceptual belief (cf. Strawson 2008, 55); in order to possibly ground perceptual belief, appearances need to make us aware of objects as individually identical across different times, spaces, and circumstances, and as individuals of a certain kind. The faculty of productive imagination is responsible for the recognition of both individual-identity and of kind-identity of perceptual objects (Strawson 2008).

Husserl's critical approach to Kant's transcendental psychology, and in particular his critique of the faculties of the mind, is fairly straightforward and is connected to the critique of psychologism that he directed at his contemporaries (e.g., *Hua VII,* 198, 228, 397, 401). Briefly, if phenomenology is supposed to investigate the a priori—that is, the eidetic—structures of experience, then such an investigation cannot rely on any assumptions about the alleged faculties of the human mind (Summa 2014b, 43–49). Against the background of this general criticism, Husserl claims that phantasy "understood as a faculty (*Vermögen*) lies outside the frame of our interests" (*PhICM,* 2, translation modified). However, what Husserl seems actually to be criticizing here is not so much Kant's claim about the role of imagination in perception but rather the empiricist views of Hume and Brentano, according to whom imaginative modifications are modifications of the intensity

or vivacity of impressions (*PhCIT,* 11–20; *PhlCM,* 99–116). For Husserl what underlies these approaches is a sensualistic and somewhat atomistic account of experience. According to this account, what we immediately experience are singular and unconnected impressions, which, since perception unfolds in time, are progressively transformed into phantasms. Against this view, Husserl elaborates an account of perception as synthetic but preconceptual act in which objects are presented (*gegenwärtigt*) in a straightforward (*schlicht*) intuition. Imagination (or phantasy) is also a synthetic, preconceptual, and straightforwardly intuitive act. However, the objects of imagination are not present in the flesh but rather are re-presented (*vergegenwärtigt*). Accordingly, imagination as phantasy is not a faculty and does not modify perception from within; it is instead a sui generis and autonomous intentional-intuitive *act,* characterized as an as-if modification of the experience of reality (Jansen 2010, 2016; Summa 2021).

Sellars has a more sympathetic take on Kant's transcendental psychology. In a 1967 paper entitled "Some Remarks on Kant's Theory of Experience," he understands transcendental philosophy, including the transcendental psychology of the faculties, as a metatheoretical enterprise that is aimed not at describing our knowledge but at justifying or legitimating it. Thus, according to Sellars, Kant is not seeking to prove that there is in fact empirical knowledge but rather "to show that the concept is a coherent one and that it is such as to rule out the possibility that there could be empirical knowledge not implicitly of the form 'such and such state of affairs belongs to a coherent system of states of affairs of which my perceptual experience is a part'" (SRKTE, 439). We can therefore have empirical knowledge only if the state of affairs we are cognizing is part of a coherent system of states of affairs that also includes our experience as cognizing subjects.

Kant's transcendental psychology should be understood against this background (Haag 2012), in which case, accusing Kant's transcendental psychology of being a piece of bad

psychologism would be misplaced. His transcendental psychology does not postulate a mechanism of empirically inaccessible processes (the faculties), "which 'constructs' the world of experience out of sense impressions" (SRKTE, 451); rather, it should be understood as the framework of legitimation or justification of possible cognition, actualized in a world to which the cognizing subject also belongs.

Sellars's argument is based on an analogical consideration of Kant's transcendental psychology and what he calls "transcendental linguistics." According to Sellars, transcendental linguistics is "concerned with language as conforming to epistemic norms which are themselves formulated in the language" (SRKTE, 452); it works by constructing metalinguistic concepts (e.g., of meaning, truth, and knowledge) that are general insofar as they are not "limited to the epistemic functioning of historical languages of the actual world" (SRKTE, 452), but are also part of concrete linguistic behavior and of the behavioral dispositions. The function of transcendental linguistics for linguistic operations is analogous to the function of transcendental psychology for empirical knowledge. Thus, if transcendental linguistics is not vulnerable to the charge of postulating mysterious mechanisms, transcendental psychology cannot be accused of that mistake either (see Haag 2012). Sellars's crucial claim is that transcendental linguistics focuses on the structural framework that makes the normativity of epistemic language possible, and that it does so *from within* that language. This means that transcendental linguistics, by construing the concepts of meaning, knowledge, and truth as metalinguistic concepts, provides constitutive rules that can be applied as norms of how to use language. These rules work as normative conditions that make the cognitive power of language possible. Accordingly, epistemology "is the theory of what it is to be a language that is about a world in which it is used" (SRKTE, 452). In this sense, it is analogous to Kant's transcendental psychology, which seeks out "the general features any conceptual system must have in order to generate

knowledge of a world to which it belongs" (SRKTE, 452). This approach also underlies Sellars's sympathetic view of Kant on imagination in his 1978 paper. There, he argues that a phenomenological reflection on the structures of the perception of objects "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" (RIKTE, 455).

This conception of transcendental linguistics does not seem so different from Husserl's understanding of phenomenology. In fact, already in the *Prolegomena* and the *Logical Investigations,* Husserl is interested in logic as a theory of science, which is not itself prescriptively normative but sets the structural framework for thinking properly. That is to say, logic as a theory of science does not formulate maxims about how one should judge but investigates the a priori laws with reference to which such maxims can be formulated. Concrete prescriptions, like maxims about how one should think or judge, are justified only if they are consistent applications of such ideal or structural laws (*LI 1/M,* 28–39).[6] In this sense, logic as a theory of science structures the knowledge of the world to which it belongs. Similarly, the phenomenological project of a theory of intentionality is about the structures of the experience and knowledge of the world to which those structures themselves belong.

Overall, then, Husserl's and Sellars's projects do not seem to fall apart, and this is due to the fact that both authors develop a version of transcendental philosophy.[7] I think this has an impact on how both of them phrase the questions related to the recognition of the individual-identity and kind-identity of perceptual objects. However, this does not mean that they reach the same conclusions about the functions of the imagination in perception.

2. IMAGINATION AND THE PROBLEM OF PERCEPTUAL PRESENCE

The philosophy of perception in general is confronted with the problem of perceptual presence (see Doyon 2019; Noë 2004).

This problem can be introduced in relation to an ambiguous use of the concept of seeing. Usually, when we say that we see a red brick, we mean that we are seeing a brick as a uniformly red-colored three-dimensional thing; strictly speaking, however, one should say that what we actually see is a nonuniform shade of red, and depending on our position, we actually see certain sides of the brick not with a rectangular shape, but with a parallelogram shape. The problem of perceptual presence famously underlies the debate on sense-data theories. Both Husserl and Sellars are interested in the relation between what is designated by these two concepts of seeing.[8] Unlike sense-data theorists, however, their crucial question is not how seeing the richer sense we usually assume is possible *despite* the fact that we actually see only partially, nonuniformly, perspectivally, etc. Rather, their question is how seeing in the former sense is possible *precisely and only in virtue* of how we see in the latter sense.

(i) Kant's Holistic Perceptual Image

In his 1770 *Lectures on Metaphysics*, Kant argues that, when we perceive an object, "the mind then forms an image of the object which it has before it while it runs through the manifold" (*LM*, 54). This means that the mind "must undertake many observations in order to illustrate an object so that it illustrates the object differently from each side" (*LM*, 54). In other words, even if we always perceive an object from a certain perspective—Kant's example is of a city, probably seen from a mountain nearby—we are aware of the object as a whole; this entails that there are other possible perspectives on the object. Our experience is not limited to *given* representations or the representations of the senses but also entails *made* representations that arise from the mind itself but "under the condition under which the mind is affected by objects" (*LM*, 49). The imagination, here considered as formative faculty of intuition (*LM*, 49–50), runs through the appearances and brings them together in a unitary, holistic image (see Matherne 2015).[9] In

the case of the city, the holistic image entails the different actual appearances of the city but also how the city would appear from the east and from the west, how it appeared in the past and in different circumstances, and how it would appear from different sides and points of view.

In the *Critique of Pure Reason*—notably in the A Deduction, where Kant distinguishes the three syntheses of apprehension, reproduction, and recognition (*CPR,* A 95–110)—we can find a development of this account (see Allison 2015, 204–34; Matherne 2015). However, it is important to emphasize that, even more than in the 1770 *Lectures,* Kant's analyses do not aim at developing a psychological-causal discussion of how perception works. Instead, his account is normative, and the references to imagination should also be read in this sense. In other words, although Kant's multifaceted approach to imagination does not exclude that there is some mental activity like mental imagery, it would be wrong to reduce imagination, and notably to reduce its epistemic function, to mental imagery (Allison 2004, 186–89; 2015, 255–56; Ferrarin 2009; Horstmann 2018; Young 1988). In fact, if we take Kant to just mean mental imagery when he speaks of the imagination, then "most of what he says about imagination would be implausible." And this precisely because Kant contends that "imagination plays a role not in the occasioning but in the grounding or justifying certain judgments" (Young 1988, 140).

What appears to be relevant for the problem of perceptual presence, within the context of a normative inquiry into the conditions for possible cognition, are the syntheses of apprehension and reproduction. In fact, when he describes the synthesis of apprehension, Kant uses the very same terminology of "running through" and "taking together" that we find in the 1770 *Lectures*. In order to gain a unitary view of what is perceived, he says, "it is necessary first to run through (*Durchlaufen*) and then to take together (*Zusammennehmung*)" the sensible manifold (*CPR,* A 99). I can grasp the color, shape, weight, and tactile consistency as properties of the brick I am perceiving

only if these qualities are not given disparately and chaotically, and only if I run through them and take them together, thereby also separating them from other sensible qualities I may be simultaneously perceiving (see Summa 2015). Besides the spatiotemporal structure of intuitions, the perception of a sensible manifold as an intuition of distinct but connected sensible appearances requires the synthesis of apprehension, which considered in and for itself, may well be provisional and unstable but nonetheless allows us to perceive the sensible manifold as manifold (Longuenesse 2000, 36–38).

In the A Deduction, Kant also considers the synthesis of reproduction to be necessary for the formation of a unitary image of the object (*CPR,* A 100). This synthesis underlies the associative connection between representations that are not simultaneously present (e.g., if they are spatially occluded), that temporally follow one another, or that are merely possible (see Longuenesse 2000, 39–40; Strawson 2008). Accordingly, as in Kant's example of the perception of the city, the perceptual properties that are not currently manifest are also part of perceptual presence (Strawson 2008): they belong to perceptual presence precisely insofar as they are imaginatively represented. The discussion of how imagination operates in the syntheses of apprehension and reproduction can be seen as Kant's response to the problem of perceptual presence. Within Kant's normative theory of cognition, together these syntheses are what make "the data be presented by sensibility in a manner suitable for conceptualization," which is something required for "the very possibility of discursive cognition" (Allison 2004, 14). Accordingly, the work of the imagination, notably as Kant presents it in the A Deduction, together with the primal structuration of intuitions through the forms of space and time, consists in rendering the given data suitable for being taken up in judgments for which we can be accountable as epistemic subjects (see Pollok 2017).

However, some questions remain. How do these syntheses differ from empirical associations? And how do we come to

select what is to be reproduced for the sake of the present perception? In order to answer these questions, we need to reassess these observations in terms of Kant's larger project. Before doing so, let me address how Sellars and Husserl respond to the challenge of perceptual presence.

(ii) Sellars on Sense-Image Models

In "The Role of Imagination in Kant's Theory of Experience," Sellars considers visual perception to be constituted by three essential moments: the act of seeing, the object seen, and the point of view, corresponding to the perspectival appearance of the object. Against the "sense data plus belief" approach, he argues that perception entails a sensible-figurative representation combined with conceptual grasping. What interests me here is the sensible-figurative representation that Sellars calls "imaging" (RIKTE, 459). Through imaging, preconceptual imagistic appearances of the occluded sides of a perceived object are formed, and these, together with the actually appearing sides, form a "sense-image model" of that object (RIKTE, 458). Sellars illustrates this by referring to the perception of an apple:

> 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 the opposite side, or its inside, or its internal whiteness, or its coolness, or its juiciness. But while these features are nor seen, they are not merely believed in. These features are present in the object of perception as actualities. They are present by virtue of being imagined. (RIKTE, 458)

Taking up Kant's remarks on the constitutive role of imagination in perception means primarily, for Sellars, providing an account of perceptual presence, which is not limited to what is sensibly given and yet does not have the propositional structure of belief. Imaging is the consciousness of the actuality,

of the actual presence of the occluded parts of the apple and its inner flesh or, to take Kant's example, of those parts of the city I do not actually see. The sense-image model results from the connection between the imagistic appearances and the sensory ones. Also, just as Kant does with the synthesis of reproduction, Sellars emphasizes that the construction of the sense-image model is "guided by a combination of sensory input on the one hand and background beliefs, memories, and expectations on the other" (RIKTE, 459). Finally, another crucial feature of the sense-image model is that it is "point-of-viewish" (RIKTE, 459); that is to say, the sense-image model entails the awareness of appearances as related to my own presence in the perceptual field. It is precisely the complex of these operations of the mind (which make holistic perception possible) that corresponds to the functions that Kant attributes to the imagination in the first two syntheses: we have neither a representation of an absent object nor a perceptual snapshot but rather a multiperspectival appearance of the same object.[10] Importantly, these operations are only implicit: what we are aware of are not sense-image models but perceptual objects, and the sense-image models serve only to make us aware of objects by mediating between our awareness of outer objectivity and our awareness of our body as the perceptual organ.

(iii) Husserl on Unitary Perception and the Modes of Intuitive Fulfillment

From very early on Husserl is concerned with the problem of perceptual presence, and this also impinges on the phenomenological conception of givenness (see Mertens, this volume). His take on this problem is based on the idea that sensibility itself is more articulated than Kant admits. This is related to Husserl's overall view on fulfillment as a necessary moment of all cognition. On the basis of Husserl's discussions, we should distinguish the epistemic kinds of fulfillment from the intuitive kinds (Hopp 2011, 190–225). Epistemic fulfillment—realized through the synthesis between a signitive intention and the

corresponding intuition (*LI 2/M,* 201–15)—is what makes knowledge in the strict sense possible. The corresponding intuition can be either a perception, in which case the object is given in the flesh as actually present here and now, or a representation, in which case the object is made present while being actually absent (by being imagined, recollected, or anticipated). In all these intuitions we are confronted with the problem of an enlarged presence: what we experience is more than what is *actually* given to us. For this reason, we should consider how the synthesis between empty consciousness and fulfillment operates already at this level, although it does not have the same structures as epistemic fulfillment.[11] It is this latter kind of intuitive fulfillment that interests us here, since it provides an answer to the problem of perceptual presence without reference to imaginative capacities. In particular, we should consider intuitive fulfillment insofar as it is based on (1) temporal syntheses, (2) perspectival appearances and syntheses, and (3) situated perception and kinesthetic consciousness.

(1) Husserl contends that temporal syntheses are the *A* in the ABC of the constitution of all objectivity (*PAS,* 170). It is not just the constitution of temporal objects, such as melodies, that relies on temporality but also that of spatial and material objects. Importantly, Husserl distinguishes between two kinds of synthesis of temporal identification. In one sense, identification consists in the constitution of an object as the same over time, that is, across different perceptual processes and notwithstanding possible modifications: what I am now perceiving is the same object that I was perceiving a while ago. In another sense, identification can be considered as the constitution of a temporal unity that persists over the duration of an unfolding act of perception. The former process requires repeated perception and is based on the synthesis of recollection in a way that recalls the role Kant attributes to the synthesis of reproduction; the latter process is a precondition of such identification and recalls Kant's synopsis and synthesis of apprehension (*CPR,* A 95–100). Despite the similarities to

Kant, Husserl develops a more demanding view of the temporal syntheses and argues that such basic identification occurs in the living present as the experiential unity between what we are experiencing now, what we keep the awareness of in retention, and what we implicitly anticipate in protention (cf. *PhCIT; PAS,* 189–93, 221–34). More importantly, and still despite the similarities, Husserl does not consider the imagination to be involved in the syntheses of identification, either in identification through the living present or in identification in recollection. Rather, in both cases, we have sui generis kinds of intentional consciousness: in one case the consciousness of a retained and protended presence; in the other, the consciousness of re-presentation, which is, however, not imagistic since it has a positing quality regarding the object as experienced in the past (see Summa 2014a, 186–94).

(2) When he considers spatial and material objects, Husserl is concerned with the investigation of how we can be aware of individual objects as wholes on the basis of their perspectival appearance. This entails amodal perception, which Husserl understands as horizonal consciousness, and to the connection between what is actually given of the object in perceptual presence and what is not. Though in the *Logical Investigations* Husserl seems occasionally to transfer the structures of epistemic fulfillment to this process—thus conceiving of the structures of the fulfillment of intuitive acts as analogous to the structures of the fulfillment of signitive acts (*LI 2/M,* 218–20, 235–38, 244–45)—his final answer to these questions is different. Indeed, Husserl emphasizes that amodal perception does not entail either the consciousness of a sign or the consciousness of an image (*TS,* 46–50) and contends that the occluded sides of the perceived object are given emptily in a sui generis intuitive way: we are intuitively aware of them as present but not as actually or properly given. Accordingly, fulfilled and empty intentions are interwoven in the unity of perception, and since perception is not static, they constantly merge into each other. Metaphorically, empty or horizonal consciousness

is the "halo" (*Hof*) or the "irradiation" (*Strahlenkranz*) of fulfilled consciousness (*Hua XX/1,* 90). A perceptual act is thus a whole in which fulfilled and empty intentions are intertwined as nonindependent moments. The specific intuitiveness of empty consciousness results from the "pointing ahead" (*Fortweisungen*) of the proper appearances of the thing toward the improper ones (*Hua XX/1,* 91–92), which corresponds to the synthesis of association that is responsible for the awareness of the hidden profiles.

(3) The phenomenon of perspectival appearance not only raises questions related to amodal perception but also raises questions related to perspectival distortions (how is it possible that we perceive a plate as circular while we actually see an elliptical shape?) and questions related to how environmental circumstances (lighting, the distance between my body and the object, etc.) influence the appearance (Noë 2004, 163–80; Smith 2002, 122–33). Like Sellars, Husserl addresses these problems by showing how perceptual experience also entails the awareness of how things appear in relation to our point of view. Concentrating on basic intuitive fulfillment and without resorting to imaginative activity, Husserl addresses these issues by focusing on the embodied character of perception and the implicit, mostly habitual, awareness of if-then relations.

Modifications in perspectival appearance occur as a consequence of either the object's movement in space or our own movement in space.[12] Both phenomena make us aware of the connection between the alteration in perceptual givenness and our bodily position and movements. If it is the object that moves, then we experience a variation in its appearance but no kinesthesia, that is to say, no sensation of our own bodily movement. When instead it is we who are moving, we do experience kinesthesia or kinesthetic sensations. We also experience a correlation between kinesthetic sensations and the appearance of the object: *if* I move around the object in a certain orientation, I implicitly and associatively expect that the object will *then* appear in a modified way.[13] This kinesthetic

awareness needs to be assessed in relation with both of the previously considered moments of intuitive fulfillment, namely, temporality and empty consciousness. In the temporal unfolding of perception, different appearances of the same object correspond to the movements I make with my body and allow me to turn empty consciousness into fulfilled consciousness. All these associations are retained and brought together; in this way, if the perceptual process proceeds in a concordant (*einstimmig*) way, such associations ground the consciousness of an object as identical in and through its modified modes of appearing.[14]

We have a similar structure in the implicit consciousness of the influence of perceptual circumstances on appearances, to the extent that it also implies the awareness of an if-then relation, which Husserl calls "conditionality" (*Ideas II,* 70–80, 140–44; cf. Summa 2014b, 265–73). Thus, if I am in a room with only very dim lightening, I can recognize an object I previously experienced in a more brightly lit room; I also recognize objects as remaining the same even if my perception is to some extent altered due to modifications in my body—for example, if I ingest santonin (*Ideas II,* 67), if my optometrist puts drops into my eyes to make pupils dilatate, or if I touch something with an injured finger—then my perception is different from how it is in normal circumstances. In all cases, if I grasp the if-then relation, then I am aware that the alterations are not in the perceived object itself but in how it appears.[15] Knowing *that* santonin has the effect of making me see everything yellow can be based on propositional knowledge, but my awareness of such an if-then relation does not necessarily require such knowledge. What it does requires is a habitual familiarity with how things appear in certain circumstances and the perception of a disruption of such a familiarity when circumstances change. Without such a familiarity with circumstances and their possible variations, I may experience an illusion and take the alterations in my perception of the object as alterations in the object itself. In cases not involving illusion, we experience an anomaly or a disturbance in the

presentation but still recognize that no alteration in the objects has occurred.

Through the analyses of the temporal syntheses, empty consciousness, and the different forms of awareness of if-then relations, Husserl aims to highlight how perceptual presence extends beyond the domain of what is actually and properly given, while explicitly ruling out the involvement of imaginative acts. With respect to the problem of perceptual presence, it seems to me that Kant, Sellars, and Husserl raise similar questions. Parts of their answers are also similar, insofar as all three want to investigate how the complexity of perceptual presence is possible. Their solutions diverge significantly, however, precisely with regard to the role of imagination. Kant and Sellars hold that the holistic representation (*Vorstellung*) of the perceptual object contains the imaginative consciousness of properties that are not currently being experienced. Husserl denies this view and instead relies on the synthetic functions just described.

One might wonder whether this is simply a terminological difference and whether Husserl does not call these syntheses imaginative because of his critique of the theory of the faculties. However, this would overlook the fact that there is a precise methodological claim behind his critique, one that requires us to rely in our analyses only on the intentional structure of acts. On the basis of this structural analysis—and in spite of some ambiguities still present in the *Logical Investigations* (*LI 2/M*, 226–28)—perception and imagination, as respectively acts of presentation and or re-presentation respectively, are discontinuous.[16] Thus, perceptually grasping an object as a whole cannot mean, as Kant and Sellars argue, that there is an imaginative representation of properties not currently being experienced because such imaginative consciousness would make determinate something that in perception is constitutively not determinate. Instead, the syntheses to which Husserl refers contain an empty consciousness. This means that, yes, we are implicitly aware that there is more in the object than what we

actually see in a narrow sense, and we also co-intend other perspectives and other properties of the object within a unitary representation; but we do this in and through a *sui generis* and non-independent intentional component of the perceptual act (i.e., an intentional component that cannot exist apart from the perceptual act to which it belongs). This moment is empty or indeterminate consciousness. Such an emptiness is not simply a void, nor is it the emptiness of a signitive intention; it is instead an incomplete determinacy (*TS,* 49–50; *PAS,* 44–47; *Hua XXXVIII,* 26–30). In perceiving an apple, I co-intend its inside and its back, and these intentions are even partially determined—I *perceive* that the back side of the apple, for instance, is not bigger than the front side—but they are not completely determined, either through perceptual fulfillment nor through imaginative fulfillment. This of course does not exclude that I *can* determine or fulfill these intentions, either imaginatively or perceptually; but this would entail other acts, or at least some change in the perceptual process (e.g., a change in my position with respect to the object).[17]

Husserl's view avoids one of the problems with Sellars's approach—namely, that even if one would agree that when I perceive an apple, I implicitly co-intend the parts that are occluded from my perspectives (its white and juicy insides, etc.). It seems less plausible that, when I perceive a dog I also co-intend its inner organs (Coates 2009). In fact, I do see that the dog occupies space and so there must be some inside contained within the surface I see, but within normal perception, this just remains indeterminate.[18]

3. NORMATIVITY IN PERCEPTION

If perception is to ground cognition, then when we form unitary perceptual appearances or sense-image models, we do so with the implicit assumption that we are doing this in the appropriate way, that is to say, in a way that appropriately presents the object. What grounds this assumption?

(i) Kant and the Conceptual Sources of Perceptual Normativity

When I briefly presented in the previous section Kant's view on the role of imagination in perception, I focused only on the first two syntheses in the A Deduction: the syntheses of apprehension and reproduction. I intentionally did not consider the role of the third synthesis, the synthesis of recognition, nor did I address how Kant understands the role of the imagination in the B Deduction and in the Schematism chapter. The main reason for this is that, in the reading I wish to propose, the three syntheses should certainly be considered as interconnected, as Kant explicitly claims. However, *abstractedly,* the extent of their accomplishments can be assessed bottom-up.[19] In this sense, the syntheses of apprehension and reproduction can be successful only if sensible contents are given as ordered according to a synopsis of the senses—that is, according to the primal unity of intuitions grounded on the forms of space and time. As Kant argues, however, a synthesis must always correspond to such a synopsis, and this synthesis is primarily the synthesis of apprehension and then the synthesis of reproduction (*CPR,* A 120). As we have seen, these syntheses are required in order to make sensible content suitable to be taken up in judgment, and this again requires the conceptual determination of perceptual objects, which is made possible by the synthesis of recognition. The synthesis of recognition, accordingly, can be accomplished on the basis of the unification of sensible contents established thanks to the synopsis, the synthesis of apprehension, and the synthesis of reproduction. Thus, there are different levels of order and unity in the constitution of a perceptual object, such that synthesis is something that is done to intuitions; this presupposes that intuitions are already structured in a way that allows synthesis (see Allais 2015; Filieri 2017). At the basic level of apprehension and reproduction—that is to say, when it comes to turning appearances into *conscious* appearances—the imagination can be considered to operate independently of the understanding in the constitution of perceptual units (Allison 2004, 185–92; Horstmann 2018).

However, the epistemic significance of these syntheses can be only legitimated and justified top-down, in relation to the synthesis of recognition, and ultimately in relation to the unity of transcendental apperception (*CPR,* A 120–28).[20] In this sense, conceptual determination adds to the appearances the consciousness of the appropriateness of the syntheses we are performing—in other words, the consciousness of normativity. As Hannah Ginsborg emphasizes, it "secures what Kant calls the 'element of necessity' (*etwas von Notwendigkeit*) involved in 'our thought of the relation of all cognition to its object' (CPR, A 104)" (Ginsborg 2008, 73).[21] Thus, although the syntheses of apprehension and reproduction seem to operate as empirical associations, they do presuppose a rule for the connection of appearances, which is the condition for empirical imagination (*CPR,* A 101–2; Longuenesse 2000, 38–44). On this reading, the main role of concepts in Kant's approach to perception is to provide perceptual syntheses with a normative standard. This does not mean that having pure or empirical concepts is a prior condition for perceptual synthesis. Instead, the claim that concepts—and the understanding—are involved in perception is meant to signify that "in perceptual synthesis the subject does not merely combine or associate her representations, but, in so doing, takes herself to be doing so appropriately, or as she ought" (Ginsborg 2008, 71).

This normative understanding of the role of concepts in perception can be extended to the consideration of the B Deduction and of the "Schematism" chapter (*CPR,* A 137 / B 176). There the imagination is considered to be responsible for the application of concepts to experience and for the subsumption of objects under concepts. The "Schematism" chapter builds on the argument developed in the B Deduction about the conditions for the applicability of concepts to possible experience and addresses more concretely the question of how (pure and empirical) concepts are applied to *real* experience. In particular, Kant focuses here on the possibility of referring judgment in its different forms to what is *concretely* given (La Rocca

1989). Applying a concept to singular experienced objects and subsuming one object under a concept are the processes that allow the recognition of singular objects as objects of a certain kind. Schemata are thus *rules,* or the representation of a "general procedure of the imagination for providing a concept with its image" (*CPR,* A 140 / B 139). In this way, the schematism defines a cognitive process though which we aim at intentionally determining how the world is (insofar as it can be experienced).

(ii) Sellars on Concepts as Recipes

In arguing that the imagination is nothing but "the understanding functioning in a special way" (*SM,* 11), Sellars takes up Kant's insight, notably presented in the B Deduction, and he defends a conceptualist reading of Kant's approach to perception. Though in the paper "The Role of Imagination in Kant's Theory of Experience," Sellars considers "imaging" to be preconceptual, the reference to the normative function of concepts is maintained. Imaging is not yet *perceiving an object as such,* for perception is "seeing *cum* imaging" *plus* the conceptual determination of an object as an object of a certain kind. Claiming that conceptual determination is required for perception does not mean that when we perceive an apple we also perceive its applehood; rather, it means that, in order for us to see an apple as an apple, the generality of an empirical concept needs to be operating as a rule for perception. Concepts operate in perception as a kind of "recipe" that underlies and guides the formation of images or sense-image models (RIKTE, 460). This also implies that, behind the empirical concepts that are constituted on the basis of prior experience, there is an a priori conceptual framework that Sellars characterizes as a "prototheory . . . of spatio-temporal physical objects capable of interacting with each other; objects . . . which are capable of generating visual inputs which vary in systematic ways with their relation to the body of the perceiver" (RIKTE, 461). Though speaking of a prototheory might be disturbing or at the very least puzzling,

we can take Sellars to be saying that even small children, with limited linguistic capacities (or none), have a structural framework or conceptual capacity that allows them to form general, stable, and typical patterns of objects on the basis of how these objects are experienced in relation to their own bodily situatedness and their progressively acquired habits (e.g., as pleasant or disturbing, as close or distant, etc.). On the basis of this capacity, they develop further capacities to make distinctions within perception to shape empirical concepts of different levels of generality and to apply concepts on new occasions and in the formation of new perceptual sense-image models.

(iii) Husserl on Typological Normativity

For Husserl, intuitive fulfillment does not require concepts. Husserl also develops an account of perceptual normativity that begins from the regularities of the nonconceptual syntheses I addressed in the previous section.[22] The epistemic fulfillment of empty intentions, which we need when we form perceptual judgments, relies instead on concepts. Thus, although perception has nonconceptual content, to the extent that it grounds cognition it does instantiate conceptual contents, just as other intuitive acts do.[23] Concepts are general precisely insofar as they can be instantiated in different acts and on different occasions and that they can allow us to identify singular objects as objects of a certain kind (Hopp 2011, 146). Such recognition occurs in and through epistemic fulfillment, a founded act that presupposes (1) a meaningful conceptual intention and (2) a corresponding intuition, as well as (3) a mediating act or a synthesis between them. For example, I can emptily or conceptually intend a cup by naming it, and I can have a corresponding intuitive act while perceiving the cup, but I will have *recognized* this cup as the cup I was intending only on the basis of a synthesis between these two acts. This synthesis of coincidence, through which identity is established and thus an object is not only seen but recognized as such, is a necessary moment for having cognition

of this object as the cup I was intending (*LI 2/M,* 201–15). As it becomes clear from Husserl's remarks on the distinction between the syntheses of fulfillment and disappointment, there is a normative moment in the syntheses that are conceptually mediated (*LI 2/M,* 211–15). Fulfillment and disappointment both contribute to the enhancement of cognition, and they occur when we realize that we have appropriately or inappropriately applied concepts to the given experience: I might intend a cup on my table, and upon perception discover that this was not a cup after all but rather a pen tray. In this case, experience shows that I had previously misapplied a concept; and this shows that the consciousness of normativity properly concerns the application of concepts, which Husserl understands in terms of fulfillment as *adequacy/adequateness* to the experience.

What comes close to Sellars's "proto-theory" is Husserl's later account of types (*Typoi*), as synthetic formations that underlie linguistic conceptualization. In a similar way to Kant with his schematism of empirical concepts (Lohmar 2008, 103–32), Husserl contends that types have a mediating function between the generality of concepts and the singularity of each experience of objects or events. As such, types are also rule-like formations that allow us to perceive something as something by synthetically unifying and by differentiating properties, aspects, and modes of presentations of objects (*EU,* 36, 331–38). Types have a rule-like character as "indeterminate generalities" that set the "realm of possibilities" (*Spielraum*) for the identification of objects (*EU,* 36).

The phenomenological inquiry into types is based on the insight that knowledge does not arise out of the blue; instead, it assumes that we apprehend what is new on the basis of what is known. What is known is based on patterns of experience developed through repetition, retention and reproduction, as well as through analogical associations. Types are such patterns that underlie the formation of empirical

concepts. Typological recognition presupposes that perception is a holistic phenomenon in a broader sense than what we saw above. Singular perceived objects are not experienced in isolation but always in a context. Thus, for instance, if you arrive at a dentist's office and see a variety of instruments, you might not be able to recognize those objects for what they are, but if you are familiar with what happens in a dentist room, you will be able to identify those objects according to the type "instrument for dental operation" or "instrument for dental care." Similarly, small children who don't have the concept of milk or food will identify a bottle of milk as food, on the basis of the familiarity they have acquired with the event of being fed.[24] Finally, types can be specified or generalized as experience is acquired. Think of the case of someone who has so far seen and eaten only apples that are red and sweet. We can assume that the type "apple" operating in their perceptual knowledge is of a red-colored fruit, with a certain smell, shape, taste, and so forth. Should they see and eat a green apple or a sour apple, they would recognize both the similarities with other apples and the differences, which would bring them to make a partial revision to the initial assumptions of the generality of the type "apple." Typological generalization has two aspects. On the one hand, it entails the enlargement of the empirical concept's extension, since there are more objects than red apples that are embraced by that concept. On the other hand, it also entails an impoverishment of the type itself, since there will now be fewer characteristics that *necessarily* belong to this type than one had previously assumed; this means that there are more objects that can be taken as objects of that kind (Lohmar 2008, 133–40). To be sure, imagination, in Husserl's sense of phantasy representation, does not play a role in either epistemic fulfillment or the formation and application of types. Nonetheless, the syntheses involved in the formation and application of types do partially recall Kant's schematism and can be considered as a kind of "weak" phantasy (Lohmar 2008).

Not only epistemic fulfillment, but also types as proto-forms of empirical concepts add a normative aspect to the phenomenological theory of perception. Such normativity depends primarily on the inner structuration of experience and on the lawfulness of content (see De Palma 2001). But once perceptual types are formed, it is also related to the correctness of the application of types—and this is an insight that, mutatis mutandis, we have also encountered in Kant and Sellars. Our application of types or patterns of experience, and then of empirical concepts, can be more or less adequate, and as we have seen, we may need to revise them and correct previous assumptions by, for instance, enlarging or impoverishing the type. Importantly, normativity does not properly depend on pregiven concepts or types, which can be the revised; instead, it depends on the appropriateness of the relation of these typological patterns and concepts to experience itself. If we also add to this point the social dimension of mutual understanding about the things we perceive, the normativity of both epistemic fulfillment and typological recognition gains yet another determination, insofar as both processes are embedded in contexts in which the generality of cognition is not only that of adequateness but also of validity for everyone. Corrections to how we use or apply empirical concepts and revisions to the extension of empirical concepts often derive from our communication with others about shared experience.

4. MUTUALLY ENLIGHTENING APPROACHES

By considering Kant, Sellars, and Husserl jointly, I have tried to identify the main theoretical problems underlying the adoption (or the rejection) of the claim that imagination plays a role in perception. These problems are not related to merely empirical questions about how we de facto perceive; rather, they concern the transcendental problem of how it is possible for us to perceptually recognize perceptual objects as individually identical and as objects of a certain kind. I connected the

problem of individual identity to questions about perceptual presence, and the problem of kind identity to questions about the formation and application of empirical concepts. Kant and Sellars consider imagination to be necessary to address both problems, whereas Husserl rejects this.

I suggested that Husserl's methodological approach, which focuses on the intentional analysis of acts, has the advantage of proposing a more structured analysis of what is distinctive of perceptual acts, in particular their sensible components, without recourse to the imagination. Such a recourse to the imagination is in fact problematic to the extent that there is some ambiguity within the concept of imagination—as a synthetic faculty that makes the experience of perceptual unity possible, or as phantasy—which is mirrored in the analyses of both Kant and Sellars. Phenomenological analysis, based on the classification of acts in relation to their specific intentional character, is more successful in avoiding this ambiguity and reserves for the imagination a different epistemic function—that of a neutral simulating consciousness, or re-presentation in the "as-if" mode.

While phenomenological analyses offer a more convincing description of how perception is accomplished, the way Kant and Sellars introduce the imagination as a transcendental faculty highlights how the normativity of perception is reshaped in relation to the claim of adequateness in perceptual cognition. Recognizing this normative function of concepts in perception, and of the mediating role of the imagination in the application of concepts, can guide us in the reassessment of Husserl's account of perceptual normativity. Such normativity presupposes the preconceptual structuration of experience, but on the level of perceptual cognition it is also related to the syntheses that are operative in the formation of types and concepts and their application to experience. Refusing to attribute these syntheses to the faculties of the imagination and of understanding does not mean refusing to recognize their cognitive and normative function.

NOTES

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1. In the same vein, at paragraph 5 of the lecture course *Thing and Space,* Husserl distinguishes between "presence in the flesh" and "belief" and contends that we can have the former even in the lack of the latter (see *TS,* 13–14).
2. On Sellars's appraisal of Husserl's work, notably mediated by Marvin Farber, see Antonio Nunziante's contribution in this volume. While in this chapter I focus exclusively on the theoretical issues raised by the discussion on whether imagination plays a role in perception, Nunziante's discussion of how Sellars, through Farber, takes up aspects of Husserl's later work in *Experience and Judgment*—notably the idea of a preconceptual and yet normative structuration of sensible content—is particularly significant for the argument I try to develop in this chapter.
3. See, in this regard, Manca (2018). On the basis of Husserl's analyses of perception and imagination, the author elaborates on a reply to Sellars's view on the role of imagination in perception that partly converge with the reading I am proposing in this chapter. In particular, I intend here to develop the idea that considering the differences between the positions of two authors is not an end in itself but instead hints at a possible mutual integration.
4. To be sure, Kant's account of productive imagination is complex, multifaced, and elusive, and therefore rather controversial. For an overview and discussion of the most relevant debated issues, see Ferrarin (1995, 2009, 2018).
5. Cf. Filieri 2017. In Kant's view, such a synopsis counts as a precondition for synthesis but is not yet sufficient to establish cognition. However, to the extent that intuitions are at least spatio-temporally organized, it has been argued that intuitions are not mere sensations, insofar as they give us "acquaintance" with objects. See Allais (2015), and on the notion of knowledge by acquaintance, see Russell (1910).

6. In this respect, Carta (2021) discusses the ambiguities in Husserl's references to normativity, trying to shed light on which claims can be considered compatible and which cannot. With respect to the present discussion, Carta would speak of the "transformation" of eidetic laws into norms, rather than their "application." In my view, the reference to application is justified because the concept is less elusive than that of transformation and indicates that eidetic laws can be translated into concrete prescriptions when they are applied to actual judgments. This is also in line with the present attempt to reassess Husserl's remarks against a Kantian background.
7. It is a matter of debate whether what I discuss in the next section as preconceptual synthetic formations (sense-image models) are in fact part of this transcendental project or whether, since they are based on sensations, they have only explanatory power (see Coates 2007; Corti 2021; Haag 2013). My suggestion is that such preconceptual formations have a transcendental constitutive function: preconceptual structuration and order within experience is one of the conditions of possibility of perception.
8. Defending a "critical realist" interpretation, Paul Coates emphasizes that, strictly speaking, in Sellars's view, we can attribute "presence" only to what is "immediately in consciousness, as a part of the phenomenal nonconceptual content" (Coates 2007, 184). In this sense, the concept of perceptual presence as I am using it here would not apply to Sellars's view (see also Coates 2007, chapter 1). However, Sellars's sense-image models seem to broaden this idea of perceptual presence so as to include nonconceptual imaginary content. The unification of such nonconceptual content in perception finds its legitimation in the application of the relevant concept.
9. Kant emphasizes that this is possible only when we are not overwhelmed by impressions, as may happen for instance in a room full of pictures and decorations, or in Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome. This shows how the synthetic function of imagination is constrained by the nature of sensible contents.
10. For reasons that need to be considered separately, for both Kant and Sellars, these activities need to be reassessed in relation to conceptual determinations; see section 3.
11. This is a distinction Husserl articulates in later works. Although some crucial insight into the difference between epistemic and intuitive fulfillment are already present in the *Logical*

Investigations, in some passages, Husserl tends to conflate the two. (See, e.g., *LI 2/M,* 216–24.)

12. Husserl actually considers other cases as well, including synchronic movement, but for the sake of brevity, I will consider just these two cases. In fact, the observations related to the other examples, are consistent with those related to two discussed here. (See Summa 2014b, 273–78.)
13. For a more detailed discussion, see Summa (2014b, 250–307). Notice that such implicit expectation is a protention and does not entail an explicit imaginative anticipation of what is yet to come.
14. Obviously, it is not ruled out that discordant perception may arise. In that case, we would have a synthesis not of fulfillment but of disappointment. Depending on the nature of such disappointment (e.g., whether it is total or partial), our consciousness of identity of the perceived object in and through its modes of appearing will be partially or totally revised (*LI 2/M,* 211–13).
15. Note that this does not rule out deception: the effect of drugs can also be to disturb the consciousness of psychophysical conditionality or if-then relation.
16. To be sure, Sellars actually distinguishes in the paper between "imaging" and "imagining" (see RIKTE). He considers imaging as a nonindependent part of both perceiving and imagining and imagining as a complex act somehow parallel to perception. This view comes close to Husserl's distinction between perception as presentation and phantasy as re-presentation. Both, in fact, would argue that the structure of perception and of imagining/phantasy are discontinuous. However, the imaging involved in the formation of sense-image models already has for Sellars the character of an imagistic re-presentation. For Husserl, instead, no imagistic representation is involved in perception.
17. Cf. Crowell (2013, 131–46). This idea of empty or indeterminate consciousness differs at least in part from the idea of an implicit but imaginative expectation operating in perception. Accordingly, on Husserl's account, it would not be correct to say that, when I see, for instance, a cat that is partially hidden behind an object, "I come to have a set of implicit expectations regarding my future experience of the cat" (Coates 2007, 193). What I see is the cat, and my perception entails what is given right now, both as determinate and as indeterminate.

18. In this case, too, such indeterminacy can be imaginatively or perceptually determined (e.g., if I imagine the dog's inner organs or if I dissect it). However, such determinacy would need to be guided by some kind of prior knowledge about the type (or even to the concept) of the object and by my interests in the object (Summa 2014b, 213–40; Wehrle 2015).
19. See Summa 2015 for a discussion of this account in relation to the problem of chaos and order within experience.
20. See also Ferrarin (1995) and Pradelle (2000, 54–55).
21. As Ginsborg summarizes:

> To the extent that impressions derived from the perception of things which are red and round lead me consistently to reproduce impressions derived from previous perceptual encounters with things that are red and round, and to the extent that I reproduce these earlier impressions with the consciousness of appropriateness of what I am doing, I am, on the view here proposed, subsuming these impressions under the concepts *red* and *round*. Similarly, to the extent that being presented with an apple leads me to reliably reproduce impressions previously made on me by apples, again with the consciousness of normativity, I am bringing the apple under the concept apple. For what it is to conceptualize one's sense-impressions, on the view I am proposing to ascribe to Kant, is just to associate them imaginatively in determinate ways with the awareness that one is associating them as one ought. The consciousness of normative necessity in these associations is responsible . . . for the object-directed character of our perceptions; but insofar as our particular way of associating present with past sense-impressions on any given occasion is sensitive to the object being of this or that particular kind, it is also responsible for the object's being perceived as belonging to that kind, and thus for the object being brought under the corresponding concept. (2008, 74)

22. Crowell (2013, 124–46) discusses some developments in Husserl's view on the normativity in perception, arguing that, in his earlier writings, his account comes close to a conceptualist view, while in his later writings, he elaborates more thoroughly on preconceptual normativity in perception. While agreeing with most parts of the argument, I here argue that, besides the structures Crowell discusses, there are different kinds of normativity

in perception (and in perceptual judgments) and that Husserl is also interested in the normativity of perception as related to the genesis and the application of empirical concepts.

23. Notice that, as Husserl already emphasizes in the *Sixth Logical Investigations,* these concepts do not need to be linguistically expressed (*LI 2/M,* 222–25).
24. Based on Husserl's analyses, we should then distinguish types of objects and types of events. In general, types of events are genetically prior than types of objects (Lohmar 2008, 141–45).

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CHAPTER 8

THE CHISHOLM-SELLARS CORRESPONDENCE ON INTENTIONALITY

Wolfgang Huemer

In the second half of the twentieth century, the notion of "intentionality" played a central role both in analytic philosophy of mind and in the phenomenological movement. In what follows, I will discuss the attitude Wilfrid Sellars, a prominent exponent of the analytic tradition, has taken toward Husserlian phenomenology. Sellars is known for his interest in the history of philosophy—which most early analytic philosophers did not share. Did his open-mindedness toward other philosophical views presented in the past extend to the rivaling tradition of his times? With a look at the letter exchange between Wilfrid Sellars and Roderick Chisholm on the nature of intentionality, I will show that Sellars was, in fact, interested to compare his own views with that of others. His main goal was not, however, to find a common ground that could serve as a basis for developing a shared position that integrated insights from both sides of the divide. Rather, it seems that he aimed at giving a more clear-cut presentation of his own views and to insist on the substantial differences that kept the two traditions apart.

1. THE GENERAL BACKGROUND: THE "DIVIDE" BETWEEN ANALYTIC AND CONTINENTAL PHILOSOPHY

According to a widespread view, the tradition of Western philosophy in the twentieth century is strongly marked by two dominant rivaling traditions: analytic and Continental philosophy. Both have in common that they do not have a shared doctrine or method, nor are they philosophical "schools" in a narrow sense. Rather, they are made up by heterogeneous groups of philosophers who share what we could call, in the most general terms, a certain "style of reasoning" or a "general philosophical outlook."[1] Both traditions have their beginnings in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is interesting to note that in their early days, there was some exchange and reciprocal influence between the two: there where convergencies on the topics that have been studied,[2] and we know from several sources that important protagonists on both sides showed a strong interest in the arguments proposed by the others.[3]

Only one generation later, however, the situation had changed dramatically. By the middle of the century, the two traditions had drifted apart, and the antagonism between them had become so pronounced that there was hardly any hope to even find common ground on which to exchange arguments or individuate concrete points of disagreement. Both traditions had developed their own specific vocabularies, their own styles of argumentation, and their own canons and frameworks of references. It thus had become more and more difficult to engage in a serious exchange across the borders, and only very few philosophers have made the effort to become fluent in both "languages." The reasons for this development are manifold, and if we look at the differences within both traditions, it seems reasonable to assume that some of the decisive factors are not of a purely philosophical nature; arguably sociological factors have also played a central role.[4]

As a result, by midcentury the predominant attitude toward the respective other tradition was that of ignorance,

often paired with hostility. Continental philosophers did not make a great effort to familiarize themselves with new developments in analytic philosophy, and the same held the other way around. David Woodruff Smith characterizes the attitude among many analytic philosophers well with the following words: "Phenomenology—developing after Brentano along different lines in Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, et al.—seemed either a direct threat or simply passé for these midcentury analytic philosophers" (Smith 2021).

2. HOW DOES SELLARS RELATE TO PHENOMENOLOGY?

Within the analytic tradition, Wilfrid Sellars was an exception in many respects. More than other analytic philosophers of his time, he cultivated an interest in the history of philosophy. According to Rorty, this, together with his idiosyncratic style—which Sellars himself characterizes as "involuted" in his "Autobiographical Reflections" (AR, 292)—added to the complexity of his works, which in turn, can explain why Sellars has received less attention than other founding analytic philosophers. Rorty mentions Quine and Wittgenstein in this context: "For Sellars was unusual among prominent American philosophers of the post–World War II period, and quite different from Quine and Wittgenstein, in having a wide and deep acquaintance with the history of philosophy. . . . Sellars believed that 'philosophy without the history of philosophy is, if not blind, at least dumb,' but this view seemed merely perverse to much of his audience (Rorty 1997, 3)." This interest in the history of philosophy indicates that Sellars was more open than other midcentury analytic philosophers to look beyond the horizon and confront his own views with that of philosophers from other periods or traditions. To be sure, he did not engage in detailed exegetical analyses of the great thinkers of the past, nor did he make an effort to contextualize their contributions or to understand them before the historical background in which they were formulated. Rather, he seemed

to be eager to draw on particular achievements of individual philosophers; his intention, it seems, was to learn from the others and to build on their insights.[5]

It might be interesting to note that in Sellars's works we find numerous references to Kant and Hegel, the empiricist tradition (in particular to Hume, Locke, and Berkeley), and of course, contemporary analytic philosophers like Carnap, Russell, Wittgenstein, Ayer, and so on—but hardly any references to Husserl. In some rare places, Sellars explicitly touches on isolated aspects of Husserlian philosophy—and typically he does so with words that express a general attitude of appreciation, which, however, very often are qualified or relativized in one way or another. Let me illustrate this point with two examples.

In his "Autobiographical Reflections," Sellars writes about his first assignment after graduation as a teaching assistant at the University of Buffalo. There he got to know Marvin Farber, one of the main exponents of the phenomenological tradition in the United States at the time. Farber and Sellars had intensive exchanges on philosophy, which had a lasting impact on Sellars. The philosophy of Edmund Husserl seems to have been a topic of their conversations. When it comes to describing Farber's importance for his own development, however, Sellars chooses the following words: "Marvin Farber led me through my first careful reading of the *Critique of Pure Reason* and introduced me to Husserl. His combination of utter respect for the structure of Husserl's thought with the equally firm conviction that this structure could be given a naturalistic interpretation was undoubtedly a key influence on my own subsequent philosophical strategy" (AR, 283). Farber's main influence on Sellars thus was that he made him *carefully read* Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*—a work that, as is well known, had a profound and lasting impact on Sellars's philosophy. He adds that through Farber he also got introduced to Husserl's philosophy, but more than the phenomenological project it was *Farber's* "utter respect" for it—as well as the prospect that it could

be given a naturalistic interpretation—that impressed him. His reference to Husserlian phenomenology remains, thus, quite distanced and indirect.

A similar attitude becomes manifest in a paper that was delivered as a contribution to a symposium of the Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy on the topic of consciousness. At this occasion, Sellars explicitly drew an analogy between the phenomenological method and that of conceptual analysis. The published version of the paper says:

> Furthermore, for longer than I care to remember I have conceived of philosophical analysis (and synthesis) as akin to phenomenology. I would therefore expect this audience to be more sympathetic to what I have to say than many of my colleagues would expect. On the other hand, since I shall be dealing with specifics, I also would expect this sympathy to be laced with disagreement. Indeed some measure of disagreement is exactly what I am hoping for. After all, disagreement presupposes communication. (SRPCPh, 170)

In the first sentence of this passage, Sellars makes a promising statement in which he expresses his opinion that there are strong analogies between the phenomenological method and that of analytic philosophy—but he stops there. Please note that he does not suggest that philosophical analysis is informed by the phenomenological method; nor does he mean to say that the introduction of the phenomenological reduction would have had an impact on the development of the method of conceptual analysis in general or on his own philosophical outlook in particular. He limits himself to point out that there are parallels between the two approaches—and does not make an effort to spell out what exactly they consist in.

More importantly, in the lines that follow he relativizes this statement and suggests that next to the analogies, there are essential differences between the two traditions. In fact,

he expresses his hope that in the discussion, a *disagreement* between the two would surface. Thus, while he clearly signals his interest in serious dialogue with the phenomenological tradition, he also states explicitly that the primary goal of this dialogue is not to find common ground or create a bridge, but rather to better understand the other position—to better grasp the similarities that might subsist as well as the differences that keep them apart.

The two quotes are exemplary of Sellars's attitude toward the phenomenological movement. He was open minded and showed interest in a genuine exchange with exponents of the phenomenological movement. Moreover, he saw there are parallels between the methods applied in phenomenology and in analytic philosophy, respectively. It is equally true, however, that he did not show an interest in finding a common ground that could reconcile the two perspectives or prepare the formulation of a new approach that would unite the strengths of both. Rather, he was well aware that he was talking to philosophers who had developed a different, rivaling perspective in the philosophy of mind and was interested in getting a more nuanced view of the differences between them.

3. HOW WAS SELLARS'S WORK RECEIVED IN THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL MOVEMENT?

How did things go in the other direction? How was Sellars's philosophy received within the phenomenological tradition? My impression is that here the attitude can be best described as that of *suspicious ignorance*. In the second half of the twentieth century, Sellars was known to a broader philosophical audience as the editor of anthologies of texts that were central for the analytic tradition (cf. Feigl and Sellars 1949; Sellars and Hospers 1952) and as the author of a ferocious attack on the Myth of the Given. The former hardly attracted the attention of Continental philosophers; the latter likely raised their suspicion. The very title of Sellars's influential argument

suggested that there was something wrong with "*the Given*." A scholar who was not yet familiar with the details of the argument could easily have had the impression that it was directed against a central notion of Husserlian phenomenology, which notoriously shows a vivid interest in "the given" or in what is "immediately given" to the mind. It is not by accident that Husserl uses these terms quite extensively and in central places of his work. Is this first impression justified? Is Sellars's critique really directed against Husserlian phenomenology? Well, to find out, one would have to profoundly engage with an author who had the tendency to present his views in a quite hermetic and "involuted" way. Some phenomenologists might have done so and concluded that Sellars's attack had a different target; others might have found ways to repress rather than address Sellars's argument, which they probably perceived as a mysterious threat that lingered far, far away on some other philosophical continent. However things may stand, the scarcity of publications that discuss the question of whether Sellars's argument is relevant for Husserlian phenomenology indicates that the argument did not find a great echo among phenomenological circles.

Things have changed only in the last two or three decades, likely as a reaction to the "Sellars revival" that was brought about by the contributions of "left Sellarsians" from Pittsburgh, like John McDowell or Robert Brandom. In the last two decades, more than half a century after the first publication of *Empiricism and Philosophy of Mind,* several scholars have addressed the question of whether and to what extent Husserl's phenomenology adopts a version of the Myth of the Given (cf., for example, Soffer 2003; De Santis 2019; Smith 2021; Williams 2021; cf. also Huemer 2005).

4. THE LETTERS ON INTENTIONALITY

The discussion so far has shown that in the historical period in which Sellars's *Empiricism and Philosophy of Mind* was

published, there were hardly any serious interactions between analytic philosophy and phenomenology. In light of these considerations, it is worth noting that Wilfrid Sellars engaged in an intensive exchange with Roderick Chisholm. In the period from July to November 1956, they discussed their views—especially those on the nature of intentionality—in a series of eleven letters. It was Sellars's initiative to publish these letters in the second volume of the *Minnesota Studies in the Philosophy of Science* in 1958, together with a short introduction written by Sellars and a reprint of Chisholm's article "Sentences about Believing" (1956), which had first appeared in the *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*.[6] The fact that Sellars invited Chisholm to engage in this exchange and opted for making the letters accessible to a broader audience shows that he was interested in confronting his own views with that of a prominent exponent of the phenomenological tradition—as well as in publicly documenting this interest.

Roderick Chisholm was the ideal interlocutor for Sellars: he was familiar both with the phenomenological tradition—especially with the work of Franz Brentano and Edmund Husserl—and the analytic tradition. Moreover, he had published extensively on intentionality—"though from a more conservative point of view" (Chisholm and Sellars 1958, 509), as Sellars suggests. Chisholm's ability to move in both traditions becomes manifest in the very article that is reprinted with the letters, where he presents a *linguistic version* of Brentano's intentionality thesis. Moreover, in this and other publications (cf. Chisholm 1955), he criticizes attempts to give a behaviorist analysis of intentionality or meaning.

In his introduction, Sellars informs the readers that he had sent Chisholm the proofs of his *Empiricism and Philosophy of Mind*. As his earlier attempts to formulate his views on intentionality had not been satisfactory for Chisholm, Sellars wanted to see whether "the new twist to [his] argument would convince him." He explicitly states that the letter exchange served to "make a further try for agreement" (Chisholm and Sellars 1958, 509).

The focus of the discussion that unfolds in the letters is clearly on the notion of intentionality; the two philosophers do not discuss Sellars's attack on the Myth of the Given—in fact, Chisholm states, right in the first letter, that he agrees "with much of what [Sellars had] to say about the 'myth of the given' and with . . . the 'rightness' of statements or assertions" (Chisholm and Sellars 1958, 521).[7] The two philosophers rather discuss the *Myth of Jones* and the philosophical implications of Sellars's story of how "our Rylean ancestors" have introduced psychological vocabulary not on the basis of introspection but as terms that were introduced for entities postulated by the theory.

The two quickly individuate the central point of disagreement: the question of whether the meaning of linguistic signs is to be explained on the basis of the intentionality of the mental, as Chisholm suggests, or whether the intentionality of the mental presupposes the possession of an articulate language and the possibility to engage in linguistic exchanges with others, as Sellars argues. In his first letter, Sellars summarizes the point of disagreement in his thesis A12:

> The argument presumes that the *metalinguistic* vocabulary in which we talk about linguistic episodes can be analyzed in terms which do not presuppose the framework of mental acts; in particular, that
>
> ". . ." means p
>
> is not to be analyzed as
>
> ". . ." expresses t and t is about p
>
> where t is a thought. (Chisholm and Sellars 1958, 522)

In the thesis that follows, A13, Sellars explains: "For my claim is that the categories of intentionality are nothing more nor less than the metalinguistic categories in terms of which we talk epistemically about overt speech as they appear in the framework of thoughts construed on the model of overt speech" (Chisholm and Sellars 1958, 522). With this formulation,

Sellars paraphrases a point already made in *Empiricism and Philosophy of Mind* (*EPMH,* § 58, 105). Chisholm agrees with the centrality of A12: "If you could persuade me of A-12, perhaps you could persuade me of the rest" (Chisholm and Sellars 1958, 523).

The two philosophers thus chose to discuss a question that is notoriously difficult, and which has become known as the debate concerning original and derived intentionality. Both sides typically treat intentionality (of the mental or of linguistic items, respectively) as a primitive that is not further analyzable. This makes it difficult to imagine that the debate could be decided on the basis of arguments: How could a philosopher, who analyzes the structure of mental states, individuate, on the basis of a priori reflections, an aspect of the mental that proves that it is mental episodes, rather than linguistic signs or activities, that have original intentionality? How could empirical research demonstrate that original intentionality is a linguistic feature? We face here, it seems to me, one of those philosophical impasses that cannot be answered once and for all but that allows philosophers to position themselves and to make their own philosophical standpoint manifest. In this case, they can express their views on whether a study of the mind should start with an analysis of the experiential aspects of the mental, as it is given in a first-person point of view, or rather with an analysis of the structures of linguistic interactions and of our established practice to ascribe mental states to others, that is, of aspects that are intersubjectively observable.

It is thus not a big surprise that in their letter exchange, Sellars and Chisholm cannot come to an agreement on this issue. Nonetheless, it is interesting to see which moves they make to present their own perspectives and to exchange their views. Chisholm, though insisting that "the plausible answer is that living things are peculiar, not noises and marks" (Chisholm and Sellars 1958, 524), eventually admits that Sellars's *Myth of Jones* depicts a scenario that is at least not prima facie impossible: "I concede that it is conceivable that people might

make semantical statements about one another's verbal behavior before arriving at the conception that there are such things as thoughts" (Chisholm and Sellars 1958, 537). Sellars, on the other hand, reacts to Chisholm's challenge concerning the intentionality of nonlinguistic creatures such as "infants, mutes, and animals" by stating, "It is, therefore, even on my view, by no means impossible that there be a mature deaf-mute who has 'beliefs and desires' and can 'think about things (but not well, of course)' though he has learned no *language*" (Chisholm and Sellars 1958, 528). Sellars uses this last point, however, to state that it is not linguistic "marks and noises" or symbols that have meaning. "Marks and noises are, in a primary sense, linguistic expressions only as 'nonparrotingly' produced by a language-using animal" (Chisholm and Sellars 1958, 525). This suggests that linguistic signs would not be such—and would thus not have intentionality—if they were not *used* by creatures who have been acculturated to rule-guided social practice. Sellars thus underlines his view of the social basis of the mental, which, of course, stands in direct contrast to Chisholm's Brentanian perspective. Sellars reinforces this contrast when he ties it to the Myth of the Given: "In your first letter you expressed agreement 'with much of what [I] have to say, about the "myth of the given."' Well, of a piece with my rejection of this myth is my contention that before these people could come to know *noninferentially* (by 'introspection') that they have thoughts, they must *first* construct the concept of what it is to be a thought" (Chisholm and Sellars 1958, 527). Thus with their letter exchange, Chisholm and Sellars have not achieved what Sellars had initially hoped for, an agreement on an issue that is most central in philosophy of mind: "I realize that our failure to agree may spring from a more radical difference in our general philosophical outlooks than appears to exist" (Chisholm and Sellars 1958, 535). What they have achieved, however, is a better understanding of the other's point of view and a more precise expression of some points of their own respective theories. In his last letter, Sellars states: "I hope, however, that

I have succeeded in clearing up: some points about my interpretation of intentionality" (Chisholm and Sellars 1958, 537).

* * *

This short discussion of the letter exchange between Sellars and Chisholm has shown, I hope, that it is not a testimony of a "veritable Sisyphean striving toward an agreement just out of reach" (Soffer 2003, 304). Moreover, I am suspicious that Sellars really saw the exchange as a "try for agreement." In the letters, fundamental differences on central issues come to the fore. Moreover, these differences are so substantial that in the end of the exchange the two philosophers agree to disagree. These two facts, together with Sellars's statement that he had the idea to publish the letters "only some months after the last of the letters had been written" (Chisholm and Sellars 1958, 509), seem to indicate that Sellars's true intention was to use them to highlight the fundamental differences between Chisholm's phenomenological approach and his own analytic perspective. He does insist on the similarities between the two views, but—in a way that is very similar to his strategy discussed above (cf. section 3)—he does not miss the occasion to remind us that there are insuperable differences. Take, for example, the letter in which Sellars writes: "Though I don't agree with some of the things you say, I have attempted to make it clear that I do agree with a great deal of what you say, more than you might think possible, while remaining on my side of the fence" (Chisholm and Sellars 1958, 529). When Sellars, who "continued to think of [intentionality] as the essential trait of the mental" (AR, 291), engaged in this exchange with Chisholm, he was probably aware that he could not convince his interlocutor to abandon the basic assumption of his philosophical position—and he makes clear that he himself was also unwilling to climb over the fence that separated them and change his own basic views as a result of these discussions.

With the publication of the letter exchange, Sellars could thus accentuate the differences between Chisholm's and his

own views on intentional structure of mental acts, which "any adequate philosophy of mind must take seriously" (AR, 286). In addition, he also succeeded in presenting a more nuanced picture of his own views that allowed readers to better grasp the details of his proposal. Very likely, he also meant to invite readers to take an open-minded approach toward other philosophical movements—not with the goal of establishing harmony or finding a common ground, but as a serious attempt to widen one's own horizons, to integrate valuable insights into one's own view where possible, and to accept the dividing points that cannot be resolved. After all, looking beyond one's own horizons is often challenging, but can at times turn out to be a fruitful and rewarding experience.

NOTES

1. The two traditions, thus, are all but homogeneous blocks. The Continental tradition comprises, among others, phenomenology in its original form as it was developed by Edmund Husserl, but also in its later developments that were proposed by Martin Heidegger or Maurice Merleau-Ponty, existentialism, critical theory, hermeneutics, post-structuralism, etc.; analytic philosophy spans from verificationism and logical-formalistic approaches to ordinary language philosophy and speech act theory. The heterogeneity in the analytic tradition becomes manifest in the very fact that nowadays there are consolidated traditions of *analytic metaphysics* or *analytic aesthetics,* i.e., contributions to disciplines that have been regarded "meaningless" by early analytic philosophers. Moreover, most of the schools or movements within the analytic and Continental traditions have developed their own distinctive method.
2. This point was already made by Michael Dummett in his *Origins of Analytical Philosophy,* where he notes that in 1903 Frege and Husserl would have appeared to any German student of philosophy who knew their work "not, certainly, as two deeply opposed thinkers: rather as remarkably close in orientation, despite some divergence of interests. They may be compared with the Rhine and the Danube, which rise quite close to one another and for a time pursue two roughly parallel

courses, only to diverge in utterly different directions and flow into different seas" (1996, 26).

3. Think, for example, of Bertrand Russell's and Gilbert Ryle's documented interest in phenomenology, which became manifest in several book reviews, and in Russell's letter exchange with Meinong; or of Felix Kaufmann's attempt to bridge the gap between the Vienna Circle and Husserlian phenomenology. For Ryle's views on phenomenology, cf., for example, Brandl (2002), for Kaufmann, cf. Huemer (2003).
4. The relations between two important traditions are, of course, very complex and multidimensional—they are, thus, determined by plenty of factors. Without any doubt, general philosophical views have played an important role in determining the dynamics that shaped the relations between the two traditions. ("What is the position of philosophy with respect to the natural sciences?" "Should philosophy adopt formal logical methods?" Etc.) I do think, however, that next to these questions, sociological aspects have also been decisive for the divide between analytic and Continental philosophy. Let me quickly mention three points: first, the geographical distribution of the two traditions might have been a factor. While the Continental tradition played a leading role in great parts of Continental Europe, the analytic tradition has gained dominance in Great Britain and Anglo North America. Some of the main protagonists of the analytic tradition were philosophers, however, who started their career in Central Europe, but were forced into exile in the midthirties—and were also met with suspicion in Central Europe after the Second World War, especially if they made an attempt to come back (cf., for example, Dahms 1987). A second element might be individuated in the idea that to facilitate cooperation in philosophical research, it is opportune to create "schools" that typically have their origins in the oeuvre of a single, brilliant philosopher. This view was quite common among Continental, but not among analytic, philosophers. A philosophical school can be understood as an organizational unit for the division of philosophical labor that can, however, easily lead to the creation of exclusive circles that have the tendency to close themselves hermetically to the outside and to become impenetrable to all forms of argumentation that is not sanctioned from "within." A third factor is the well-known group-psychological fact that the contrast with "others" (in our case: with philosophers that are considered

exponents of the rivaling tradition) reinforces the inner coherence of any social group.

5. In his "Autobiographical Reflections," Sellars recalls the period when he taught history of philosophy at the University of Iowa, in the late 1930s. This assignment required him to study the history of philosophy, which he did "with a burning intensity" and which made him understand the importance of the "probing of historical ideas with current conceptual tools" (AR, 290).
6. Or so the last lines of Sellars's introduction to the letter exchange seems to suggest (cf. Chisholm and Sellars 1958).
7. This might be an indication that (at least some) North American phenomenologists who were familiar with Sellars's argument at midcentury read it as an attack against of the empiricist, not the phenomenological, notion of givenness.

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CHAPTER 9

PHENOMENOLOGICAL VARIATIONS ON SELLARS'S "PARTICULARS"

Daniele De Santis

After an initial, very critical reaction,[1] recent scholarship on Wilfrid Sellars has finally brought close attention to the so-called Sellarsian particulars[2]—both in connection to the many aspects of Sellars's own relation to Leibniz[3] and to the proper systematic contribution this concept can bring to current metaphysical and ontological debates.[4] Although Sellars has basically dedicated only two texts to the topic in question—the long "On the Logic of Complex Particulars" from 1949, followed by "Particulars" in 1952—the very concept of a "particular" (how it should be comprehended and how it should never be misunderstood) is operatively present throughout his works. A most meaningful example can be found in *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind:*

> Now if we bear in mind that the point of the epistemological category of the given is, presumably, to explicate the idea that empirical knowledge rests on a "foundation" of non-inferential knowledge of matters of fact, we may well experience a feeling of surprise on noting that

> according to sense-datum theorists, it is *particulars* that are sensed. For what is known, even in non-inferential knowledge is *facts* rather than particulars, items of the form *something's being thus-and-so* or *something's standing in a certain relation to something else.* (*EPMH,* § 3, 15–16)

The starting point of Sellars's diagnosis of the roots of the (many variations on the) Myth of the Given, and therefore of his radical dismissal of it, consists of fixing both the "gnoseological" distinction between *sensing* and *knowing* and the ontological distinction between *particulars* and *facts*.[5] Later on, over the course of section 23, the concept of a particular—notably, of a complex particular—emerges once again during a discussion of the equivocations affecting the phrase "having a red surface":

> We start out by thinking of the familiar fact that a physical object may be of one color "on the surface" and of another color "inside." We may express this by saying that, for example, the "surface" of the object is red, but its "inside" green. But in saying this we are *not* saying that there is a "surface" in the sense of a bulgy two-dimensional particular, a red "expanse" which is a component particular in a complex particular which also includes green particulars. . . . It is just a mistake to suppose that as the word "red" is actually used, it is ever surfaces in the sense of two-dimensional particulars which are red. The only particular involved when a physical object is "red on the outside, but green inside" is the physical object itself, located in a certain region of Space and enduring over a stretch of Time. (*EPMH,* 52–53)

But the notion of a particular also plays a crucial yet almost unperceivable role in "Metaphysics and the Concept of a Person," from 1969. The "unity of a person," Sellars states, is

not that of a system: "A person is a *complex individual,* of course, but his *complexity* is a matter of the many predicates applying to that one individual who is the person" (MCP, 222, emphasis added). Later on in this same essay, during the assessment of "the endless perplexities which have arisen about the ownership-relation between persons and their 'experiences,'" Sellars writes the following:

> Words like "sensation," "feeling," "thought," and "impression" in such contexts as Jones has a sensation (feeling, etc.) have mesmerized philosophers into wondering what Jones' mind is, as contrasted with his sensations, feelings, etc. If Jones qua mind is a haver of "experiences" then, since to be a haver is to have a relational property, must not the mind be a *mere* haver—in other words a "*bare particular*"? Are we not confronted by a choice between accepting *bare particulars* with ontological piety, and avoiding them at the price of committing ourselves to a "bundle theory" of the self?
>
> Since the above dialectic is a special case of a more general dialectic pertaining to subject-predicate statements, we find philosophers pressing their brows in anguish over the dilemma of choosing between "things are havers (bare particulars)" and "things are bundles of what they are said to have." The fundamental mistake, of course, is that of construing subject-predicate statements as relational. (MCP, 230–31, emphasis added)

The question of particulars—notably, of their "complexity" and "logic"—covers an array of different cases ranging from "physical objects" to "Fido" (the leading example in "On the Logic of Complex Particulars") and "persons."[6] In the following, I will set for us three different tasks. Due to the introductory aspect of this chapter, I will first briefly present what is at stake for Sellars with the problem of (complex) particulars (§ 1). In section 2, I will try to verify to what extent the

"perplexities" surrounding the particulars—namely, all the difficulties and contradictions that undermine the very concept of "bare particular" as Sellars tackles it in "Particulars"—can de facto also affect the phenomenological conception. In the conclusion (§ 3), we will see whether phenomenology is able to gratify us with a view of particulars that is more articulated and nuanced than might be expected. This is no otiose issue. For if the roots of the Myth of the Given are to be found in the confusion between "sensing" and "knowing," "particulars" and "facts" (as Sellars affirms right at the outset of *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind*), they therefore also lie in the nature of particulars. If that is true, then the question whether a certain philosophy (be it Husserlian phenomenology or some other philosophy) falls prey to the "myth" (or to one of its variations, such as the categorial myth) can also be decided on the basis of the conception of what a "particular" is.[7] For the sake of space, in the following, the "myth," and hence the problem of its connection to the issue of particulars, will be left completely out of the picture, since our sole concern here will be the structure and nature of "particulars" (which I will be using interchangeably with "individuals").

However, before we move on, two methodological remarks are necessary to avoid confusion. The first remark bears on the adjective "phenomenological," which I will constantly employ in such phrases as "phenomenological ontology" or the "phenomenological conception" of essences or of particulars. Here "phenomenological" is meant to designate only a certain number of figures upon which this text will be building so as to construct the most unitary and consistent picture possible. I will not be concerning myself with the question of the historical development of the many different positions from the early phenomenological tradition. The second remark concerns Sellars himself, or better, the nature of the arguments he sets forth in "Particulars." As has rightly been pointed out, Sellars's "project does not supposedly belong to a constitutive ontology," and his argument is in fact "more pragmatic-linguistic than

ontological" (Nunziante 2021, 19). In "Particulars," Sellars explicitly notes, "The substantive contentions of my argument belong to logic rather than to the philosophy of epistemology of logic, and if, particularly in the following paragraphs, I have given them, on occasion, an overly 'ontological' formulation, I have done so solely for the sake of simplicity and convenience" (P, 269). Although Sellars is quite likely referring solely to the very last pages of the essays, where the concept of "family of worlds" is introduced, the warning might be applied to the essay as whole. However, in straightforward opposition to Sellars's disclaimer, I will explicitly be reading him *ontologically*—with the clear awareness that questions and issues might arise over the course of my analyses that do not have a direct counterpart in the trajectory of his own thought and way of thinking.

1. A "MORIBUND" DOCTRINE AND SELLARS'S PARTICULARS

The already "moribund" doctrine of "bare particulars" is blown to death by Sellars by a two-step argument: first, by a reductio ad absurdum of the concept of bare particular; second, by tracing its (fallacious) origin back to the already mentioned confusion between "facts" and "particulars."

The absurd character of the assumption of bare particulars is displayed by Sellars in a footnote at the beginning of "Particulars" in which the symbolism of the *Principia Mathematica* is quickly employed:

> Perhaps the neatest way in which to expose absurdity of the notion of bare particulars is to show that the sentence, "Universals are exemplified by bare particulars," is a self-contradiction. As a matter of fact, the self-contradictory character of this sentence becomes evident the moment we translate it into the symbolism of the *Principia Mathematica*. It becomes, $(x)((\exists\varphi)\varphi x \supset \sim(\exists\varphi)\varphi x)$, in other words, "If a particular exemplifies

> a universal, then there is no universal which it exemplifies." (P, 262)

Even without resorting to the symbolism mobilized by Sellars, the "self-contradictory" character of the notion of bare particular consists of the following: a bare *particular* is supposed to exemplify a universal precisely in order to be the *qualified* particular that it is; and yet as a *bare* particular, the particular does not exemplify any universal. Moreover, a *bare* particular with no qualification is not even able to exemplify any universal: either the bare *particular* is already characterized by its "ability" (*sit venia verbo*) to exemplify a universal (let us say: A-universal), in which case it is not a *bare* particular, or it is indeed a *bare* particular—but why would it exemplify A-universal rather than B-universal or C-universal?[8] Due to its bareness, there would be no reason for it, as a *bare* particular, to exemplify any universal whatsoever so as to be a *particular* of any sort displaying some kind of qualification.

What is interesting for us here is that Sellars's corrosive argument extends over the attempt to appeal to the mereological distinction between "parts" and "wholes" (*holoi*). Sellars rejects the argument to the effect that patterns of particulars can be interpreted in such a way that an additional "particular which exemplifies a Gestalt universal" determines the identity of the pattern itself: "The business of the *holoi* with which this confusion populates the world is to be instances of irreducible *Gestalt* universals, as it is the business of ordinary particulars to be instances of ordinary universals, and there is no more reason to describe *holoi* as bare particulars than so to describe any other particulars" (P, 263). Sellars's argument works on two premises—first of all, that particular *holoi* are treated like *Gestalts* per se, irreducible to their own parts, and in addition that such *holoi* can be treated like "additional" particulars, or better, particulars added to the part-particulars in such a way that, properly speaking, the whole itself seems in the end to consist of the many "part-particulars" plus the

"*holon*-particular." This has the absurd consequence that as a result of the "addition" of the *holon*-particular to the many part-particulars, the whole would end up being included within itself; it would end up being part of itself as a whole. We shall verify later on whether this necessarily needs to be the case.

So much for Sellars's diagnosis of the self-contradictory nature of bare particulars. With regard to the roots of the notion itself, Sellars traces them back to the confusion between *facts* and *particulars* in terms of the dichotomy between a *this-factor* and a *such-factor.* Sellars presents his analyses as a response to a possible objection to his own idea of complex particulars:

> The objection takes its point of departure in the fact that the proposed framework, whatever its peculiarities, involves an ultimate dualism of universals and particulars. It runs as follows: "Any dualism of universals and particulars amounts to a distinction within things between a factor responsible for the particularity of the thing and a factor responsible for its character; in brief, a *this*-factor and a *such*-factor. But surely this is exactly the doctrine of bare particulars!" Now this argument has a venerable history, but it is beyond question as unsound as an argument can be. Its plausibility rests on a confusion between *particulars* and *facts*. Suppose that a certain *a* exemplifies φ. Than *a* is an instance of φ, but φ is not a component of *a*. On the other hand, φ is a component of the fact that *a* is φ. But the fact that *a* is φ is not itself an instance of φ. Thus, the notion of a thing which (1) has φ for a component, and yet (2) is an instance of φ, is a confusion which blends *a* and the fact that *a* is φ into a philosophical monstrosity. (P, 265–66)

If we translate the expression *fact* into the more phenomenological sounding phrase *state of affairs* (*Sachverhalt*), then the argument boils down to denouncing the confusion between "particulars" and the "state of affairs" (= formal and material

ontological correlates of propositions) into which they are articulated and in which they appear.[9] The *fact,* or better, the formal *state of affairs* "that '*a* is φ'" produces the illusion that there is a *this-factor* ("*a* is . . .") materially and ontologically distinct from a *such-factor* (". . . is φ"), the former being the *bare* particular individualizing the latter into a so-called qualified particular. On the contrary, Sellars says, that "*a* is φ" simply means that *a* is an "instance" of φ—or better, that *a* is a particular φ. The complexity of the formal state of affairs posited by the proposition "*a* is φ" does not correspond to a material complexity *in a*. Nevertheless, it is important to emphasize that Sellars does not intend to deny the existence of the *this-factor*—the point for him is rather to undermine the dichotomy between a *this-factor* and a *such-factor:* "We can, indeed, say that the fact that *a* is φ consists of a '*this*-factor' and a '*such*-factor,' but the '*this*-factor' instead of being a bare particular, is nothing more nor less than an instance of φ" (P, 266). This is precisely the key to Sellars's "complex particulars." However, it is a mistake to claim that what is thereby dropped is "*the very opposition between object and property*" (Morganti 2012, 302). (Sellars himself does not seem to talk this way.) Instead, it would be better to maintain that what is dropped is the opposition between substrate and property, or in different language, between "individualization" (better, the entity responsible thereof) and what is (to be) "individualized." It is the dichotomy between τόδε and τι within the τόδε τι that Sellars intends to drop once and for all by his conception of "complex particular."

Let us quote a few passages in which the idea of complex particulars is presented.

> Let us consider a domain of particulars each of which is an instance of one and only one simple non-relational universal. . . . It is to be a defining characteristic of the conceptual frame we are elaborating that no particular belonging to it *can* exemplify more than one simple

> non-relational universal. Let us call these particulars *basic particulars,* and the simple non-relational universals they exemplify, *qualia.* Now the first step in removing the air of complete unreality which surrounds the above stipulation is to point out that even though the basic particulars of this universal each exemplify one and only one *quale,* it is nevertheless possible for this universe to contain complex objects exemplifying complex properties. To say this, of course, is not to assert that *over and above* basic particulars exemplifying *qualia,* the universe under consideration might contain additional particulars and universals, only this time, complex ones. For sentences attributing complex properties to complex particulars are logical shorthand for conjunctions of sentences each of which attributes a *quale* to a basic particular. . . . In short, the fundamental principle of this conceptual frame is that what is ostensibly a single particular exemplifying a number of universals, is actually a number of particulars exemplifying simple universals. (P, 265)

> To make our example more intuitive, however, let us substitute for "φ" the expression "Greem," which we shall suppose to designate a simple non-relational universal capable of being exemplified by basic particulars, that is, a *quale.* In *a,* we have a particular that is greem. . . . Neither Greemness, nor the fact that *a* is greem, is greem. It is *a* that is greem. When we say that *a* is greem, we imply no internal complexity in *a.* Greemness is not an element of *a,* though it is of the fact that *a* is greem.
>
> . . . Once the confusion between particulars and facts is completely avoided, the notion that a basic particular can be an instance of two *qualia* not only loses all plausibility, but is seen to be absurd. A basic particular which is an instance of Greemness is not a bare

> particular standing in a relation to Greemness, it is a grum [= an instance of Greemness]. A basic particular which is an instance of Kleemness is not a bare particular standing in a relation to Kleemness, it is a klum [= an instance of Kleemness].
>
> . . . It is only "complex particulars," then, which can be both greem and kleem. To say this, of course, is to say that a sentence attributing these qualities to a complex particular is logical shorthand for a conjunction of sentences to the effect that certain basic particulars are greem, others are kleem, while the set of basic particulars as a whole is an instance of such and such a pattern or structure. (P, 266–68)

What is thereby obtained is also a clear-cut distinction between *quality* or *qualities* (of "complex particulars") and *quale* or *qualia:* to say that a complex particular is characterized by qualities, or has a series or system of qualities, is the same as saying it consists of some basic particulars, each of which is the instance of a *quale*. Basic particulars do not have qualities—they instantiate *qualia* instead. In contrast, complex particulars have qualities—but only in the sense that they consist of basic particulars instantiating *qualia*. Given such a distinction between *quality* (and complex particular) and *quale* (and basic particular), then, it should be clear why Sellars ends up dropping the dichotomy between the this-factor and the such-factor or between τόδε and τι within the τόδε τι. There is no such thing as a *this-factor* (τόδε)—a bare particular—that would instantiate a *such-factor* (τι); the *this-factor* is already the *such-factor* and the *such-factor* is already the *this-factor:* they are one and the same.

Of course, just as it would not be correct to state that each *this-factor* is already its own quality (for qualities are attributed to complex particulars), neither would it be consistent to affirm that each *this-factor* is already its own *quale* (basic particulars are not *qualia;* they instantiate *qualia* instead). All we can

do is what Sellars himself does, namely, to say: "*a* is φ"—with the constant risk of mistaking the logical (and ontologically formal) distinction for a (materially) ontological complexity.[10]

It is at this point that a few questions can also be raised concerning what Sellars himself maintains toward the end of his essay. Unless one attributes to Sellars's account of "complex particulars" in "Particulars" a merely descriptive nature (in such a way that Sellars would be simply describing what a complex particular consists of), the question arises of why a given "complex particular" would consist precisely of this set of "basic particulars." This could be labeled the problem of synthetic necessary truths. At the end of section 2 of "Particulars," Sellars replies to a possible objection to his discourse in the following way:

> "How, on your position, can 'x is green' entail (as it obviously does) 'x is extended'? Green is surely a *quale,* and your argument, therefore, implies that 'x is green' and 'x is extended' can't both be true." My answer is, of course, that the predicate "green" of ordinary usage has a complex logical structure. It designates a quality rather than a *quale,* and the particulars to which it applies are complex particulars. It applies, indeed, to *continua,* the elements of which have the logical properties of points. It is these points which are the basic particulars, and the *quale* which they exemplify has no designation in ordinary usage. We might well introduce the word "greem" for this purpose. It is a *synthetic* necessary truth that the instances of *greem* are points in a *continuum.* On the other hand, "x is green" = "x is a *continuum* of which the elements are greem"; so that "x is *green*" analytically entails "x is extended." (P, 269)

We believe, however, that the passage is less clear than it seems. If Sellars's points so far are consistent, then a *continuum* (the *x* in the opponent's objection) is itself to be regarded

as a "complex particular" consisting of some "basic particulars," each of which instantiates a *quale*. And this is precisely what Sellars affirms here when he remarks that the "points" of the *continua* are the basic particulars—in such a way that *x* (= a complex particular) "is a *continuum* of which the elements are greem." Now the only way to make sense of the argument is to assume that contrary to his opponent, Sellars does not take "*x* is extended" to be attributing a *quality* to *x* as a complex particular. Were this the case, what would be the basic particular instantiating the relevant *quale? Points* are the basic particulars instantiating the *quale* greem. But where is the basic particular instantiating the *quale* of the *quality* ". . . is extended"? Given the "basic-complex" particulars distinction, the statement "'*x* is green' analytically entails '*x* is extended'" makes perfect sense to the extent that *x* does indeed designate a complex particular: the analytic necessity pointed out by Sellars follows insofar as *x* consists of at least two basic particulars—one of them instantiating the *quale* of the *quality:* ". . . is green," the other instantiating the *quale* of the *quality:* ". . . is extended." And yet one fails to see where such a second basic particular would be. Were we to take the argument to its most extreme consequences, and were ". . . is extended" to mean the attribution of a quality to *x,* it would follow that there is a basic particular (*a*) that is by itself green (as an instance of "greem") without being extended (for as a basic particular, it does not and cannot instantiate the *quale* of the *quality:* ". . . is extended").

Moreover, on the basis of our reconstruction of the passage quoted above, a further question can be asked, one that would go far beyond the (nonontological) framework of Sellars's discourse. If we are right in the reconstruction of the meaning of the very last statement of the passage ("'*x* is green' analytically entails '*x* is extended'"—with *x* being a complex particular), this implies that the so-called synthetic necessary truth that Sellars has in mind bears on the connection between the two basic particulars out of which the complex particular is made.

It would be a synthetic and necessary truth that *a* (the instance of the *quale* of the *quality:* ". . . is green") is connected to *b* (the instance of *quale* of the *quality:* ". . . is extended").

It is at this point that the phenomenologically minded reader and Sellars himself would part company once and for all (if this has not already happened). The former would ask whether the synthetic necessary truth obtains only at the level of basic particulars making up a relevant complex particular, namely, only at the level of its *qualities,* or also obtains between the *qualia* themselves. In sum: Is it only *qualities* (within a given "complex particular") that are and can be synthetically and necessarily connected, or are the *qualia* themselves also already connected in this way? If, contrary to what Sellars does, we assume that the *x* in the opponent's objection does not stand for a complex particular but rather for two basic particulars, and if we use the term "extendeem" for the *quale* of the quality ". . . is extended," then the question becomes What kind of relation obtains between the basic particular *x* (as an instance of greem) and the basic particular *x*i (as an instance of extendeem)—and thus obtains between the two *qualia?*[11]

To introduce Sellars's solution, let us read once again what he writes in section 2 of "Particulars": "It is only 'complex particulars,' then, which can be both greem and kleem. To say this, of course, is to say that a sentence attributing these qualities to a complex particular is logical shorthand for a conjunction of sentences to the effect that certain basic particulars are greem, others are kleem, *while the set of basic particulars as a whole is an instance of such and such a pattern or structure*" (P, 268, emphasis added). Sellars calls *structure* or *pattern* "the set of basic particulars as a whole," although here the terms "structure" or "pattern" are to be understood nonontologically. A pattern or a structure designates a "rule of use" and is expressed by how we "employ" it correctly in specific "pragmatic" contexts; the ontologically sounding notions of *pattern* and *structure* are in truth not to be understood ontologically but rather "pragmatically" and "normatively."[12]

They designate forms of governed behavior. The consequence of this interpretation of the concepts of "pattern" and "structure" is that the question we are asking (i.e., the problem of synthetic necessary truths) is pragmatically resolved by Sellars by appealing to the notion of "family of worlds": *qualia* are identified with their instances in a family of worlds but in such a way that a *quality,* hence all the instances of a certain *quale* in a family of worlds, does not point to a material content but rather, as has been explained, to a "*usage bond*" (or in the language that Sellars borrows from Rudolf Carnap, a "P-rule" or "material law of inference" [P, 271]).[13] Let us consider the following paradigmatic passage:

> If it is a law of nature that if anything were a case of φ it would be a case of ψ, the inference from "φx" to "ψx" is warranted by a material rule of inference; *indeed, there are but two ways of saying the same thing.* Notice that if "ψx" is thus inferable from "φx," the generalized material implications,
>
> (x) φx ⊃ ψx
>
> can be asserted on the basis of a rule of inference of the language. It can also be said to be true by virtue of the meaning of "φ" and "ψ," for it was our contention above that the meaning of a term lies in the rules of inference, formal *and material,* by which it is governed. I would be certainly willing to say that "(x) φx ⊃ ψx" is, in these circumstances, a synthetic *a priori* proposition. (P, 271–72)

The ontological problem of the necessary connection between *qualities* in a "complex particular," hence between their *qualia* and the many basic particulars themselves, is thereby resolved linguistically and pragmatically. Now unless one is willing to accept such a *resolution* of an ontological problem into a linguistic and pragmatic one (for the alternative could be to retain both the ontological dimension and the linguistic-pragmatic

one), the ontological question regarding the connection between the "basic particulars" making up a "complex particular" still stands. Should we not conclude that—at least from the ontological angle of the relation between the many basic particulars (as instances of *qualia*) that make up such and such a complex particular (which has *qualities* instead)—Sellars's basic particulars are not able to make sense of the very unity of complex particulars? Should we not conclude that the possibility of synthetic and a priori truths, of which Sellars makes sense at the level of its pragmatic and linguistic account, remains ungrounded at the ontological level of his basic particulars?[14]

2. FIRST PHENOMENOLOGICAL VARIATION

Before we get into the discussion of the phenomenological perspective, let us remark that as was already the case with our assessment of Sellars, in the following we will not go beyond the context of what phenomenologists call "natural things." In short, just as in the previous paragraph, where both the case of "Fido" and that of "persons" were left out of the picture, we will proceed in the same way in the present section.

There is no doubt that in some of the ways in which phenomenologists talk about "particulars" (in Sellars's terminology) or "individuals" and "essences" as *Wesen* (in their own terminology), the very misleading impression might emerge that they mistake the formal complexity of the state of affairs "*a* is φ" to express a material complexity in the object, in such a way that a form of bare particularism is here necessarily present. Does not Husserl himself speak of "pure and formless individual singularity"?[15] And does not Jean Hering use the turn of phrase "the *essence of* a" (1921, 498; *Wesen von a*)—thereby misleadingly suggesting that by *a* we designate something materially different from its own essence? And yet Husserl denies the very talk of a *this-here* devoid of properties (*Hua III/1*, 12; Husserl 2014, 11), just as he explains that by a "formless individual singularity," one should understand a

materially determined individual that has not yet been "syntactically" articulated (see *Hua III/1*, 33; Husserl 2014, 29). By the same token, in the first edition of his groundbreaking essay, in order to avoid the above impression, Hering proposed the symbol $\overline{Wa}$—with the overline meant to express a most unitary relation (1914, 170). Just as it would not be correct to affirm that *a* has an essence, so would it be utterly wrong to maintain that *W* belongs to *a*. Rather, *W* is *a* just as *a* is *W* (in Hering's jargon, one can talk of "the essence as an *individuum*") (1921, 497).

What is an essence? The essence is the *Sosein* or *being-thus* of an object: "The individual features of the being-thus (*Sosein*) (ποῖον εἶναι) are the features of its essence." As Hering also adds:

> The *being-thus* (ποῖον εἶναι) of an object—whose sum-total coincides with its essence—is to be sharply distinguished from the *thus* (*So*) of the entity, from its quality (*Beschaffenheit*) in the broadest sense. For example, the brown color belongs to the ποῖον of a horse, of which I can say that it is brighter than the brown color of the rider's dress. But the *being*-brown of the horse cannot be brighter than the being-brown of the clothing.
>
> By the same token, the ποῖον εἶναι should not be confused with the *state of affairs* that the object is qualified in such and such a way (*so und so beschaffen ist*). The state of affairs that "S is p" can be affirmed or denied; but I can neither affirm nor deny the "being-p"-moment, which I ascertain as belonging to the essence of S. The state of affair "S is p" can have a contradictory and negative state of affairs; there is no negative quality corresponding to S. (1921, 496–97)

On the basis of this passage, there should be no doubt that the phenomenological talk of "essence" remains fully aware of the necessity of avoiding the confusion between states of affairs

and moments. The essence or *Sosein* of an object, which Hering calls here the sum-total of its features, is not to be confused with the state of affairs "*that* the object is qualified in such and such a way." One might be tempted to say that the object's essence can be spelled out by a series of propositions (and relevant "states of affairs") of the type: *S* is *p, S* is *q, S* is *r,* and so forth. At this stage, this would misleadingly suggest—and de facto misleadingly does suggest—that *S* is something fully different from its properties (just as a "bare particular" would be different from the many properties inhering in it). The situation is in truth quite different. And yet it would not be correct to say à la Sellars that "*a* is *W*" means that *a* is an instance of *W*—as if *a* stood for what Sellars calls "basic particulars" and *W* for a *quale*. In the terminology employed by Hering, *a* stands in contrast for a complex particular (as Sellars would indeed call it)—or in order to avoid possible ambiguities, it stands for an *individuum*.

The "essence" of an object (Wa) is the sum-total of its *Sosein;* for example, *being-red, being-soft, being-fragrant,* and so on, make up the essence of a rose. Now in Hering's strategy, to affirm of an object (here, a rose) that it *is* red, soft, fragrant, and so on, does not mean affirming that an object as a "bare particular" has a series of properties. Rather—and in line with the expression *Sosein* or being-thus, which Hering first introduces in his text—it means that the object *is* (*sein*) in a certain *way* or a certain *mode* (*So*): the rose *is* in the mode of *being-red, being-soft, being-fragrant,* and so forth. The object is not something underlying its essence, nor is it something over against it; despite the ambiguity of Hering's talk of the "essence" as a "non-independent object" in need of a "bearer" without which it cannot even exist or be thought (and which actually seems to commit him to bare particularism), *a* is *W*—that is, the sum-total (*gesamter Bestand*) of the *Sosein.*[16] Hering calls it the basic or fundamental principle of the essence: "*Every object . . . has one and only one essence which, as its own essence, makes up the fullness of its constituting specificity*" (1921, 497). Yet in

a manner reminiscent of Sellars, Hering would not consider it appropriate to affirm that *a* is an instance of *red* because *red* is one of its qualities. Just like Sellars, Hering admits a further distinction between μορφὴ and εἶδος—corresponding to that between *qualities* and *qualia*. The single *morphē* is an instance of such and such an *eidos* ("redness" or "red καθ'αὐτό"), and as this quality, it contributes to making up Wa.

As was already the case with Sellars, it is at this stage that there emerges the problem that we called "the problem of synthetic necessary truths," that is, that of the connection between the *morphai,* or better, the *eidē* themselves and hence their instances making up Wa. Even if Sellars's concept of basic particular(s) (and notably, the arguments proposed to support it) does a good job of avoiding the mistakes of bare particularism, we nevertheless judged it to be inadequate when accounting for the very possibility of complex particulars (= the constitution of a complex particular out of "basic" ones). Now it is interesting to point out that the same problem affects the very account of "concreta" (particulars, in Sellars's jargon) proposed by Maximilian Beck (an early Munich phenomenologist and former student of Alexander Pfänder) in his 1929 essay on "Ideal Existence" ("Ideelle Existenz").[17]

For Beck, every idea (which he also calls *Quale*) is something absolutely "ultimate," "elementary," and "indivisible" (just like Sellars's basic particulars)—namely, *abstract* in the literal sense of being detached and isolated from every other idea (1929, 159). But individual essences are *concrete* in the sense of the Latin *concresco* or the German *zusammengewachsen,* "coalesced" (like complex particulars) (157).[18] And when it comes to the problem of synthetic necessary truths, to which Beck refers with the turn of phrase "syntheses of essences" (215), his position is adamant. There obtains no relation at the level of ideas, and it is only as they realize themselves in a concretum that they connect with one another in an essential way: "When the essences X and Y exist in a certain realizing-connection, *then they must* necessarily comport themselves

(*sich . . . verhalten*) in such and such a manner by virtue of their own proper nature" (217). Concreta consist of basic ideas connected together in a realization. The issue that we raised at the end of our discussion of Sellars is the starting point of Beck's doctrine of ideas, for whereas we deemed basic particulars to be unable to make sense of the possibility of their own connection within a complex particular, Beck contends that the basic, irreducible nature of ideas would be compromised were we to ascribe to them a mutual connection prior to the concreta themselves. But then it is not clear why precisely *these* ideas should enter into *this* concretum if the essential relation itself is something immaterial to them.

3. SECOND PHENOMENOLOGICAL VARIATION

A Husserl-inspired solution to the problem we have been indicating is the one that Peter Simons outlines in his "Particulars in Particular Clothing," in which the notion of "moment" plays a pivotal role and the distinction between "dependent" and "independent particular" is introduced (1994, 553–75). "Substance" is the term that Simons uses for "independent concrete particulars." Simons's strategy is to mobilize some of the main concepts introduced by Husserl in the *Third Logical Investigation* to develop an account of substances (or concrete independent particulars) that is able to avoid both bare particularism and the problems of the bundle theory (i.e., its inability actually to account for individual substances, which in fact remain "a collection and not an individual"): it is what he calls the "nuclear theory" (558). In order to do this, Simons needs two groups of Husserlian conceptual distinctions.

First of all, there is the notion of "*whole in the pregnant sense,*" which Simons also calls an "*integral whole,*" based on the idea of direct foundation and the distinction between "weak foundation" and "strong foundation." An individual A is said to be *weakly founded* upon an individual B if A cannot exist without B—that is, it cannot exist unless B also exists

(e.g., an object is weakly founded on its parts). But A could also be *strongly founded* on B when it is weakly founded on it and B is not a part of A. This is what corresponds to Husserl's theory of species in the *Logical Investigations,* in which an object of some sort (a color trope) cannot exist with the object of some other sort (an extension trope), yet without the latter being a part of the former. Nevertheless, as Simons does not fail to acknowledge, "this answers works only for cases of essential compresence. We may admit that any extension trope requires *some* color trope, but it does not follow that *this* extension trope E requires just *this* color trope C, since E may continue to exist while C is replaced by another color trope C' of a different kind" (559–60). It is at this point that the concept of integral whole is discussed. An object is an *integral whole* when its parts form "a foundational system," that is, "if every member in it is foundationally related in it to every other, and none is foundationally related to anything which is not a member of the collection" (562). It is crucial to understand that the dependence relation needs to be "met" within the collection, and what is more, "that the whole system be fully connected." Hence as Simons concludes: "Thus while two substances would be independent, their joint collection of tropes would not form a foundational system, since there is no dependence relation crossing between the two collections of tropes." But he goes on to inquire whether the presence of a foundation system ensures independence. And he answers: "It would be seem so, provided we add the supplementary principle: *A collection of particulars, all of whose foundational needs are met within the collection, is itself independent*" (562–63).

Simons uses the terms "essential kernel" or "*nucleus* of the substance" to refer to "a collection of tropes that must all cooccur as individuals":

> For them we could have a substratum tying them together but . . . I prefer a bundle theory in the style of Husserl. Since these tropes are all directly or indirectly

> mutually founding as the individuals they are, they form a foundation system in the sense discussed above. Such a nucleus forms the *individual essence* or *individual nature* of a substance, but will usually not be a complete substance, since there are further, non-essential properties that the substance has. The nucleus will require supplementation by tropes of certain determinable kinds, but not require particular individual tropes of these kinds: its dependence will be specific, not individual. The other tropes it has, and which may be replaced without the nucleus ceasing to exist, may be considered as dependent on the nucleus as a whole as bearer. . . . Their dependence is partly one-sided, for while these accidental tropes depend on the nucleus for their existence, it does not depend on theirs. . . . The nucleus is thus itself a tight bundle that serves as the substratum to the looser bundle of accidental tropes, and accounts for their being together. The nuclear theory thus combines aspects of both bundle theory and substratum theory. (567–68)

The *nuclear theory* accepts the presence of a "substratum" (just like substrata-theories)—and yet such a substratum is not something underlying the system of tropes: it is the very nuclear system of tropes mutually connected with one another. This theory also accepts the core premise of bundle theory, that is, a substance is nothing other than a system of tropes—the difference being that now we can account for their connection in a more robust and less evanescent way. What is crucial for us is the distinction between *complete substance* and *nucleus:* the former includes the latter plus what is one-sidedly dependent on it. The "nucleus" is thus an integral whole in which all the elements (*moments,* in Husserl's jargon) are strongly founded on one another (A is weakly founded on B without being part of it and vice versa). The nucleus, as the above passage shows, is what Simons also identifies with the "*individual essence*" or "*individual nature* of a substance." And its relation to the

substance as a whole seems perfectly to match a famous Husserlian statement from the beginning of *Ideas I:* "An individual object is not merely in general an individual one, a *this-here!,* a 'once and only' object. Fashioned as such and such 'in its very self,' it has *its own kind of being,* its complement of *essential* predicables that must pertain to it (as 'the entity as it is in itself'), so that other, secondary, relative determinations can pertain to it" (*Hua III/1,* 12–13; Husserl 2014, 11).

Now if we have been paying so much attention to Simons's essay, it is for two major reasons. It is, first of all, because in addition to the attempt to frame Husserl's conceptuality in a way that is more in line with contemporary debates, it seems to offer the solution to all the problems discussed in the former sections: it avoids bare particularism, vindicates the concept of substance, and makes sense of the connection between the tropes within a whole on the basis of Husserl's theory of species in the *Second Logical Investigation.* And second, it is because the essay epitomizes a very common tendency, as it were—that is, the tendency to understand the concept of essence (which is what Simons calls the nucleus of the substance, its individual nature, or also its individual essence) in Husserl as based on the doctrine of "parts/wholes" from the *Third Logical Investigation.*[19] This is particularly clear when we consider the concept of the nucleus of the substance and the very idea of strong foundation, whose paradigmatic example is the same paradigmatic example that guides Husserl in the *Third Logical Investigation:* that of the relation between *color* and *extension* as two nonindividual "species" (*Hua XIX/1,* 238; *LI 2/M,* 9). Were we to translate Simons's language back into Husserlian language, one could say that the individual nature of the substance—namely, its nucleus—consists in a system of nonindependent parts, that is, parts that can neither exist nor be thought without one another (mutual dependence). Simons extends the example of the color-extension relation to the nucleus as a whole. Hence what he calls the substratum (as this is understood in the "nuclear theory") is a whole made up of

moments strongly founded on one another. Moreover, the argument also seems to avoid Sellars's objection against the *holoi* (see § 2 above): the structure of the whole is not understood as an additional *particular* that would "instantiate" a *Gestalt*. It is the relation of (strong) dependence between the tropes (in Simons's language) or "moments" that brings about the whole-structure of the nucleus itself.

Now despite the promising character of Simons's own solution (which we are here regarding as a variation on Husserl's discourse from the *Third Logical Investigation*), we firmly believe that this is *not the way in which Husserl conceives of the essence and that the toolbox forged in the* Third Logical Investigation *does not at all suffice to make sense of it* (not even in the refined form tried out by Simons). In other words, and as we will argue in the following, the essence (*Wesen*) is not conceived by Husserl *mereologically*. Or better, the mereology of the *Third Logical Investigation* is not fully able to make sense of an essence. This could be prima facie shown by quickly looking at Husserl's example from the opening paragraphs of *Ideas I,* that of a material thing in general:

> Each individual material thing has its own essential kind of being, and, at the highest level, it has the universal kind of being "material thing in general" (*materielles Ding überhaupt*), together with a determination of time in general, duration in general, figure in general, materiality in general. *Another individual can also have everything inherent to the essence of the individual* (*Wesen des Individuum*), and the *highest* essential universalities of this kind . . . circumscribe "*regions*" or "*categories*" *of individuals.* (*Hua III/1,* 13; Husserl 2014, 11)

Here two points need to be made:

- Husserl speaks of *individuum* (which we have already

encountered in Hering's reflections), by which he means a this-here or τόδε τι, the "material essence of which is a concretum" or independent essence. Husserl distinguishes, in fact, between abstract and concrete essences or nonindependent and (relatively) independent essences: only concreta are called "absolutely independent" essences (*Hua III/1*, 35; Husserl 2014, 30).

- In the slightly imprecise language that Husserl uses in the passage above, the essence of a material thing in general consists of a series of determinations: (a) time in general and (b) duration in general; (c) figure in general and (d) materiality in general. On closer inspection, however, it is clear that these determinations do not make up a whole in the sense of the theory of parts and wholes in the *Third Logical Investigations,* for they do not all stand to one another in the same kind of relation that binds color and extension together. Whereas *a* and *b* cannot even be thought independently from one another (= two "moments" in the sense of the *Third Logical Investigation*), this is not the case when we consider *c* and *d*. Indeed, *a-b-c* can be thought without including *d:* we would not have a material thing but rather what Husserl calls a "phantom" (a shape that is filled with quality). By the same token, *a-b* can also be thought together without *c* and *d:* the individuum would cease to be a material thing in general; it would be a lived experience or *Erlebnis* instead (to which the determinations figure and materiality do not belong)—that is, an individuum instantiating a different "region of being."

The theory of moments or nonindependent parts that Husserl first developed in the *Third Logical Investigation* makes sense only of some of the elements that make up an essence, that is to say, only those elements whose species of genera stand in a relation of nonindependence with regard to one another, as is the case with "color" and "extension." Now,

that an individual "material thing" (an individuum) cannot be without all the determinations above being co-present is one thing; however, it is quite another that these determinations are connected with one another in the same way in which "color" and "extension" are mutually connected. We endorse the former but reject the latter.

An essence (*Wesen*) in the Husserlian sense of the term (what Simons calls "individual essence") is not a whole made up of moments in the sense of the *Third Logical Investigation*. An essence—or better, the essence of an individuum (a complex particular in Sellars's terminology)—is the instance of a "region," which Husserl defines as follows: "The *entire unity of all the supreme genera that pertain to a concretum,* i.e., the essentially united connection of the supreme genera that pertain to the lowest differences within the concretum" (*Hua III/1*, 36; Husserl 2014, 31). The "region" is not a supreme genus; rather, it is the unity of all the supreme genera, the ultimate differences (eidetic singularities) of which make up an individuum's concrete essence. Husserl does not say that the region unites genera whose species stand to one another in a noninindependent sort of relation (like color and extension); rather, the region unites supreme genera to the extent that their ultimate differences contribute to making up a concrete essence. In other words, it is the *what* of the individuum, its τί εἶναι, that determines which supreme genera are united by the region.

In Simons's terminology, the substance as a whole (= nucleus or individual essence plus what is one-sidedly dependent on it) is weakly founded on its parts; in contrast, the various elements making up the individual essence itself are strongly founded on one another (like color and extension). Now what we have been trying to suggest is that for Husserl, only some of the elements of the nucleus or concrete essence are strongly founded on one another, and that the latter kind of relation is not able to make sense of its structure as a whole (in contrast to what Simons believes), namely, of its being the (concrete) essence of an individuum.

What needs to be introduced is what for the lack of a better expression one could label *regional dependence*. This is neither a form of weak foundation nor a specimen of strong foundation: it is not a strong foundation because it is not the case that the region is founded on the many determinations and that these are not part of it. Nonetheless, it is not a weak foundation either, because one cannot say that the region is founded on the many determinations in the same way that an object is founded on its parts. Instead, it is the opposite: *what* the object is, that is, the region, brings about the co-presence of a certain group of determinations (the individuum's concrete essence or *Wesen*).

If we now return to Hering, we can perfectly understand why we said that the talk of *S* is *p, S* is *q, S* is *r,* and so forth was *at that stage* a misleading one because it could suggest that *S* is a bare particular or substratum supporting certain properties. But now we can correct ourselves and also recognize that the talk of *S* is *p, S* is *q,* and so on makes sense because what is meant by *S* is the region of the object—that is, the object's τί εἶναι as distinct from its *Sosein* or ποῖον εἶναι. To say that *S is* . . . does not mean to point to the inner complexity of an object in the sense that the latter would consist of a bare particular plus properties; rather, it means expressing the relation between two aspects of a wholly qualified object. It is the complexity of the relation between τί εἶναι and ποῖον εἶναι—the *what* of the object and the many *modes* of its being. Indeed, it is the *what* of the object (τί εἶναι or *Was-Sein,* as Hering would also say) that determines the *how* (*So*) of its being (*Sein*).

* * *

The time is now ripe for us to sum up the outcomes of my analyses.

The crucial importance of Sellars's account of particulars consists both in dismissing once and for all the myth of bare particularism and in dropping the dichotomy between the this-factor and the such-factor or τόδε and τι within the τόδε τι.

There cannot be a τόδε that is not always already a τι. But if this is the case, then the idea of building "complex particulars" out of "basic particulars" needs to be abandoned altogether, since the talk of "basic particulars" can at best account for a multiplicity (= a *cluster*) of *qualities,* yet not for a τι that alone could ground the talk of qualities and their connection. However, that the solution could be found in Husserl's mereology from the *Third Logical Investigation* is a thesis that I reject altogether, since Husserl's talk of the concrete essence of an individuum requires a "logic of regions" or regional logic, which goes far beyond the alleged mereology of the *Third Logical Investigation* and whose development is still a *desideratum* for phenomenology.[20]

NOTES

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1. See Alston (1954, 253–58).
2. They have rightly been given this label by Morganti (2012, 293–306).
3. Jean-Baptiste Rauzy (2009, 87–102); Nunziante (2018, 36–58).
4. See, for example, Morganti (2012, 301–3); Bailey (2012, 31–41); Nunziante (2021).
5. I write "gnoseological" within quotation marks because the difference between *sensing* and *knowing* does not amount to a distinction between modes of "knowledge."
6. See DeVries (2005, 255–70).
7. For a criticism of Husserl's phenomenology from the standpoint of the categorial myth, see Sachs (2014). *Contra,* see De Santis (2019, 177–90).
8. "Particulars are *nude* in that they have no natures, that is, they are *not necessarily connected* to any specific property or set of properties. A nude particular has no nature, and is to be distinguished from the naked particular which has no properties.

Those who claim that there are bare particulars, Russell, Bergmann, et al., claim that they are nude of *natures, not* that they are naked of *properties*" (Garcia 2014, 156). The temptation to adopt the distinction is strong, but the concept of particulars with no natures and yet properties seems to us to be even more contradictory: even if we accept the nature-property disjunction, if a particular has no nature, then it is not clear why we should attribute a-property to it (e.g., *being such that properties can subsist in it*) rather than its opposite in the form of b-property (e.g., *being such that properties cannot subsist in it*).

9. The distinction between formal and material correlates of propositions is borrowed from Ingarden (1925, 125–304, notably 127–30).
10. Of course, one can opt for the function: "*f*(x)" (standing for: "x is a case [or instance] of *f*") so as to avoid the subject-predicate form—but this would not really help us out. As Sellars himself shows right at the beginning of "On the Logic of Complex Particulars," the "function" can be used, and usually is used, to express statements as different as "Fido is a dog"; "It is a twinge"; "Fido is angry"; "It (a certain experience) is painful" (LCP, 308). The problem would be to analyze the different logical constructions characterizing each one of them respectively (which is what Sellars attempts to do, especially for what concerns the difference between the first and the second group of statements). Already in *P,* Sellars recognizes that "*the logical structures which find expression in the subject-predicate form of ordinary language are, strictly speaking, as many as there are types and levels of logical constructions*" (P, 268). For the sake of interest, let us remark that the latter is also the starting point of Ingarden's "Essentiale Fragen": following Pfänder, Ingarden is convinced of the necessity of distinguishing different logical forms on the basis of the different ontological correlates of the subject-predicate form of ordinary language. On this, see De Santis (2014, 7–139, here 70–72).
11. The question is legitimate on the basis that for Sellars, the "distinction between particulars and *some* type of abstract entities is ultimate and irreducible" (P, 269).
12. See Nunziante (2021, 15–17). For a more general account concerning the problem of universals, see Loux (1977, 43–72).
13. See Nunziante (2021, 15).
14. We say this regardless of the fact that ontologically speaking, Sellars's complex particulars seem to end up being a variation

on the bundle theory, with each complex particular consisting of a bundle of basic particulars. It is no accident that a recent text on Sellars ends up speaking of a "*cluster* of basic particulars" (see Nunziante 2021, 13). For a classical introduction to these topics, see Loux (1998, 93–129) ("Concrete Particulars I: Substrata, bundles, and substances").

15. See *Hua III/1,* 33; *Ideas I,* 29.
16. Hering 1921, 498.
17. Beck 1929, 151–238. On Beck, see De Santis 2020, 111–33.
18. Let me emphasize that Beck's language is quite fluid, as he tends to speak of essences when referring both to universals (abstracts, in his own jargon, or *qualia* according to Sellars) and to concreta.
19. For a very different reading of Husserl—which, however, follows the same tendency—see Benoist 1999, chapters 4 and 5.
20. As far as we know, the only one who has recognized the need for a logic of regional being is Spiegelberg (1930, 1–238; see especially the introduction). See also De Santis (2021, 213–21).

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