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A Conceptualist Reply to Hanna's Kantian Non-Conceptualism

Introduction: The Resurgence of Realism and the Question of Non-Conceptual Content

Recent decades have seen a gradual resurgence of what has, by its critics, traditionally been called *naïve realism*, and in the last few years it has become a serious contender in the philosophy of perception.[1] The position may be characterized as the view that the objects of perception are just what they appear to be to our untutored, pre-philosophical (hence 'naïve') way of encountering the world, namely mind-independent, macroscopic individuals (both things and events) that have at least the manifest properties and relations we perceive them to have. Hume declares in a well-known passage on the assumed mind-independence of the objects of perception (or as he tellingly phrases it, "sensible objects or [*sive*] perceptions") that "a very little

[1] Among recent book-length treatments of the topic see for example Moltke S. Gram, *Direct Realism: A Study of Perception*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff 1983; John McDowell, *Mind and World*. Harvard UP 1994; Hilary Putnam, *The Threefold Cord: Mind, Body, and World*. New York: Columbia UP 2000; A.D. Smith, *The Problem of Perception*. Harvard UP 2006; and most recently, William Fish, *Perception, Hallucination, and Illusion*. Oxford UP 2009. Certainly not all the authors would accept the characterization of their respective positions as 'naïve' or even 'direct' realism, but they do all espouse recognizably similar forms of perceptual realism.

reflection and philosophy is sufficient to make us perceive the fallacy of that opinion".[2] Thereupon he lists some common cases of illusion or visual malfunction which are meant to show at the very least that our awareness of 'external' objects is mediated by ideas. The view that our awareness of worldly objects (assuming there are any!) is wholly mediated by states or contents internal to the mind, and that the immediate experiential content of veridical perception is identical to the immediate content of non-veridical states such as illusion and hallucination, has come to be the default position for much of mainstream philosophy. John McDowell has dubbed this the "highest common factor" conception of experience, and argued that it is deeply enmeshed in a specifically Cartesian view of the mind as an 'internal' realm specifically distinct and really separate from the 'external' realm of worldly objects.[3] The view has survived the revolt against Cartesian immaterialism and continues to inform influential strands of analytic epistemology and philosophy of mind, as well as research programs in cognitive science, despite their physicalist outlook.[4]

If, however, Cartesian dualism is the source of the apparent cogency of the arguments from illusion and hallucination that impugn the natural view (from which we cannot in any case distance ourselves) as 'naïve', then persistent questions as to the philosophical merits of Cartesianism should also suffice to cast doubt on the verdict of philosophical naïveté when it comes to the nature of perception and its role in the formation and justification of belief. And this is just what we see happening among a diverse group of philosophers who seek to affirm the substance of our pre-philosophical, direct realist view of perception in ways that are anything but naïve.

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[2] David Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature*, 152.

[3] John McDowell, "Criteria, Defeasibility, and Knowledge", in *Meaning, Knowledge, and Reality*. Harvard UP 1998, pp. 369-394, esp. 393f.

[4] Cp. John McDowell, "Singular Thought and the Extent of Inner Space", in *Meaning, Knowledge, and Reality*, pp. 243-246, 251f.

In this paper I do not intend to enter into the broad and multiform debate on the merits or weaknesses of direct perceptual realism; it has grown exponentially in recent years.[5] What I would like to do instead is to address an issue that is hotly debated within the camp of direct perceptual realists themselves. It is the question whether the content of perceptual experience is wholly conceptual in nature or whether some kinds of perceptual content or some part of all perceptual content is non-conceptual. In particular, I will focus on the elaborate and ambitious version of non-conceptualism Robert Hanna has expounded under the label *Kantian essentialist non-conceptualism*. Hanna gives persuasive arguments that this is the only current version of non-conceptualism that can effectively meet the challenges of an increasingly refined version of conceptualism incorporating the notion of demonstrative concepts.[6]

Hanna's arguments for this claim flow from two basic insights. First, 'state non-conceptualism', i.e. the view that perceptual experience is non-conceptual insofar as the subject of such experience is unable adequately to articulate its content in conceptual terms and reliably re-identify it, is stymied as soon as the conceptualist points out that such content is non-conceptual only relatively to that subject's current dispositions to conceptualize. If however the same content is *in principle* articulable in conceptual terms (say by another subject or the same subject at a different point in time), then it is in itself conceptual content. What the non-conceptualist therefore needs is a notion of 'absolutely' or 'essentially' non-conceptual content incapable in principle of being strictly determined by concepts or conceptual capacities.[7] At this

[5] For a condensed discussion of the issue see Pierre le Morvan, "Arguments against Direct Realism and How to Counter Them", in American Philosophical Quarterly vol. 41:3 (2006), pp. 221-234. More detailed treatment is to be found in William Fish, *Perception, Hallucination, and Illusion*, cited in note 1 above.

[6] Cp. Robert Hanna, "Beyond the Myth of the Myth of the Given", ms. pp. 15, 44-45. As examples of the demonstrative strategy, Hanna cites McDowell, *Mind and World,* pp. 56-60, 170-173; Bill Brewer, *Perception and Reason*, Oxford UP 1999; and Sonia Sedivy "Must Conceptually Informed Perceptual Experience Involve Non-conceptual Content?," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 26 (1996), 413-431. He sees 'highly refined conceptualism' exemplified in John Campbell, *Reference and Consciousness* (Oxford UP 2002), ch. 4; and McDowell, "Avoiding the Myth of the Given," in *Having the World in View*, Harvard UP 2009, pp. 256-272.

[7] Hanna formulates this notion of 'absolutely' non-conceptual content in reply to Jeff Speaks, "Is There a Problem about Nonconceptual Content?," *Philosophical Review* 114 (2005): 359-398. See Hanna, MS pp. 8-9, 16.

point a second insight comes into play: Only the "formal constitution, or structure, of mental content" will fit this bill.[8] A non-conceptualist who relies on either the composition or compositional matter of mental content to secure its non-conceptual status is as vulnerable to co-optation by the conceptualist as his state-non-conceptualist allies are.[9]

I am persuaded by Hanna's observations on the relative superiority of his 'Kantian essentialist' version of non-conceptualism as a serious opponent to conceptualism. If Hanna is right, then the case for non-conceptualism stands or falls with his position. In what follows, I would like to consider whether this maximally strengthened non-conceptualism really succeeds in outflanking the conceptualist position espoused by John McDowell, Sonia Sedivy, and (with a somewhat different inflection) by Alva Noë. But first it will be helpful to clarify Hanna's reasons for thinking of his position as a specifically Kantian version of non-conceptualism.

Part One: Why *Kantian* Non-conceptualism – and How Kantian Is It Really?

Like the more recent figurehead Gareth Evans[10], Kant figures ambiguously in the debate between conceptualists and non-conceptualists, being claimed as an illustrious predecessor by both sides. For example, some of McDowell's more recent discussions of the content of sense experience are framed as interpretations of Kant that elicit from him a more consistent and nuanced conceptualism even than that propounded by Sellars, thus vindicating him against Sellars's criticisms.[11] Apparently with equal plausibility, Hanna interprets Kant as a powerful theoretician

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For detailed exposition of Hanna's understanding of strict determination in terms of strong supervenience, see pp. 2-3.

[8] Cp. MS pp. 16-17, 22-23.

[9] For the details of Hanna's arguments, see MS pp. 13-25.

[10] For discussion of Evans's (from the standpoint of current debate) ambiguous understanding of non-conceptual content, see José Bermudez and Arnon Cahen, "Non-conceptual Mental Content", in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/content-non-conceptual/. Cp. McDowell's discussion of this same point in *Mind and World*, loc. cit., pp. 47-65.

[11] See the first two essays in the recent collection *Having the World in View. Essays on Kant, Hegel, and Sellars*. Harvard UP 2009.

of non-conceptual content, drawing on his anti-Leibnizian doctrine of the specific difference between intuitions as the content of sensibility and concepts as the content of the understanding. While Hanna acknowledges the famous passages that seem to place Kant unambiguously in the conceptualist camp, he also draws attention to remarks in the *Critique of Pure Reason* that seem equally unambiguously to state that objects can appear to us without having any relation to the functions of the understanding, i.e. to concepts.[12]

I will return momentarily to the passages where Kant seems to affirm that objects can appear to us independently of the functions of the understanding. It seems to me both that the balance of evidence shows that Kant *cannot* be saying what Hanna says he says, and that there is a natural and straightforward way of reading Kant's remarks as *in fact* not saying this. But first we need to be clear about what is at stake in Hanna's interpretation of Kant.

1. Heuristic Benefits of the Kantian Framework

So why *Kantian* non-conceptualism? As I see it, there are two answers to this question, the first of which bears on the formal constitution of non-conceptual content, while the second is bound up with the range of philosophical consequences that can be drawn from the (putative) existence of non-conceptual content. In the first place, then, Kant's theory of sensibility as presented in the Transcendental Aesthetic clearly marks off the forms of sensibility (time and space) as essentially different from conceptual forms. Against Leibniz, Kant adduces reasons for denying that the concepts of space and time are acquired by abstraction from the relations of conceptually constituted and (in principle) conceptually articulable individuals. More importantly, Kant argues that space and time are structured in terms of parts and wholes, where the whole is given antecedently to the parts and the parts are mere limitations of the whole, incapable of separate existence. This contrasts starkly with the relation of subsumption between concepts, their conceptual components (i.e. subordinate concepts), and individuals, the latter two of which are

[12] See MS pp. 1, 11. The passage most widely quoted in support of the claim that Kant is a conceptualist is the famous slogan, "Concepts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind"(*Critique of Pure Reason* B75). Hanna, on the other hand, points us to Kant's remarks at B122-123, 132, and 145.

given antecedently to their logical unity in the (superordinate) concept, while individuals exist independently of the concept(s) under which they fall.[13] Thus one can say, with Hanna, that the formal constitution or structure of Kantian intuitions is *essentially* different from the formal constitution and structure of concepts.

Furthermore, the *sui generis* formal constitution of the spatiotemporal character of intuition ties in with Hanna's views on the psychological function of essentially non-conceptual content. Non-conceptual content is said to be "inherently context-sensitive, *egocentric*, first-personal, intrinsically spatiotemporally structured" and "shareable or communicable only to the extent that another ego or first person is in a position to be directly perceptually confronted by the same individual macroscopic material being in a spacetime possessing the same basic orientable and thermodynamically irreversible structure".[14] A shorter way of saying this is that essentially non-conceptual content is "situated content",[15] whose function is to locate and track both macroscopic material objects in the perceiver's environment and the embodied perceiver himself in relation to them. In other words, non-conceptual content is what allows us to cope with things in our environment by locating them in a behavioral space through which we move in relation to them and which we share with our conspecific fellows and at least some conscious animals of other species. While this characterization of the nature and psychological function of spatiotemporally situated content requires extrapolation beyond what Kant himself explicitly offers in the First Critique, it is basically compatible with the doctrines expounded in the Transcendental Aesthetic and elsewhere.

So by associating the content of intuitions with essentially non-conceptual spatiotemporal forms linked to the egocentric orientation of the subject, Kant provides – or seems to provide – a way to characterize both the intrinsic nature of non-conceptual content and its psychological function in the life of the subject. But, moving now to the second answer, the Kantian framework simultaneously offers much more than this. It suggests numerous avenues for extending the discussion about non-conceptual content to areas of philosophy beyond the theory

[13] Cp. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B38-40.

[14] MS p. 35.

[15] MS p. 54.

of perception. Following out paths suggested by the systematicity of Kant's philosophy, Hanna draws out consequences for our understanding of freedom and the agency of human persons, and develops resources for tackling problems in the philosophy of mathematics.[16] At the very least, then, Hanna's Kantianism is richly suggestive of systematic applications and elaboration of the core ideas of non-conceptualism across a number of philosophical subdisciplines. This in itself already makes for an exciting program of research and reflection.

2. The Universal Objective Validity of the Categories and Problems with Non-Conceptualism

These heuristic advantages notwithstanding, however, it must be questioned how Kantian Hanna's non-conceptualism really is. For it requires that we revise a number of points that may well be considered essential to Kant's philosophical project. One such point is the role of apperception or pure self-consciousness in the transcendental deduction of the categories. As Hanna notes in "Kant's Non-Conceptualism, Rogue Objects, and the Gap in the B Deduction",

> the conclusion of the B-Deduction depends intimately and again necessarily on Kant's conception of the role of the faculty of apperception or rational self-consciousness in the nature of judgment. Without Kant's doctrine that the unity of the proposition is strictly determined by the higher-order self-representations introduced by the faculty of apperception, it could not be the case that the pure concepts of the understanding, as logical forms, would necessarily carry over into the objects of experience, as constituting their objective structure.[17]

But, as Hanna also notes, pure apperception can play this role only on the assumption that conceptualism is true, i.e. "that the unity of the spatiotemporal forms of intuition and the unity of propositional content in judgments is *identically the same* unity", in other words that "the spatiotemporal *intuitional* unity of the content of our conscious perceptual representations is necessarily also a fully logico-conceptual unity".[18] And it is here, of course, that Hanna sides

[16] See Robert Hanna, "Mathematical Truth Regained," in M. Hartimo and L. Haaparanta (eds.), Essays on the Phenomenology of Mathematics (New York: Springer Verlag, 2010).

[17] Robert Hanna, in A. Faggion (ed.), **Kantian Semantics: Festschrift for Zeljko Loparic** (Sao Paulo, Brazil: UNICAMP Press, forthcoming). I will return to the crucial role of apperception at the end of this paper.

[18] Hanna, "Kant's Non-Conceptualism".

with the non-conceptualist strand he sees in Kant against the conceptualist strand that informs the crucial step of the B-Deduction.

Granted, the obscurities of the B-Deduction are notorious, and many passages are open to conflicting readings. However, two consequences flow from Hanna's interpretation that are to my mind basically incompatible with the spirit and intent of Kant's critical philosophy. The first is the existence of what Hanna calls "rogue objects", i.e. "spatiotemporal objects of conscious perception to which the categories either *do not necessarily apply* or *necessarily do not apply*".[19] This consequence, as formulated in the first clause of the disjunction, puts us right back in the universe of Humean contingency from which the transcendental deduction is designed to release us. To deny what Hanna rightly construes as the conceptualist "linchpin of the whole argument"[20] is to undermine the very purpose, not only of the B-Deduction, but of the positive project of the First Critique, which is to establish an a priori guarantee of the rational intelligibility of experience and thus of the empirical world. To the extent that the non-conceptualism Hanna imputes to Kant compromises this larger project, the principle of charity would seem to require that we reject the non-conceptualist interpretation.

When we examine the text more closely, however, Kant himself does not in fact seem to waver between conceptualism and non-conceptualism. None of the remarks Hanna cites from the *Critique of Pure Reason* to establish Kant's non-conceptualist credentials really clinches the argument. First consider the remark at B132: "That representation that can be given prior to all thought is entitled intuition." Hanna does not quote the sentence that immediately follows it: "All the manifold of intuition has, therefore, a necessary relation to the 'I think' in the same subject in which this manifold is found."[21] At the least, the fact that this statement follows immediately on the heels of the first shows that the first remark cannot be cited as unambiguous evidence for

[19] Hanna, "Kant's Non-Conceptualism".

[20] Hanna, "Kant's Non-Conceptualism".

[21] Hanna will object that such a relation is necessary if the intuitive manifold is to become an object for self-consciously reflective thought, but as a *pre-reflective* constituent of the "Grip of the Given" it is indeed given *as a representation* prior to its relation to thought. In the context of the remarks just quoted, however, Kant is concerned with the conditions under which alone it is *possible* for the 'I think' to accompany my representation, not those under which self-conscious thought about those representations becomes *actual*. And on one widely held interpretation, those conditions lie precisely in the constitution of representations in conformity with the categories.

Kant's non-conceptualism. Similar considerations apply in the case of the remark at B145: It is striking here (a) that Kant speaks not of the intuition itself qua conscious representation, but of the manifold "*for the intuition*"; (b) that in the clause immediately following the one quoted by Hanna, Kant specifies that the way in which the manifold for an intuition is given "remains here undetermined"; and (c) that Kant's main concern in the passage is to contrast the receptivity of finite human understanding with the pure spontaneity of a divine or intuitive understanding. So once more, the remark is less than decisive evidence for Kant having held non-conceptualist views about representations.

The other remarks at B122-123 are drawn from a single passage in section 13 of the *Critique*, "The Principles of Any Transcendental Deduction" A84/B115. I quote the passage at length.

> The categories of understanding […] do not represent the conditions under which objects are given in intuition. Objects can, therefore, appear to us without necessarily being related to the functions of the understanding; and understanding need not, therefore, contain their a priori conditions. Thus a difficulty such as we did not meet with in the field of sensibility is here presented, namely, how subjective conditions of thought can have objective validity […]. For appearances can certainly be given in intuition independently of the functions of the understanding. […] That objects of sensible intuition must conform to the formal conditions of sensibility which lie a priori in the mind is evident, because otherwise they would not be objects for us. But that they must likewise conform to the conditions which the understanding requires for the synthetic unity of thought, is a conclusion the grounds of which are by no means so obvious. Appearances could perhaps [*könnten wohl allenfalls*] be so constituted that the understanding should not find them to be in accordance with the conditions of its unity [*gar nicht gemäß fände*], and such that everything would be in such confusion [*so in Verwirrung läge*] that, for instance, in the series of appearances nothing presented itself [*sich nichts darböte*] which might yield a rule of synthesis [*eine Regel an die Hand gäbe*] and so correspond to [*entspräche*] the concept of cause and effect. This concept would then be [*wäre dann*] altogether empty, null, and meaningless. But since intuition stands in no need whatsoever of the functions of thought, appearances would none the less present objects to our intuition (A89/B122-A91/B123).[22]

Now Kant's purpose in this passage is to characterize the difficulty inherent in an a priori deduction of the *necessary* objective validity (or empirical meaningfulness, as Hanna helpfully

[22] I have supplied the German in brackets in order to emphasize, in a way not forcefully captured in English translation, that Kant is writing here in the optative, counterfactual mood.

glosses this term)[23] of *pure concepts*. Note that on Leibnizian premises, according to which there is no specific difference between concepts and the objects of sensuous experience, this Kantian difficulty would not arise. For on Leibnizian principles, objects *cannot by definition* appear to us without relating to the understanding. Kant's two-stem theory, by contrast, saddles him with the task of showing how these two stems, whose relation to each other is *logically contingent* in that the content of the one does not *analytically* entail that of the other, nevertheless bear a *synthetically necessary* relation to each other in the constitution of conscious experiential content and (by the lights of transcendental idealism) thereby of empirical objects. Indeed, the conception of a synthetic necessity irreducible to concept containment is the cornerstone of Kant's conception of transcendental logic. So I read Kant's remarks here as saying that objects can, in the sense of a *formal logical possibility*, appear to us without necessarily having a relation to the functions of the understanding, and hence that a transcendental deduction is required in order to show why it is nevertheless *really* or *transcendentally impossible* that appearances and concepts come apart, on pain of destroying the unity of consciousness.

Assuming for a moment a two-stem theory of cognition without a successful transcendental deduction of the categories' necessary applicability to appearances, we would end up where Salomon Maimon in fact believed us to be: We would be cognitive creatures with an a priori or innate set of capacities that guarantee the *possibility* of objective experience but which are silent as to the *actuality* of objective experience.[24] Thus our actual experience could be thoroughly Humean and its seeming intelligibility merely contingent appearance, regardless of the fact that concepts such as substance, identity, and causality had their non-empirical origin in the innate constitution of the intellect. But this is just the possibility that Kant entertains and means to exclude in the latter half of the passage just quoted. Every single verb there is in the optative mood, every clause explicitly counterfactual; Kant is not affirming any real possibility of non-

[23] Hanna, "Kant's Non-Conceptualism"..

[24] Cf. Salomon Maimon, *Versuch über die Transzendentalphilosophie* [1790]. Hamburg: Meiner 2004, pp. 44-45, 97-99, 105-106. Cp. further Manfred Frank, *Unendliche Annäherung*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1997, pp. 114-132; Paul Franks, *All or Nothing. Systematicity, Transcendental Arguments, and Skepticism in German Idealism*. Harvard UP 2005, pp. 176-191.

conceptually constituted phenomenal objects, but introducing it as the merely logical possibility whose real impossibility the transcendental deduction has to demonstrate.

Now, one could reply to this objection that this Maimonian vision of a Kantian mind in a Humean world, i.e. a mind with a priori, but empirically meaningful concepts in a world that pervasively and drastically fails to conform to them, is too dire. What the non-conceptualist is suggesting is not that experience in general does not conform to the categories, but only that *some special objects* within experience (e.g. organisms, human agents and their actions) *necessarily* fail so to conform. However, the strictly universal, i.e. exceptionless, validity of the categories is not a point on which Kant could compromise: It has to be all or nothing. – To head off the obvious counter-objection, this obviously does not mean that the full conformity of every object of experience to the categories must *actually* be exhibited: The doctrine of the *Critique of Pure Reason* is perfectly compatible with the fact that there are indeed many objects whose strict conformity with, say, causal determinations has not been exhibited. But this is just another way of saying that empirical natural science is not complete and indeed might not even be completable by human minds. But if it happens not to be completable, this would be due to further *contingent* facts about the constitution of the human mind (in particular its finitude, of which the difference between intuitions and concepts is the most salient aspect).[25]

To see how the strict universality of the constitutive applicability of the categories can be compatible with the fact that many objects have not been subsumed under them in an adequately explanatory manner, it is helpful to draw a distinction between *determinateness* and *determinability*. Objects may be determined either in their determinateness or in their determinability: My neighbor's new car is determined for me as determinable in regards to color prior to my seeing it or otherwise learning of its determinate color: It makes sense for me to wonder what color it is. After I have learned that it is (say) blue, then it is determined for me as of a determinate color. Now, *all categorial determinations are determinations of determinability*. To categorize an object of thought as a natural number is to determine it as determinable as either prime or non-prime but not as determinable as having some color. But the categorization of a *given* number (say for example 2947738993781) as natural is not to

[25] Cp. for example CPR B145-146 and *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, sections 76 and 77.

determine it as determinately prime (or non-prime). The number must be, in itself, either prime or non-prime, but taken in itself, my knowing this fact about it in no way enables me *to decide* whether the number is in fact prime (or not). So I have not determined it in its determinateness.

I suggest that the categories as enumerated in the transcendental analytic determine all *possible* objects of experience *whatsoever* in their determinability, thereby constituting them as objects of possible experience. This *ur*-determinability underwrites the meaningfulness of (natural scientific) inquiry as to the quantitative, qualitative, and relational *determinateness* of the objects of *actual* experience. It does not, however, guarantee that we will (ever) be able *to decide* every meaningful question of the kind.

As Hanna points out, organisms and human actions are two prominent examples of experiential objects which according to Kant prove difficult (and perhaps humanly impossible) to explain in the purely causal-determinist, mechanicist terms prescribed by the categories as the form of all possible objects of experience.[26] One could easily add to this Kant's observation in the First Introduction to the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*: it could easily seem possible that the multiplicity of natural laws might be such that even though nature is determined by the transcendental laws of the understanding as a system (i.e. as systematically *determinable*), the human mind would nevertheless be incapable of specifying those most general laws in such a way as *actually* to determine that system *in its determinateness*.[27] Kant's reflections on teleology and reflective judgment come into play here, and this same problem will continue to occupy him throughout the 1790s in the form of the question of the "transition" from transcendental philosophy to empirical physics.

I am suggesting – contra Hanna's theory of "rogue objects" – that for Kant it must be *formally possible* to give fully adequate causally deterministic, mechanical explanations of them, even though he may be pessimistic in the extreme as to the *real possibility* of our ever achieving an adequately powerful science for doing so. (In the case of human actions, the account would take the form of some kind of motivational laws being applied to particular beliefs, desires, and circumstances.) But this is precisely the origin of the philosophical difficulties, indeed

[26] See *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*, 4:471; *Critique of the Power of Judgment*,5:400
[27] Cp. *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, "First Introduction", 20:208-211.

antinomies, Kant himself associates with organic life and normatively evaluable human behavior. And what he looks for are not ways of qualifying organic life and human action as nomologically ill-behaved or 'rogue'. Instead, he looks for non-contradictory ways of attributing *both* natural causal determinism *and* freedom, *both* mechanism *and* teleology to the same objects:[28] Constituted as mechanistically *determinable*, how could they be *determinately* mechanistic (causally determined) and moral/teleological at once? If this is right, then the thoroughgoing determination of all phenomena as causally determinable and the thoroughgoing determination of all things whatsoever (including things in themselves) as expressions of at least some form of lawfulness (e.g., the intelligible character in the case of action) are central to Kant's project and deeply embedded in the motivations of transcendental philosophy. To the extent that a commitment to essentially non-conceptual content would force Kant to compromise on this view, the hermeneutic evidence is stacked against it.

3. Embodied Agency and Conceptualism in the *Opus Postumum*

This basic point concerning Kant's conceptualism is strengthened when we recall that for him, space itself (i.e. the form of outer intuition) is *not an object of experience*; only determinate, relative, *material* spaces are sensible and thus possible objects of experience.[29] Similarly, and in more explicitly transcendental terms, my *representations* of space and time (i.e. spaces and times insofar as they are objects of intuition and not mere forms of intuition) must first be constituted in a synthesis of reproduction. Without this conceptually supported synthesis, Kant says, "a complete representation would never be attained: […] not even the purest and most elementary representations of space and time, could arise".[30] But this can only mean that no object whatsoever, not even times and spaces, can be an object of awareness (a 'complete representation') independently of conceptual synthesis. (Kant makes this clear on the following page (A 103f.) when he specifies the necessity for a "synthesis of recognition in the concept" as a condition for the "synthesis of reproduction in imagination".)

[28] Cf. *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 5:377-379, 406.
[29] Cp. *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*, in *Gesammelte Schriften* (Akademie-Ausgabe) 4:481.
[30] A 102.

The evolution of Kant's thinking about the conditions under which space can become an object of experience presents an occasion to sketch out a *Kantian conceptualist* reply to Hanna that takes up some of Hanna's own central concerns with embodied agency, its role in perception, and the "Grip of the Given". *The Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science* (1786) seem to have been intended by Kant chiefly as a construction in pure intuition of the object of outer sense in general: In order to complete the deduction of the objective validity of the categories, he required a construction of *matter* as the factor which makes *space* a possible object of experience.[31] This concern was of a piece with the increased attention to outer sense and its basic schemata on display in the second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* in the Refutation of Idealism. By 1792, however, Kant had come to realize that his original construction of matter was circular, and the difficulty of finding an alternative solution that would also be constructible in pure intuition thus confronted Kant with a serious "gap"[32] in the foundations of transcendental philosophy, a gap he sought to remedy by way of his *Selbstsetzungslehre* and the projected deduction of the ether.[33] So the details of these later revisions to transcendental idealism are immediately relevant to understanding Kant's own ultimate views on the nature of (spatial) intuition, embodied agency, and their role in cognition.

The key point here is to see how *both* our givenness to ourselves as spatially situated, embodied perceivers *and* the givenness to us of a spatially constituted world of material objects spring at once from our *conceptually determined* experience of our own active forces. Here again, it is important to stress that space itself originally becomes an object of awareness only by way of the forces exerted on the subject by the material objects filling space. From the standpoint of transcendental philosophy, then, the problem is how to introduce such forces into an a priori construction of the possibility of perception. Condensing greatly and presenting the main ideas in purely *thetic* form, the solution is to understand the faculty of receptivity (sensibility) not as passivity (as in the Transcendental Aesthetic of the First Critique), but as

[31] Here and in the following I closely follow Eckart Förster's account in *Kant's Final Synthesis. An Essay on the Opus postumum* (Harvard UP 2000), chapters 3 and 4. On the role of the *Metaphysical Foundations* in Kant's system, see ibid., pp. 61, 72.

[32] Cf. Kant, *Correspondence*, 12:257; *Opus postumum*, 21:626, 637, 640, 642; 22:182.

[33] For Förster's reconstruction of the difficulties with the construction of matter, and the place of the *Selbstsetzungslehre*, see *Kant's Final Synthesis*, p. 71-74.

reactivity and hence as a manifestation of the subject's activity. Human beings are mechanical systems (operating with the basic powers of pressure, traction, and shear), but further equipped with the organic forces of excitability and irritability that make them capable of spontaneous movement: they are self-moving machines.[34] Self-awareness and awareness of objects external to me is, at its deepest level, *sensorimotor awareness*:

> Empirical self-consciousness emerges at the point of intersection (interaction) between the moving forces of matter as they affect me and, and my own motions thereon. That is to say, on the one hand, only because I am corporeal – a system of organically moving forces – can I be affected by moving forces of matter; on the other hand, only insofar as I can represent myself *as affected* do I *appear* to myself as sensuous and corporeal, that is, as an object of outer sense. Self-affection and affection through objects must thus be regarded as two sides of the same coin . . . ."[35]

Affection, in turn, is only the flip-side of my (re-active) ability to exert my own mechanical and organic moving forces on the object that is affecting me. In this perspective, time and space are not simply forms of intuition, but "forms of our effective forces".[36] My perceptions arise at the threshold of my interaction with the objects of perception – at the limit my activity sets to the forces exerted by material things, which may therefore justly be characterized as the limit between the subject and the object. It is crucial to the main point I want to make in this section, that the basic forms manifested in this interaction are categorially, that is, *conceptually constituted*. The material objects by way of which time and space become phenomenal to me as forms of my effective forces, manifest themselves as being ponderable or imponderable, coercible or incoercible, cohesive or incohesible, exhaustible or inexhaustible. And these most basic attributes of material bodies are themselves *categorially determined* conditions of the possibility of experience: They are conceptually shaped.[37]

Here is not the place to elaborate the complexities of Kant's ether deduction and theory of *Selbstsetzung*. Others have done that work, and moreover the point of this section is not to argue for the plausibility of Kant's late thought on intuition, but to exhibit Kant's thorough-going

[34] Kant, Opus postumum, 21:212-213, quoted in Förster, *Kant's Final Synthesis*, p. 106.
[35] Förster, *Kant's Final Synthesis*, p. 106.
[36] Kant, *Opus postumum*, 21:38, quoted in Förster, *Kant's Final Synthesis*, p. 109.
[37] (In)-coercibility corresponds to the category of quality, (im)-ponderability to that of quantity, (in)-cohesibility to relation, and (in)-exhaustibility to modality: See *Opus postumum*, 22:378-379; cf. *Kant's Final Synthesis*, p. 97-101.

conceptualism at precisely the level of sensorimotor awareness where Hanna locates the "Grip of the Given". If I have succeeded, then there are both interpretive and philosophical reasons for thinking that Kant's categories determine the fundamental axes along which all objects of experience whatsoever must be determinable, and that they do so right down to the point at which we are, in Hanna's words, "plugged into the world" by way of "spatiotemporally situated, egocentrically-centered, biologically/neurobiologically embodied, pre-reflectively conscious" representations that ground our "skillful perceptual and practical grip" on the environment.[38]

4. Kantian Freedom and "Rogue Objects"

A second consequence that flows from Hanna's notion of Kantian rogue objects is that "all and only the living, conscious, self-conscious, deliberative intentional agents or *persons* are the actually existing spontaneous rogue objects that cannot even in principle be brought under empirical concepts and the Analogies of Experience".[39] Our experience of our own freedom, Hanna argues, is the experience of a rogue object.

Again, this is a consequence that is alien to Kant's philosophical project. First of all, Kant would not agree that the behavior of persons *cannot in principle* be brought under empirical concepts and the Analogies of Experience. The core of Kant's particular brand of compatibilism, worked out in the solution to the Third Antinomy, is that persons *qua* phenomena are indeed subject to the constitutive principles set out in the Analogies of Experience.[40] And this is true

[38] Hanna, MS. pp. 77, 79. Alva Noë has recently advocated the idea that "sensorimotor skills are themselves conceptual or 'proto-conceptual'" and that they form the most basic form of our understanding of ourselves and our environment. This idea has an obvious and striking similarity with Kant's views as presented above. Noë is thus partially mistaken when he writes that "Unlike Kant and the tradition spawned by him, the form of understanding I have taken as basic is sensorimotor understanding. . . . Sensorimotor skills can play much of the role that concepts have been called on to play in Kantian theories of perceptual experience (such as McDowell's)" (Noë, *Perception in Action*. MIT Press 2005, p. 183). It is true that, for obvious reasons, "the tradition spawned by Kant" was largely ignorant of or chose to neglect the developments documented in the *Opus postumum*. It is false that Kant himself did not recognize both the fundamental significance and the conceptual nature of our basic sensorimotor skills.

[39] MS p. 15.

[40] Cp. B570: "Consequently, all events are empirically determined in an order of nature. Only in virtue of this law can appearances constitute a *nature* and become objects of experience. This law is a law of the understanding, *from which no departure can be permitted, and from which no appearance can be exempted*" (emphasis added). At

not only from a third-person, specifically explanatory perspective on our actions and motives. In the *Groundwork*, Kant insists that I myself cannot introspectively know (on the basis of experience given in inner sense) whether I have acted out of respect for the moral law and thereby (since the moral law is the *ratio cognoscendi* of freedom) that I have acted freely.[41] As Kant states elsewhere, "Freedom absolutely cannot be an object of experience."[42] The possibility that I have acted out of 'pathological', empirical and thus deterministic motives cannot be excluded either in principle or on the grounds of my own experience of myself. The single case that forms an exception to this dubitability is that in which I 'humiliate' my purely animal being and the egotism inherent in it, and set the moral law above my love of life.[43]

This emphasis on the non-phenomenal, purely intelligible nature of freedom accords with Kant's arguments in the Third Antinomy where he first develops the notion of causality through freedom. It is crucial to note that such causality corresponds to the *unschematized* concept, not the schematized concept of causality operative in the Analogies of Experience. It is not, therefore, the case that freedom for Kant becomes thinkable as a radically non-conceptual (non-categorial) state or event, as Hanna suggests. Freedom is indeed subsumed under a concept, to wit the concept of cause, according to which if one object, A, is posited, another, distinct object, B, must of necessity also be posited.[44] This conception of causality, which is common to both the phenomenal and the noumenal realm, is the root of Kant's concept of the intelligible character *that is the person*. "Every efficient cause," he writes, must have a *character*, that is, a law of its causality, without which it would not be a cause".[45] The person, viewed under the noumenal aspect, is such a character, and this character implies just as much necessity and regularity as an empirical causal character does. Kant virtually identifies this necessity with the identity of the

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B572-3 he then goes on to state that "all the actions of the human being in appearance are determined in accord with the order of nature in accord with his empirical character and other cooperating causes; and if we could investigate all the appearances of his power of choice down to their basis, then there would be no human action that we could not predict with certainty, and recognize as necessary given its preceding conditions."

[41] Cp. *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, AA 4:407.
[42] *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, First Introduction, AA 20:195
[43] Cf. Paul Franks, *All or Nothing*, loc. cit., pp. 287-290.

[44] Cp. *Critique of Pure Reason,* B122.

[45] *Critique of Pure Reason,* B567.

person. "We may not, therefore, ask why reason has not determined *itself* differently, but only why it has not through its causality determined the *appearances* differently. But to this question no answer is possible. For a different intelligible character would have given a different empirical character."[46] I take this to mean that, *per impossibile*, to have taken a different action would have been to be a different person: action expresses essence.

Now I am not arguing that any of these peculiarly Kantian conceptions, either of the necessary intelligibility of the transcendentally ideally constituted empirical world or of the free causality of the intelligible character, is unproblematic in itself or clearly more attractive than what Hanna sets in its place. That discussion would be beside the point here. However, I do hold them to be non-optional, core features of Kant's Critical Philosophy – every bit as much as the two-stems theory of cognition is. But if this is correct, then by contraposition Hanna's imputation to Kant of an essentially non-conceptualist view of the contents of experience must be mistaken. For its consequences clearly contradict claims that are essential to Kant's presentation of the Critical Philosophy. [47]

[46] *Critique of Pure Reason,* B584.

[47] Elsewhere, Hanna has argued that the kind of interpretation of Kantian freedom offered here implies a "timeless agent theory" of agent causation, and that such a theory is beset by deep philosophical problems. (See Robert Hanna, Kant, "Causation, and Freedom. Critical Notice of Eric Watkins, *Kant and the Metaphysics of Causality*", in *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 36.2 (2006), pp. 281-305, esp. pp. 297ff.) The problems Hanna points to there are (1) that the theory conflicts with our everyday consciousness of our own intentional agency; (2) that it commits one to interactionist substance dualism (and thus to all of its weaknesses, including violation of the principle of the causal closure of the physical). And (3) he alleges that it involves causal over-determination of events, thus violating the explanatory exclusion principle. To respond briefly, the conflict with pre-philosophical views about agency we happen to find obvious and attractive today does not seem to me to be a pressing philosophical difficulty in itself. Most of contemporary physics happily departs from what even highly trained scientists may otherwise be wont to find obvious and natural. The second two difficulties are indeed serious, but the timeless agent theory is not in fact exposed to them. To quote Eric Watkins, "there is an important distinction between causing a nature that is instantiated in the world to be efficacious in certain ways and causing a nature to be instantiated in the world" (*Kant the Metaphysics of Causality*. Cambridge UP 2005, p. 336, note 38). If the 'timeless agent' caused a nature to be efficacious in certain ways, in addition to some prior physical state of things causing it to be efficacious in those ways (as required by the causal principle), then we would have a case both of causal overdetermination and of a non-physical intervention into the causal chain. On the timeless agent theory, by contrast, the agent's action consists immediately in choosing his own character and thereby mediately in choosing the natural laws of the possible world entailed by that character (cf. *Kant and the Metaphysics of Causality*, pp. 335-336). Construed thus, there is no substance interaction; what is caused is the fact that certain natures are instantiated in the world. As Watkins has suggested in personal communication, far from violating the principle of causal closure, on Kant's view noumenal causality determines what causal closure of the physical could even be.

5. Summary

What, then, is the upshot of this line of criticism? Well, in systematic terms, perhaps no more than this: Hanna's interpretation of Kant, though heuristically rich, is an extraordinarily productive misunderstanding. The inherent systematicity of the Critical Philosophy is suggestive of a number of surprising and promising ways to extend the discussion of non-conceptual content – not least to the phenomenology and metaphysics of practical and moral agency. This in turn produces feedback effects that reinforce Hanna's insights into the intimate link between perception, embodied agency, and situated content. Finally, though, as Hanna is sure to agree, his philosophical claims must fend for themselves. Kant, who helped to sire them, would be unlikely to acknowledge them as legitimately his own. Indeed, Kant's extension of transcendental idealism to a *conceptualist* theory of active, embodied perception in the *Opus postumum* suggests a competing conception of our pre-reflective sensorimotor being in the world that directly integrates a number of features central also to Hanna's essentialist non-conceptualism.

Part Two: Critique of Hanna's Essentialist Non-Conceptualism

1. Reasons for Preferring Non-Conceptualism

Let us turn, then, to Hanna's systematic arguments for his brand of non-conceptualism. The position he lays out in "Beyond the Myth of the Myth of the Given" and "Kant, Non-Conceptualism, and Kantian Non-Conceptualism" has two distinct components. On the one hand, there is the Kantian 'essentialist' non-conceptualism of the title, and on the other a position that Hanna christens "radically naïve realism".[48] In what follows, I will argue that theses two components are logically independent of each other. One can coherently embrace both Hanna's radically naïve realism and a thoroughgoing conceptualism about perceptual content. Direct realism, (weak) externalism, disjunctivism, and manifest realism – the specific features of

[48] R. Hanna, *The Rational Human Condition* (Unpublished MS, Summer 2010 version), section 2.23, p. 424.

radically naïve realism – do not entail or require non-conceptualism, nor does non-conceptualism provide an effective platform from which to argue for them.

I will furthermore argue that there are reasons to prefer the wedding of conceptualism and direct realism over Hanna's non-conceptualist package. Here that argument will mainly take the form of critical analysis of Hanna's theory of concepts: I want to show that some of Hanna's key criteria are either not adequately justified or not sufficient to exclude relevant forms of 'situated' content from the conceptual order. My analysis will at the same time, hopefully, turn out to reveal the specific ways in which conceptualism directly supports a robust form of direct realism with all the features of Hanna's radically naïve realism, while preserving the intuitions that seem to make non-conceptualism attractive.

Let us now review some of the reasons Hanna gives for finding non-conceptualism preferable to conceptualism (all things being equal). For one, he says that non-conceptualism supports a robust variety of direct perceptual realism, as was just noted. Given that this is the pre-philosophical default attitude that we tend naturally to take towards experience and to which we necessarily revert as soon as cease contemplating and encounter the world as practical agents, a philosophical position that vindicates it has obvious attraction. Second, Hanna provides a list of criteria, all of which mental content has to meet in order to count as conceptual content. While not all of these are designed to capture our intuitions about the character of perceptual experience and its difference from the conceptual, Hanna's "non-acquaintance condition"[49] for concepts does seem to mirror two observations frequently made about the contents of experience. To wit, our powers to perceive and discriminate properties given to us in sense experience appear to outstrip our arsenal of concepts for representing and reliably re-identifying the discriminated properties – an observation that has been enshrined in the Fineness of Grain Argument against conceptualism.[50] Moreover, there are mental contents that can only be made available to a subject in the actual presence of what they represent, so perceptual content is highly context-dependent. Non-conceptualism seems to do justice to these observations in a way that

[49] MS p. 27.

[50] See Christopher Peacocke, *A Study of Concepts*. Cambridge MA: MIT Press 1992. The earliest instance of the argument is presumably Gareth Evans, *The Varieties of Reference*, Oxford UP 1982, p. 229.

conceptualism cannot, and this intuition is mirrored in Hanna's condition that genuine concepts exhibit an independence of the perceptual context or immediate sensory 'acquaintance' that distinguishes the conceptual from the non-conceptual content of perception. A third reason for preferring non-conceptualism is, as Hanna suggests, that it fits better with the obvious fact of human infant and animal cognition and with the intuition that there is some common mental content that adult human concept-users share with human infants and non-rational animals.[51] Conceptualism, by contrast, would seem to rule out that infants and non-human animals have any conscious experience at all, much less that adult humans share some experiential content with them. Thus the burden of proof lies with the conceptualist, who must somehow justify this deeply counterintuitive implication of the position. In the fourth place, finally, Hanna believes that non-conceptualism allows for a "bottom-up theory of human rationality" in terms of "proto-rational" capacities.[52]

I will discuss these general considerations in favor of non-conceptualism, along with the more detailed arguments Hanna associates with them, in turn.

2. Is non-conceptualism in a stronger position than conceptualism to justify direct realism?

To answer this question, consider the traditional arguments against 'direct' or 'naïve' realism. Among the most powerful have been the arguments from illusion and from dreaming (or hallucination) that have been with us at least since the beginning of modern philosophy with Descartes.[53] What makes these arguments against direct realism appear so persuasive is that they

[51] MS pp. 2, 7.

[52] MS pp. 5-7, 12-13.

[53] The argument from illusion obviously draws on ancient skeptical arguments against the veridicality, or at least against the reliable certainty, of sense perception. However, ancient skeptics concluded from those arguments neither that sense perception must be mediated by representations essentially internal to the perceiver's mind which thus are the immediate objects of perception, nor that the totality of ostensibly perceived objects (the external world) could be wholly non-existent without making a difference in the content of perception. On this see Myles Burnyeat, "Idealism and Greek Philosophy: What Descartes Saw and Berkeley Missed", in *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. 91, No. 1 (Jan., 1982), pp. 3-40.

seem to draw on no prior theory of perception, but merely on experiences familiar to us all. As John McDowell has pointed out, however, the cogency of such arguments in fact depends on a picture of experience which is not as indubitable as the facts of illusion and hallucination the arguments explicitly cite. McDowell calls it the "highest-common-factor" view: the view, that is,

> that since there can be deceptive cases experientially indistinguishable from non-deceptive cases, one's experiential intake [. . .] must be the same in both kinds of case. In a deceptive case, ones experiential intake must *ex hypothesi* fall short of the fact itself, in the sense of there being no such fact. So that must be true [. . .] in a non-deceptive case too.[54]

With this unexamined view in place, the argument against the direct realist's belief that what we are given in perception are just the things (or the facts) themselves, easily seems unanswerable. Once this background assumption has been brought out into the open, of course, one can decide either for or against it. Those who decide against it (as McDowell and Hanna himself do) embrace disjunctivism, a key element in Hanna's 'radically naïve realism'.[55] But note that neither disjunctivism nor, more importantly, the arguments from illusion and hallucination specify whether the content allegedly common to veridical perception and non-veridical mental states must be conceptual or not. Indeed, whatever force the tradition arguments have would be much diminished if they relied on a controversial premiss about the extent to which concepts shape our perceptual experience.

So at least to the extent that Hanna's 'radically naïve realism' includes disjunctivism as a component, it is logically independent of non-conceptualism. That's the first point. The second point is that non-conceptualism has nothing to set against the traditional arguments against direct realism, since they do not draw on assumptions about conceptual mediation in the first place. Of course it is true that the assumption that perception (in whole or in part) is not conceptually mediated implies that our encounter with the world about us "cannot fail to be veridical due to

[54] "Criteria, Defeasibility, and Knowledge", loc.cit., p. 386.

[55] On disjunctivism, its background, and recent discussions of its philosophical merits, see Adrian Haddock and Fiona MacPherson (eds.), *Disjunctivism: Perception, Action, Knowledge*. Oxford UP 2008, especially the Introduction, pp. 1-24.

any failures of conceptualization, propositions, beliefs, judgments, or theories", as Hanna says.[56] But neither does that assumption, taken in itself, go any distance toward positively establishing direct realism, nor is there any reason to think that merely because conceptually mediated perception *can* fail to be veridical in the ways Hanna mentions, it must therefore be incompatible with direct realism. To infer thus would be subscribe illicitly to the 'highest-common-factor' view, only now in a form limited to conceptually shaped experience. Disjunctivism, in its most general form, is however neutral regarding the alternative between conceptualism and its opposite; to limit the extent of its applicability as a position to conceptually shaped experience would require additional argument.

3. Are Hanna's criteria for conceptuality sufficient to establish that there is essentially non-conceptual content?

One of the central moves in Hanna's strategy for establishing that there is essentially non-conceptual content is to offer a set of conditions that mental content must fulfill in order to count as conceptual content,[57] and then to show that some mental content necessarily fails to meet some of these criteria. In the following, I will discuss two conditions in particular, the *non-acquaintance condition* and the *containment analyticity condition* for material concepts.

3.1. The non-acquaintance condition

Hanna's non-acquaintance condition specifies that if a mental content X is such that a conscious cognizer necessarily needs to be directly acquainted with or confronted by whatever X represents in order to have that content available to him, then X *is not a concept*.[58] This condition appears to be framed so as to exclude what Hanna calls the "demonstrative strategy" of "highly refined

[56] MS p. 6.

[57] Cp. MS pp. 26-28.

[58] Cp. MS p. 27. What I give here is a negative reformulation of the condition which, in Hanna's text, figures as a necessary condition for a mental content counting as a concept. Since I am interested here only in the status of this specification as a necessary condition for conceptuality, I think the negative formulation above, while equivalent to Hanna's positive formulation, is more perspicuous.

conceptualism". That strategy consists in taking head-on the context-dependence of certain discriminatory abilities that exceed our ability to name and to re-identify the distinguished contents; it does so by introducing the notion of demonstrative concepts and untethering them from the usual condition that we be able to re-identify what they represent.[59] If this strategy succeeds, then the conceptualist has already come out on top of the state non-conceptualist;[60] and if it is always possible to identify perceptual content in this way, then non-conceptualism fails.

The non-acquaintance condition blocks this move. But is it justified? At the least, it would seem that Hanna needs to give a fuller account of *why* demonstrative concepts should not be counted as genuine concepts. The argument he gives against the notion of demonstrative concepts is that just because demonstrative content possesses a demonstrative part, this no more makes it a demonstrative concept than containing a lion part makes a griffin a lion; thus he insists on the *hybrid nature* of such content.[61] To this it may be replied that what makes the demonstrative concept a concept, *tout court*, is not that it possesses a conceptual part, but that its referent is parsed in terms of the abilities formulated in Evans's Generality Constraint.[62] As it stands, the non-acquaintance condition simply defines demonstrative concepts out of existence, and with them the notion of object-dependent *thought*.

Moreover, it seems that the proponent of demonstrative concepts could reply to Hanna's move here in at least two different ways. For one, she might fasten onto what Hanna calls the "'over-the-telephone' test" for conceptuality: Mental content qualifies as conceptual only if it is "possible to convey that conceptual content linguistically to someone else [. . .] over the telephone, in the absence of the individual thing or things represented by that concept."[63] Strictly speaking, this is a test for a further of Hanna's conditions for conceptuality, "the linguistic

[59] Cf. Pierre Chuard, "Demonstrative Concepts without Re-Identification," *Philosophical Studies* (2006): 153-201. Cp. Hanna, MS p. 15.

[60] Cp. MS p. 24-25; 44-45.

[61] Hanna, MS p. 45.

[62] Hanna argues (MS pp. 17-20) that the Generality Constraint is not a necessary condition for conceptuality. Be that as it may, it is a *sufficient* condition, and that is enough to secure the present point.

[63] MS p. 30, and note 42.

cognitivism condition".[64] Briefly, the condition states that conceptual content must *in principle* be expressible in some or other natural language. The qualification 'in principle' is important, since Hanna wants to allow for the possibility that pre-linguistic children and some non-human animals in fact use concepts without however being able to express them linguistically. The point is therefore that the concepts used by cognitive subjects must be expressible *by someone*, if not by themselves. That said, the linguistic cognitivism condition does have a deep connection with the non-acquaintance condition since it is rooted in Hanna's view that thought necessarily takes place in a *lingua mentis* or language of thought whose basic elements are symbols.[65] A *symbol*, as Hanna understands it, differs from a mere *sign* in that it necessarily has a referential and intensional semantics in addition to its syntactical features, whereas a sign is wholly determined by its syntactical properties alone.[66] And these mental symbols must be deployable and re-usable in the absence of their intensionally picked-out referents. This general condition on the symbols of conceptual thought is what makes the non-acquaintance condition and the linguistic cognitivism condition effectively equivalent.

Now, the conceptualist proponent of demonstrative concepts might object, this condition on conceptuality is an instance of just the kind of sliding between concepts-as-vehicles for expressing content and concepts-as-parts-or-aspects of content, for which McDowell criticizes Tyler Burge in his paper on "*De Re* Senses" and which Hanna himself warns against in his discussion of mental symbols.[67] Although Hanna is careful to distinguish between the vehicle of thought and its intentional target, he seems tacitly and implicitly to exclude the externalist possibility that in certain cases *the object itself* (and not the symbol directed toward it) is literally *part* of the *conceptual* content entertained in my thought. Is there a principled reason for allowing this 'digestivist' possibility *only* if the content into which the object enters is non-conceptual? If not, then for all the over-the-telephone test shows, "a conceptual repertoire can

[64] Cf. MS p. 27 ff.

[65] Cf. Hanna, *Rationality and Logic*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press 2006, chapter 4.

[66] Cf. *Rationality and Logic*, pp. 34-35, 92-93.

[67] See John McDowell, "*De Re* Senses", in *Meaning, Knowledge, and Reality*, loc. cit. pp. 218. In *Rationality and Logic* (p. 92), Hanna emphasizes that "it is crucial not to confuse the vehicle of a mental representation with the *intentional target* and *intentional* [sic?] *content* of a mental representation."

include the ability to think of objects under modes of representation whose functioning depends essentially on (say) the perceived presence of the objects".[68]

A second and related response to the non-acquaintance condition might start from the idea that concepts are *capacities* or *abilities*. As Sonia Sedivy puts it in her account of Evans's Generality Constraint, "thought must be structured not in the sense that subjects use 'symbols', or more generally that thoughts are 'composed of *elements*', but in the sense that thought is a 'complex of abilities'."[69] The point here would be that whether or not my encounter with objects in my environment is conceptually mediated depends not on how I might be able to express or even re-identify them, but on how I process information coming to me about those objects over a standing information link. If my encounter with them "involves grasping that a property of a certain object is not tied to this or that individual object, and that a particular object might have other properties as well as those perceived or considered",[70] then that encounter is conceptually shaped. What the Generality Constraint specifies is therefore not, at the most basic level, a structure that elements have to exhibit, but the actualization of abilities that are "essentially recombinatory along attributive and referential dimensions respectively".[71] The conceptual status of the content involved in such an encounter is thus in no way compromised by its failing to meet the non-acquaintance condition. Indeed, for Sedivy, the requirement of an on-going information link (Hanna's 'perceptual acquaintance') with the object is at the heart of the idea that perceptual experience is a "mode of engagement" with the environment, that it is "world-involving".[72] According to her, Evans's "radical, overarching aim" is to show how "demonstrative spatial thought is a conceptual contentful capacity that involves its objects"[73] –

[68] McDowell, "*De Re* Senses", p. 219.

[69] Sonia Sedivy, "Non-conceptual Epicycles", in Christine van Geen, Frédérique de Vignemont (eds.). *European Review of Philosophy*, vol. 6: *The Structure of Non-conceptual Content*. Stanford: CSLI Publications 2006, p. 43; cp. Gareth Evans, *Varieties of Reference*. Oxford UP 1982, p. 101.

[70] Sedivy, "Non-conceptual Epicycles", p. 45.

[71] Sedivy, "Non-conceptual Epicycles", p. 42; cp. p. 45.

[72] Sedivy, "Non-conceptual Epicycles", pp. 39, 51.

[73] Sedivy, "Non-conceptual Epicycles", p. 47.

and, I would add, involves them as *metaphysical constituents* of the *conceptual* content of the subject's perceptual state.

This variety of externalism, according to which the perceptual objects themselves constitute or compose part of the perceptual content, is perfectly compatible with thoroughgoing conceptualism about perceptual content. Consider once more the way immediate perceptual content tends to fail Hanna's non-acquaintance condition. That it fails to meet that condition is at the root of the context-dependence of our abilities for perceptual discrimination and, in a somewhat different form, it also enters into the Fineness of Grain Argument for non-conceptualism as a basic premise. But merely noting this general and striking fact about the contents of perceptual experience does not suffice to qualify them as non-conceptual, as I argued above. A different way of arriving at this same point is to consider the implications of the fact that such content is, as Hanna emphasizes, essentially *situated* and bound up with our sensorimotor skills and our ability to track both the objects in our natural environment and ourselves in relation to them.[74] Drawing on a similar observation, together with a careful inspection of the phenomenology of seeing, Alva Noë has taken issue with the widely held "snapshot" conception of visual experience that he believes to underlie (*inter alia*) the Fineness of Grain Argument. According to the "snapshot" conception, visual experiences "represent the world the way pictures do – all at once, in sharp focus, from the center to the periphery".[75] As has long been known, there are physiological facts that conflict with this view, but in order to save the (putative!) phenomenon, "the orthodox strategy [. . .] is to suggest that the brain integrates the information available in successive fixations to form a detailed internal representation, which then serves as the substrate of the experience."[76] Recent work in cognitive psychology, however, suggests that not even this epicycle can save the erroneous phenomenology of the snapshot view, on which, to repeat, the Fineness of Grain Argument

[74] Cp. MS pp. 55-57.

[75] Alva Noë, "Experience without the Head", in Tamar Szabo Gendler and John Hawthorne (eds.), *Perceptual Experience*. Oxford UP 2006, pp. 411-433, here p. 419.

[76] Noë, "Experience without the Head", p. 419f.

partially depends. "Phenomenologically," Noë suggests instead, "the world is given to perception *as available*":

> The scene is present to me now as detailed, even though I do not now see all the detail, because I am now able – by the exercise of a repertoire of perceptual skills – to bring the detail into immediate perceptual contact. [. . .] The detail is present because it is, as it were, *within reach*. The basis of our feeling of access is our possession of the skills needed actually to reach out and grasp the relevant details. [. . .] Familiarity with the ways our sensory stimulation changes as we move is the ground of our perceptual access. Perceivers *know how* to gain access, to make contact, with the environment around them.[77]

Noë draws out the consequences of this insight for the debate between conceptualists and non-conceptualists in another paper. When we attend to the fact that experience is a "temporally extended episode of encounter with a densely detailed environment", then it becomes clear that "what is seen depends on activity on the part of the perceiver that is at least quasi-conceptual. Attention is a way, in experience and in thought, of identifying, discriminating, carving our features of the environment from the background. Moreover, attention is [. . .] gist-dependent. Where you look, how you inquire, depends on how you take the scene, on how you understand it."[78]

My perceptual experience, then, as a temporally extended encounter with the things that make up my environment, has at least part of its content 'out there', in those very things. But now the important point is to see that this *conceptualist* "active externalism"[79] about perceptual consciousness is also fully compatible with what Hanna calls manifest realism. Holding on to the idea, developed above, that concepts are complexes (not of internal symbols, but) of abilities actualized in the way I appreciate the temporally and causally dynamic, changing objects of my environment as I move in and through it, we are now free to identify the objects and properties

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[77] Noë, "Experience without the Head", p. 422-423.

[78] Alva Noë, "Perception, action, and non-conceptual content", available online at the following web address: http://host.uniroma3.it/progetti/kant/field/hurleysymp_noe.htm. For a more recent defense of conceptualism by Noë see his book *Perception in Action* (MIT Press 2005), pp. 181-208.

[79] Cf. Noë, "Experience without the Head", p. 411.

given in direct perceptual experience with the very objects and properties that we are encountering in our immediate environment.[80]

But, it may be objected, if our active encounter with the environment is shaped by our concepts, does not this speak against the compatibility of this version of disjunctivism and digestivism with the manifest realism of Hanna's position? The answer is no, it does not. Again taking a page from Sonia Sedivy, we should stress that human norms, practices, conceptions are not somehow alien to how the world 'really' is, so that their presence and influence must necessarily be appraised as a 'subjective' or purely 'anthropocentric' imposition or distortion of the world. Human life activity (including its normative and conceptual dimensions) forms, just as non-human animal life does, a unity with 'the world' at large.

> The objective – be it facts, values, or simply 'the world' – is co-constitutive with ourselves, so the very fabric of the world is not something whose specification can be independent of reference to us and our activities. [. . .] Our activities are constituted in a reciprocally evolving relationship between the possibilities for action in the world and our possibilities. This is the sense in which forms of life – we might more fully say forms of life activities – are co-constitutive for persons and world [. . .].[81]

This picture of the way we, as concept-users, are in the world, accords much better with the view that informs Hanna's radically naïve realism, but which he seeks to limit to our strictly non-conceptual encounters with the world. But if we are in touch with the world *at all* in the way Hanna suggests we are in the dimension of non-conceptual content, then what reason can be given *in principle* for thinking that just because "failures of conceptualization, propositions, beliefs, judgments, or theory"[82] *can* and *do* occur, the conceptual as such *must* therefore fundamentally vitiate the directness and manifestness of our cognitive encounter with the world? If there is none, then again one leading motivation toward non-conceptualism fails to get any traction.

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[80] Cp. Sonia Sedivy, "Starting Afresh Disjunctively: Perceptual Engagement with the World", in Adrian Haddock and Fiona MacPherson (eds.), *Disjunctivism: Perception, Action, Knowledge*. Oxford UP 2008, esp. pp. 358-363.

[81] Sonia Sedivy, "Starting Afresh Disjunctively", pp. 367, 372.

[82] MS p. 6.

3.2. The containment analyticity condition

I now turn to the second of the two criteria for conceptuality that I promised above to address, Hanna's containment analyticity condition. This condition states (again in my own negative reformulation) that if some mental content X does not fully support the truth of some analytic propositions that are necessarily true in virtue of intensional containment, then X *is not a concept*.[83] Whereas above I tried to show that context independence *should not* be accepted as a criterion of conceptuality, in this section I will argue that the containment analyticity condition is *both a proper criterion of conceptuality* and that it is *necessarily fulfilled by the perceptual content of any and every being capable of representing its environment at all*.

Fred Dretske has argued convincingly that if some thoroughly causal indicator of an environmental condition is to become a genuine *representation* of that condition (call it F), then the causal indicator or structure in question

> must play a part in the production of behavior that is rational from the point of view of the organism's well-being. An internal representation of F becomes a representation of F in a process in which what it causes is, I this sense, a *reasonable* response to F. According to this recipe for thought, nothing can become the thought that F without contributing to a rational response to F, a response that is appropriate given the system's needs and/or desires.[84]

Dretske arrives at this 'recipe' in the course of trying to pave a way from purely causal-informational processes to the emergence of something recognizable as genuine (if somewhat rudimentary) representational content. Despite important differences from Sedivy and Noë, Dretske shares the insight that representational content cannot be adequately understood in isolation from a biological creature's natural environment, the way it has (co)-evolved in that environment, and its mode(s) of behavior therein. The key concept here is that of a *natural function*. But an animal's internal organs obviously also serve natural functions without thereby

[83] Cp. MS p. 27.

[84] Fred Dretske, "A Recipe for Thought", originally published as "If You Can't Make One, You Don't Know How it Works", in P. French, T. Uehling, and H. Wettstein (eds.), *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, vol. 9, pp. 468-482, quoted here from David Chalmers (ed.), *Philosophy of Mind. Classical and Contemporary Readings*. Oxford University Press 2002, p. 498.

counting as representations. To zero in on representation, therefore, Dretske focuses on ontogenetically emerging *learning functions* that, given the appropriate causal-functional, environment-involving history, can eventually "detach" the organism's F-indicator (say) from causes in the way a representation must be.[85]

The exact details of Dretske's 'recipe' are less important here than what they imply for the structure of representations as such. The (teleo)-functional nature of representations would seem to entail that their most specific content (their proper meaning) is nested within less narrowly specified representational content. Assuming differential flight-or-fight behaviors in the organism, the representation of a flying predator (perhaps in contrast to an aquatic one) would be nested in the functionally anchored representation of a predator (without the qualification of flying or aquatic), and that representation would be nested in the functionally anchored representation of danger from the environment. If biological functions and the representations they give rise to are to be thought of in this way, then they do in fact support "the truth of some analytic propositions that are necessarily true in virtue of intensional containment":[86] 'Flying predators are predators'; 'Flying predators are dangerous': 'Flying predators are not aquatic predators', and similar rudimentary inferences. It would be far-fetched to suppose that in all cases biological creatures *possess* these concepts and the analytic truths they support, in the sense that they would be able "to make analytically necessary and a priori logical inferences that pick out at least some of the intrinsic descriptive or intensional elements of *X*".[87] And accordingly, Hanna might reply here by citing his fourth possession condition for conceptuality, to wit:

> (vd) it is possible for (va) to be satisfied by *some* cognitive subjects (e.g., normal human toddlers and other young children) without their also satisfying either (vb) or (vc), and it is possible for (vb) and (vc) to be satisfied by *other* cognitive subjects (e.g., the Oddly Detached Cognizer) without their also satisfying (va), *and in all such cases there is no real possibility of concept-possession, and thus no conceptual contents in*

[85] Cf. Dretske, "A Recipe for Thought", pp. 494-496.

[86] Echoing Hanna's words from MS p. 19, 27.

[87] MS p. 28.

> *the strict sense, although concept-like contents are still present in the mental acts or states of those cognitive subjects*.[88]

However, there are problems with this response: For one, it seems to be in conflict with Hanna's argument against Richard Heck's composition-based account of non-conceptual content. When Hanna first introduces the "Oddly Detached Cognizer" mentioned in the condition just quoted, his purpose is to show that a mental content's failure to conform to Evans's Generality Constraint, say by not being deployable by a subject in the construction of singular categorical propositions, is not sufficient to disqualify it as *conceptual* content.[89] Citing the distinction between "the ability for concept-use or concept-deployment on the one hand, and the ability for concept-possession, on the other"[90], Hanna goes on to argue that despite such failures in the deployment of the relevant content, that content would fully count as conceptual. But if that argument is valid in the former context, it surely must be valid in the present context as well: For otherwise it would seem that by denying that such contents are "conceptual contents in the strict sense" just because they cannot be possessed by the subject in question, puts Hanna in a position indistinguishable from that of the State Non-Conceptualists he criticizes. So we are free to characterize the kind of very rudimentary biological representations Dretske has in mind as fully conceptual.

4. Is non-conceptualism better able than conceptualism to accommodate the intuition that human infants and non-human animals enjoy conscious experience and cognition?

The upshot of the line of argument that concluded the last section is that if Dretske is right about the biological origin and (teleo)-functional nature of representations, then any representation whatsoever (even the very rudimentary ones we might attribute to the lower animals) will meet the containment analyticity condition. Of course one might have reservations about the truth of Dretske's materialist account of representation.[91] Such reservations can be met, however, by pointing out that the key to Dretske's 'recipe' is the commonsensical observation that the

[88] MS p. 28, emphasis added.
[89] Cp. MS p. 17-21.
[90] MS p. 18.
[91] As Hanna does: cf. MS p. 48, and note 69.

purposeful and differential responsiveness to the environment that is characteristic of organisms becomes salient to us just to the extent that we can describe it *rationally*, in terms of *reasons*. To grasp representations as (teleo)-functionally anchored in the organism's "needs and/or desires" is to grasp them as inherently rational (or rationalizable).[92] But this point is independent of Dretske's specific account of the biological origin of representation. As Noë emphasizes,

> it is a condition of our treating an animal as a conscious subject of experience at all, as opposed, merely, to a locus of neural or psychological processes, that we view the animal as an integrated whole, situated in an environment, suitably responsive to features of that environment, with reasons it is capable of being moved by even if it is not capable of fully understanding. In short, it is only when viewed as simple agents, in possession of what are in effect, rudimentary conceptual and inferential skills that we can even make sense to ourselves of the idea that animals are full-blooded perceivers.[93]

This observation gives me occasion to address the third reason for preferring non-conceptualism given at the beginning of this second part of the paper.[94] Hanna points out that, on the joint assumption that (a) experiential content is necessarily conceptual and (b) in order for a subject to enjoy conceptual content, the subject must possess the relevant concepts, it would follow that normal human infants and the non-human animals we are familiar with enjoy no conscious experiential content. Non-conceptualism rules out this counterintuitive position.[95] Now it is obvious from my previous discussion of Hanna's linguistic cognitivism that he does not hold concept possession to be a necessary condition of enjoying (in some sense of the word) conscious conceptual content; and he makes this qualification in part in order explicitly to make room for the possibility that infants and some non-human animals use concepts (without possessing them). On this assumption, (some of) the content we share with infants and non-human animals could in principle be conceptual content. So there is no reason to think that non-conceptualism is exclusively in a position to do justice to the intuition that there is some content that we adult humans just must share with infants and animals; that content could, in principle, be conceptually shaped. But if Noë's observation on the conditions under which we can make

[92] Cp. Dretske, "A Recipe for Thought", pp. 497ff.

[93] Noë, "Perception, action, and non-conceptual content", loc. cit.

[94] See above, p. 3.

[95] Cf. Hanna, MS p. 22; see also pp. 1 and 52.

sense to ourselves that animals are even perceivers is right, then it is in fact conceptualism alone which, with the appropriate extension beyond our conspecific, essentially like-minded human fellows, can do justice to our intuitive perception of animals as life forms deeply similar to us, i.e. as conscious subjects of experience. And this is not because of an antecedent theory of how conscious content must be constituted, but because of what makes the living organisms in our environment salient to us as living and conscious in the first place.

Hence just as the externalism, digestivism, and manifest realism that make up Hanna's 'radically naïve realism' are logically independent of his non-conceptualism and deeply compatible with conceptualism, so too is the thought of a *gradualism* in the transition from human to animal cognition and a *pluralism* in regard to the manifold co-constituted properties and aspects of the world we share with animals[96] compatible with a decidedly conceptualist stance.

5. Can non-conceptualism provide a 'bottom-up' account of rationality?

The answer to this question is in a way the litmus test for Hanna's non-conceptualism. The argument behind his idea of "the myth of the myth of the given" is that Sellars, McDowell, and those who follow them have supplied reasons for rejecting, not non-conceptualism, but a mythologized "sensationalist" version of it. According to the myth, non-conceptual content "is just the unstructured causal-sensory 'given' input to the cognitive faculties, passively waiting to be carved up by concepts, propositions, and theories".[97] The problem with this mythical, sensationalist view is twofold. First, it is "not in fact a thesis about *representational* content at all, but rather only a generally discredited thesis about how *phenomenal* content relates to conceptual content".[98] Second, such causal-sensory input, being unstructured or at least not of

[96] On this cp. Sonia Sedivy, "Starting Afresh Disjunctively", p. 357f.

[97] MS p. 76.

[98] MS p. 76.

the appropriate propositional structure, cannot be called on to justify perceptual beliefs. In McDowell's pithy phrase, it gives us exculpations where what we want are justifications.[99]

Hanna sets out to debunk that myth of the myth of the given and to vindicate a form of non-conceptualism that is really able to provide justification for our perceptual beliefs. He promises a "bottom-up" theory of our "conceptual and other intellectual capacities" that will *explain* them "*in terms of* the more basic and more primitive essentially non-conceptual psychological capacities shared with infants and non-human animals, or what I will call collectively *the proto-rational capacities*."[100]

Now, the promise to explain humans' conceptual capacities "in terms of" the more basic non-conceptual capacities is ambiguous to the extent we are not told what "explanation in terms of" is supposed to amount to. In personal conversation, Hanna has indicated to me that he does not mean any form of reductive explanation where the higher-level intellectual capacities come out as essentially no different from the lower-level non-conceptual capacities on which they are said to depend. This is presumably what he has in mind when he states that his "bottom-up explanation entails no deflation, narrowing, or reduction *whatsoever* in the epistemic scope, modal character, or normative force of human rationality as classically conceived."[101]

Hanna gives a very concise formulation of what such a bottom-up explanation achieves:

> [I]t is precisely the Grip of the Given, via essentially non-conceptual content, that is our non-inferential sufficiently justifying reason for basic perceptual belief or basic intentional action, or at least this grip is the primitive fact that provides non-inferential sufficiently justifying reasons for us to hold basic perceptual beliefs or perform basic intentional actions. No rational human minded animal cognitive or practical activity could ever be actually accurate, true, sufficiently justified, logically consistent, effective, good, right, or practically consistent without essentially non-conceptual content.[102]

[99] Cp. *Mind and World*, p. 13.

[100] MS pp. 7, first emphasis added.

[101] MS p. 7.

[102] MS p. 79.

There is much to agree with in the substance of this formulation, and yet the argument that only non-conceptual content can perform this basic function is less than wholly convincing. For it hinges in part on the *negative* premiss that " conceptual content necessarily underdetermines the essentially non-conceptual content that actually performs these representational jobs."[103] But if the conceptualist approach inspired by Kant's *Selbstsetzunglehre* (and unwittingly echoed by Noë) is viable, then the *ur*-concepts are embedded in the most basic ways I make the world experienceable: in the forms of pushing, pulling, tearing, weighing . . . . And clearly, while such content is essentially situated in an egocentric behavioral space, there are any number of ways that a 'this' can become phenomenal to me (again, by pushing, pulling, etc.), and there are different possible 'thises' upon which I can exert force in any one of those basic ways. Which is to say that the structure codified by Evans's Generality Constraint in inscribed in action itself and thus in the perceptions mediated by action. "Knowing how" thus ultimately does boil down to our ability to exert force in the basic ways Kant identifies and which cut across the subject-object dichotomy. Knowing-how must therefore be analyzable in terms of knowing-that, as Jason Stanley and Timothy Williamson have argued,[104] not only in the case of reflective consciousness, but also for pre-reflectively conscious cognitive action and practical intentional action. If this is correct, then conceptualism remains afloat and indeed flourishes precisely in the element Hanna believes most inhospitable to it.

6. The Grip of the Given, Transcendental Dependence, and the Transition from Pre-Reflective Consciousness to Reflective Self-Consciousness

A final point still needs addressing. The "Grip of the Given" is meant to go beyond the "myth of the myth of the given" by giving an account – contra Sellarsian and McDowellian critiques of the non-conceptual – of how non-conceptual content can given reasons, justifications, and not just "exculpations". As Hanna states, "it is precisely the Grip of the Given . . . that is our non-inferential *sufficiently justifying reason* for basic perceptual belief or basic intentional action."[105]

[103] MS p. 52.
[104] Jason Stanley / Timothy Williamson, "Knowing How," *Journal of Philosophy* 97 (2001): 411-444.

[105] MS p. 79.

Now, Hanna repeatedly emphasizes that non-conceptual content is rooted in our pre-reflective consciousness, whereas self-conscious reflection (of the kind we engage in when we ask ourselves whether certain of our beliefs or actions are justified) requires conceptual content. But then it remains unclear how exactly non-conceptual content does (1) play a justificatory role across the pre-reflective/reflective boundary and (2) survive our self-conscious consideration of it intact.

My suspicion is that Hanna is conflating a relation of transcendental dependence with a relation of epistemic justification. I can explain what I mean by this by reference to McDowell's critique of Sellars's view in *Science and Metaphysics*, to which Hanna's view bears an unmistakable resemblance. As is now well-known, Sellars first analyzes and rejects the "myth of the given" in *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind*, showing that bare sensations cannot do the epistemic work classical empiricism had assigned to them. This, however, did not leave sensations unemployed, not even within Sellars's own thought. As McDowell shows in great detail, Sellars believed that "the transcendental role that Kant needs sensibility to play consists in its supplying manifolds of sensory items that are not shaped by the understanding, to guide the flow of conceptual representations in perception".[106] Intuitions, on this view, are only "proto-conceptual",[107] in that they provide the foundation for a "downward dependence" of the conceptual and epistemological that ensures its directedness towards objects. This transcendental role of Kantian intuitions (on Sellars's view as reconstructed by McDowell) seems to me to be exactly analogous (if not identical) to the role Hanna wants the "grip of the given" or the veridicality-relation to play. But must that which transcendentally constitutes the object-directedness of the perception also be understood to supply its epistemic warrant?

McDowell's critical revision of Sellars on this point seems worthy of serious consideration in just this context. Tailoring the thought to the matter at hand, McDowell can be read as suggesting that the Grip of the Given is a *state* of consciousness, but not an *object* of consciousness, that is, the the Grip of the Given is a state of consciousness that is not

[106] McDowell, "The Logical Form of an Intuition", in *Having the World in View*, loc.cit., p. 25.

[107] Ibid,, p. 26

apperceived.[108] Hanna will object that this puts us right back with state non-conceptualism, and that is true. But perhaps that is the most judicious position to take.

In fact, the position even harmonizes well with Hanna's own Deep Consciousness Thesis: "Necessarily, whenever a creature with a consciousness like ours is in any sort of mental state, then it is also occurrently conscious in some definite way, even if only minimally. So occurrent consciousness like ours penetrates into every aspect of our mental lives, including so-called "non-conscious" or "sub-personal" information processing."[109] This thesis resonates strongly both with the idea of a smooth transition between conceptual, but non-apperceived content to the level of self-conscious awareness, and also with Noë's suggestion that it is undesirable and impossible to distinguish sharply and once and for all between our personal-level capacities and the sub-personal implementation of causal processes on which they depend and from which they emerge, but which in turn are open to guidance from the personal level. One consequence that Noë draws from this impossibility is that a holistic view of thought, action, and perception will not draw "a sharp division between the conceptual and the non-conceptual",[110] but instead extend the reach of the conceptual until it shades off into the sphere of the purely causal, sub-personal. Yet turning again to Kant's late revision of transcendental philosophy in the *Opus postumum*, we can stress how this same continuity between sub-personal levels of neurobiological implementation and the personal level of conceptual poise, between the flow of representational content below the threshold of apperception and the reflective awareness of such content must be conceptually supported. For the content that flows, insofar as it is *my* content, the *object* of my consciousness, must be wholly conceptual in structure and constitution if, in Kant's famous phrase, the representation of the 'I think' is to be able to accompany it.[111]

[108] Cp. McDowell, "Sellars on Perceptual Experience", p. 18f.

[109] MS p. 64

[110] Noë, "Perception, action, and non-conceptual content".

[111] Cp. *Critique of Pure Reason*, B132.

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