

CHAPTER 3

THE PHILOSOPHY OF WILFRID SELLARS

Summary

According to Richard Rorty, Sellars' philosophical enterprise has the merit of challenging the Kantian foundation of knowledge, since it aims at undermining the whole framework of *givenness* by adopting a form of holism founded on the idea that *justification* is not a matter of a special relation between ideas and objects, but of *conversation*, of *social practice*. In this sense, philosophy cannot no way maintain the role of a *metapractice* intended to criticize all the possible forms of social interplays; it searches no more for certainty. The behaviorist attitude is not a matter of "adequacy" since it aims at rejecting all those sorts of explanations founded on the reliability and authority of *first-person reports* about the world or the mind; more than this the issue of behaviorism is to inquire whether a practice of justification can be given a grounding in a fact.

Sellars' project can be seen as Kantian since he believes that the conceptual frameworks by virtue of which we encounter the world contain some synthetic a priori truths and are not deprived of a *prescriptive* or *normative* dimension. According to Sellars, to be a good philosopher is to cope with the *dialectical character* of philosophy itself, being disposed to put into question even the current conceptual framework. The courage to threaten well-accepted frameworks is demonstrated by Sellars through the demolition of the *myth of the Given*, that is, through the rejection of the idea that there would be an *exogenous* Given imposed *from the outside* on our system of beliefs.

Sellars' efforts are directed toward the development of a sort of "principle of comprehension" according to which nothing in the phenomenal field must be completely repudiated since even the scientific discourse is but a *continuation* and

refinement of the common sense framework; in this sense, Sellars' thought can be characterized as *naturalistic* even if not reductionist.

1. Rorty reads Sellars

According to Richard Rorty, philosophy since Descartes, has been dominated by *epistemology*; few philosophers took seriously the effort to stigmatize radically the notion of philosophy as *metacriticism* of special disciplines, proclaiming the unreality of the traditional epistemological problems and solutions.

"The spirit of playfulness" which connotes the philosophical enterprise at the beginning of the 1900, turned very early to a more serious way of doing philosophy, inspired by the force of the mathematical logic: Husserl and Russell are in this sense paradigmatic figures.

The discovery of "privileged representations"- called by Russell "logical forms" and by Husserl "essences"- can be seen as the last effort to rescue from the ancient philosophy the *quest for seriousness, purity and rigor*.

The Kantian picture of concepts and intuitions getting together to produce knowledge was not only rescued but also was used as the means to distinguish philosophy from psychology: philosophy, in this sense, stays to empirical science as the study of *structure* to the study of *content*.

Rorty's attempt in his famous work *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*⁴⁵ is to challenge this Kantian foundation reminding us of Sellars's behavioristic critique of the whole framework of the *givenness* and Quine's behavioristic approach to the *necessary-contingent distinction*.

Quine's and Sellars' way of thinking can be considered as a *form of holism* in that knowledge cannot be conceived of as an *accurate representing*- as the Mirror of Nature-, since such accuracy requires a theory of *privileged representations* which are automatically and intrinsically accurate.

Their holism would depend on the thesis that *justification* is not a matter of a special relation between ideas and objects, but of *conversation*, of *social practice*:

Conversational justification, so to speak, is naturally holistic, whereas the notion of justification embedded in the epistemological tradition is reductive and atomistic. ... The crucial premise of

this argument is that we understand knowledge when we understand the social justification of belief, and thus have no need to view it as accuracy of representation.⁴⁶

Conversation then replaces *confrontation* and the idea of the mind as mirror of the Nature can be dispelled; philosophy, in this view, cannot have the role of a *metapractice* defined to exercise the critique of all possible forms of social practice: philosophy is no more a quest for certainty.

Notwithstanding Sellars' holism, his writing, according to Rorty, would be still permeated with the notion of *analysis* and with a *tacit use* of the distinction between the necessary and the contingent, the structural and the empirical; Sellars *de facto* is not as distrustful of these distinctions as Quine: while the latter believes that the notion of meaning would involve commitment to *shady entities* which, then, are worthy of being abandoned, the former retains that meanings *per se* may well be vague, even if meaning talk is classificatory. If classifications were not vague, then we could not find a logical space for linguistic tokens like "tall", "short", "fat" and so on.

Willem DeVries argues this subject of matter as:

Sellars thus sees no need to call the very idea of the analytic-synthetic or the *a priori-a posteriori* distinctions into question, although his position implies that these distinctions are not the sharp-edged distinctions the logical positivists assumed they were.⁴⁷

Sellars, however, keeps the *analytic-synthetic* distinction separate from the *a priori-a posteriori* distinction, for the former distinction concerns *formal truth*, while the latter has to do with *material truths*; it is the notion of material truth which permits Sellars to define better his notion of the synthetic a priori: the good inferences in fact which are contained in the conceptual framework of an expression are not all the formal inferences: if the material rule of inference by virtue of which "x is colored" can be validly inferred from "x is red" is a good one, then the proposition "All red things are colored" can be seen as a synthetic a priori proposition.

Sellars, notwithstanding his endorsement of synthetic a priori propositions, cannot be considered a Kantian, for there is no need to believe that, like in Kant, there is

a single synthetic a priori proposition that is an element of all possible languages or conceptual frameworks.

De Vries gives further details on Sellars' endorsement:

In this respect, Sellars is more Hegelian than Kantian, for he recognizes that the synthetic *a priori* truths and even the set of categories we operate with are, potentially, dynamic, changing under the impact of both experience and reflection.⁴⁸

Rorty makes a point of the impossibility for analytic philosophy to be written without one or the other of these distinctions: for this reason, the analytic movement in the present stage, as an entrenched school of thought, would lack of *metaphilosophical reflection* and of *methodological self-consciousness*.

Quine and Sellars raise behaviorist questions about the epistemic status of assertions warranted by privileged assertions: for Sellars one point of interest lies in the reason we have, if we have, to distinguish between the authority of *first-person reports* and that of *expert reports*; the certainty of "I have a pain" would be then a reflection of the fact that nobody cares to question it, not conversely:

Explaining rationality and epistemic authority by reference to what society lets us say, rather than the latter by the former, is the essence of what I shall call 'epistemological behaviorism', an attitude common to Dewey and Wittgenstein.⁴⁹

If, however, we interpret epistemological behaviorism as a kind of *holism* according to which to understand the rules of language amounts to understand the way moves are made in that language⁵⁰, we must accept the premise that epistemic notions must be explicated only in behavioral terms, that is to say, remarks like "S knows that" must be interpreted as remarks about the status of S's reports among his peers and not as remarks mirroring the world.

If this premise is well accepted, then philosophy comes down to a *therapeutic tool* for straightening out quarrels between *common sense* and philosophy and nothing else.

According to this point of view, Sellars' account of first-person contemporary reports is grounded on the following conviction: to say that this kind of reports are

incorrigible is to say that “nobody has yet suggested a good way of predicting and controlling human behavior which does not take sincere first-person contemporary reports of thoughts at face-value”.

Behaviorist attitude is not only a matter of “adequacy”, but it claims simply that philosophy ought to offer common sense about knowledge and truth; it amounts to a rejection of a sort of explanation which tries to expound the reliability of reports about the world or the mind by using notions like “acquaintance with meanings” or “acquaintance with sensory data”.

If we are legitimated to postulate such abstract entities as helpful tools for entrenching our causal explanations, we cannot interpret them as premises from which to infer our knowledge of other entities:

What we *cannot* do is to take knowledge of these “inner” or “abstract” entities as *premises* from which our knowledge of other entities is normally inferred, and without which the latter knowledge would be “ungrounded”.⁵¹

This is a move which is attempted for the first time by Wittgenstein who dethrones the myth according to which rationality would consist in *a state of constraint under rules*. The Austrian philosopher makes a great work by dissolving the traditional *notion of analyticity*, by replacing the traditional term “coherence”, intended as a kind of “glue” which connects one element of the discourse with the other, with a colored linguistic context: the idea of *necessity*, then is destined to disappear.

Coherence, in the traditional debate, is conceived metaphorically as the force of a rope which goes through and links the steps and the phases of thought and language; in Wittgenstein’s point of view however, the force of a rope would consist much more in the fibre *interlacements*:

I can think of no better expression to characterize these similarities than “family resemblances”; for the various resemblances between members of a family: build, features, colour of eyes, gait, temperament, etc., etc. overlap and criss-cross in the same way.—And I shall say: ‘games’ form a family.

And for instance the kinds of number form a family in the same way. Why do we call something a “number”? Well, perhaps because it has a—direct—relationship with several things that have

hitherto been called number; and this may be said to give it an indirect relationship to other things that we call the same name. And we extend our concept of number as in spinning a thread we twist fibre on fibre. And the strength of the thread does not reside in the fact that some one fibre runs through its whole length, but in the overlapping of many fibres.

But if someone wished to say: "There is something common to all these constructions—namely the disjunction of all their common properties"—I should reply: Now you are only playing with words. One might as well say: "Something runs through the whole thread—namely the continuous overlapping of these fibres".⁵²

The issue of behaviorism in epistemology is not the adequacy or the explanation of a fact, but, much more that of inquiring whether a practice of justification can be given a grounding in a fact; this does not mean that knowledge is cut off from the world, but only that justification is a practice referred to what we already accept, so that we cannot "get outside our beliefs and our language so as to find some test other than coherence"⁵³.

Sellars however cannot be defined a coherentist in the classical sense, since he does not maintain that all knowledge is inferential: perceptual and introspective reports, as a matter of fact, can be considered as instances of *noninferential knowledge*⁵⁴; according to the American philosopher, both the foundationalist and the coherentist positions conceal a position similar to that of "the myth of the Given" and they do so in linking together the notions of *noninferential* and *self-justifying*⁵⁵. He tries, on the contrary, to keep these notions distinct, formulating a theory in which noninferential knowledge doesn't amount to self-justifying knowledge.

There is no a "permanent neutral matrix" to regard some scientific or moral assumptions more rational than others; if we dispense with foundations or ontological grounds, then we implicitly admit that the only cultural criticism admitted is that which goes on *piecemeal* and *partial* without any referring to eternal standards.

Sellars' opposition to Platonism consists in his throwing back any attempt to measure the worth of every assertion and action by *recurring to the notion of correspondence instead of that of coherence*.

Rorty, however, affirms that Sellars cannot get along without appealing to a *residual form of Platonism*:

Unfortunately, both men tend to substitute correspondence to physical entities, and specifically to the 'basic entities' of physical science (elementary particles, or their successors).⁵⁶

As to the residual form of Platonism present in Sellars, it can be said that the American philosopher does not belong to those radical nay-sayers which not only deny much of the metaphysical architecture, dismissing it as mere non-sense, but they also reject the metaphysical project itself. Sellars, on the contrary, aims at constructing a metaphysics in which you can find some truths which have not the form of evidences (as in Descartes), but that of *complexes* in which competing insights balance reciprocally in several different dimensions:

Classical rationalism... made explicit the grammar of epistemological and metaphysical predicates, but- owing to certain confusions, particularly with respect to *meaning* and *existence*-came to the mistaken conclusion that philosophical statements were factual statements, albeit of a particular kind. Classical empiricism, on the other hand, argued that these statements were common or garden variety factual statements, and usually put them in the psychological species. Rationalism gave the grammar, but contaminated it with platonizing factualism. Classical empiricism threw out the platonizing, but continued to factualize, and confused the grammar of the philosophical predicates by attempting to identify them with psychological predicates....⁵⁷

The importance of Quine's and Sellars' enterprise would lie in their declining every attempt to reduce norms, rules, justifications to facts, generalizations and explanations; this strategy has a positive outcome insofar as they do not want to offer any account to be tested for *adequacy*: the idea, that is to say, of an account of human knowledge is futile.

According to them, rationality of science is not due to the fact that it has a *foundation* (Sellars) or it has an *architectonic structure* (Quine): science is for the first a "self-correcting enterprise which can put any claim in jeopardy, though not all at once"⁵⁸, while for the second it resembles a *field of force* in which there are no assertions immune from revision.

Sellars' project, in particular, can be seen as a Kantian response to the dominant empiricism of the XX century; the manifest and the scientific images are, as a matter of fact, *transcendentally ideal* frameworks because they are human constructs; to put it in other words, any conceptual framework determine some

synthetic a priori truths, including valid forms of material inference, even if there is no set of absolute truths.

Every conceptual framework has necessarily a *prescriptive* or *normative* dimension: they are in fact constituted by valid inferences, formal and material, and by the responses and behaviors that are permitted by them.

Science itself, contains methods which consist also of prescriptive claims; according to Sellars however, the prescriptive dimension of science is not complete, insofar as scientists do not deal with questions, such as the legitimacy of some scientific investigations.

In this sense, science, even if promoting our *epistemic welfare*, can contribute to the broader intersubjective intention to promote our welfare unconditionally⁵⁹.

Science thus can have practical relevance or reality, even if it is the manifest image that retains *practical priority* over the scientific: the scientific image raises in fact practical issues it is not in a position to answer:

The practical reality of scientific objects, *as such*, however, is extrinsic to them. Their practical reality is not intrinsic to them, for it is not, for instance, tied in to their identity and individuation conditions⁶⁰.

The most important point however in Sellars' account of science is the claim that no theory of representation provides a good explanation of how science goes on: that is, no account of nature can rely on a theory of representations which stand in privileged relations to reality.

To better appreciate this matter of fact, we need to reflect upon Sellars' account of the *nature* of scientific laws.

Sellars' account of scientific laws can be seen as *mediation* and *synthesis* of what he considers as positive insights contained in the empiricist and the rationalist poles⁶¹: putting it in other words, the empiricist is right in claiming that the world contains only constant conjunctions of events (there is no place for causal power), but, on the other hand, the rationalist is right in claiming that the *language* of causal necessity is an irreducible element of rational discourse about the world, even if P-entailments have no descriptive significance.

Sellars' account of the role of causal necessity is similar to that regarding the role of observation basis: they have both a *methodological* significance.

The American philosopher then regards laws as *material rules of inference*, that is, as rules that permit us to move from statement X to statement Y where X and Y are *nonlogical* terms: a law like "water boils at 212° F" can be rendered by "from 'x is water' infer 'x boils at 212° F'".

Gary Gutting writes:

The most immediate motivation for regarding laws as material rules of inference is to desire to implement the ideate that necessity of laws does not correspond to an ontological fact but rather to a methodological directive. If laws are rules of inference, then their direct function is to tell us what we ought to do, not what is the case. (This construal paves the way for Sellars' own version of a pragmatic "vindication" of induction...).⁶²

This interpretation of the nature of scientific laws is tied intimately to Sellars' theory of meaning and to his rejection of the epistemological given; Sellars, in particular, makes clear that there is no such thing as *pre-linguistic awareness* which would provide the special sort of certainty associated with the visual perception:

*All awareness of sorts, resemblances, facts etc., in short all awareness of abstract entities- indeed, all awareness of particulars- is a linguistic affair.*⁶³

Awareness intended as being in the *logical space of reasons* and not as a *discriminative behavior is justified true belief*: the ability then to respond to stimuli (discriminative behavior) is a *causal condition* for knowledge but not a *ground* for knowledge; moreover, the empiricist account of knowledge according to which concepts and particulars are temporally prior to any propositional knowledge is, on the basis of the above view, misguided.

If, however, there is no such thing as a justified belief which is not propositional, how pre-linguistic children can be said to know i.e. what red is in a sense different from the color discrimination of, say, a photoelectric cell?

Sellars introduces to solve this problem the distinction between “knowing what X is like” and “knowing what sort of thing an X is” ; children see or, more general, feel the same thing (a red ball, e.g.) before and after language-learning:

Before language, he is said to *know* the thing he feels just in case it is the sort of thing which in later life he will be able to make noninferential reports about.⁶⁴

Children are then different from photoelectric cells for they have this “latent ability” which will be developed when they will grasp the relevant vocabulary, for, according to Sellars, *to have a concept is to use a word* and, more particularly, *we cannot have a concept without having many*.

The distinctions made above supply the theoretical ground to overtake the obstacles created by the *myth of the Given* since, according to this myth, there is a connection, a grounding relation, between *knowing what* something is like and *knowing that* sort of thing something is.

In Sellars’ point of view, language does not produce “inner” changes, but let us enter a community in which assertions can be justified and so legitimated :one thing is to explain the *acquisition* of language, another thing, very different from the former, is to understand the *justification* of human knowledge which rests on a *social practice*:

Once again, Sellars falls back on saying that justification is a matter of social practice, and that everything which is not a matter of social practice is no help in understanding the *justification* of human knowledge, no matter how helpful it may be in understanding its *acquisition* .⁶⁵

Summarizing: the greater mistake made by the epistemological tradition was to confuse the *causal process* of acquiring knowledge with questions regarding its *justification*: in this perspective, Sellars’ commitment to philosophy is similar to Wittgenstein’s effort in the *Investigations*: it is, ultimately, the “natural corollary” of the *Tractatus*’s separation between *fact-stating* assertions and others uses of language (ethical, religious, aesthetical and so on).

In other words, Sellars’ attempt is to turn *outward* what the philosophical tradition has turned *inward* , regarding knowledge as depending on social context rather than on relations between inner representations seen as the *touchstone* of truth.

2. Sellars' theory of knowledge

Before touching some issues about Sellars' conception of knowledge, it is worth giving briefly Sellars' view of the role of philosophy among the disciplines of the intellect. Sellars tries, from the very beginning of his philosophical enterprise, to *balance* competing insights which constitute the epistemological domain: empiricism, rationalism, foundationalism, coherentism, externalism, internalism, realism, phenomenism, idealism.

In this sense, Sellars' philosophical discourse can be seen as an attempt to maintain a *central position* with respect to all the above mentioned insights, preserving the best results or fruits of every position; we can, however, retain a central position only by acknowledging the most important pair of *opposing pitfalls*: the *coherentism* that rejects any rational external constraint and the *myth of the Given* which offers "exculpations" where what we need is "justifications"⁶⁶. Only by stopping oscillation between these pitfalls, we may arrive at a consideration of empirical knowledge as a *co-operation* between sensibility and understanding; according to John McDowell, one way of disposing of these pitfalls would consist in assuming that *understanding is already implicated in the deliverances of sensibility*:

Experiences are impressions made by the world on our senses, products of receptivity; but those impressions themselves already have conceptual content.⁶⁷

Sellars supports the above position by denying that there would be a *basic level* at which knowledge is a matter of an immediate encounter with its object, as if this immediate knowledge were not inferred from any other knowledge.

According to the most American philosopher, to defend the notion of Given would mean to affirm that there is a difference between *inferring* that something is the case and *seeing* it to be the case,⁶⁸ it is however remarkable to note that the word "Given" is intended by Sellars as a piece of *professional-epistemological talk*, which carries with it a substantial theoretical commitment.

At the core of sense-datum theories there is a distinction between an *act of awareness* and the *object of this act*: acts moreover are often characterized as “phenomenologically simple” that is to say, not further analyzable.

Sense-datum theorists, in this point of view, argue that in perception we are not directly related to physical objects, but to sense data which, in some way, would *mirror* the ontological status of the real objects.

The major point of Sellars’ view is the idea that numerous *tensions* are hidden in sense-datum theories that can be characterized in these terms:

- 1) knowledge of *facts* versus knowledge of *particulars*;
- 2) *learned* versus *unlearned* cognitive capacities;
- 3) *factualism* about knowledge versus *non-naturalism* about knowledge;
- 4) inner episodes as *causal intermediaries* of empirical knowledge versus inner episodes as *epistemic intermediaries* of empirical knowledge.

Sellars fashions an account of sensation which construes this both *instrumentally* and *nonepistemically*: sensations are neither the direct objects of knowledge, nor are they primordial knowings; they would belong to the *causal order* rather than to the cognitive one .

Sensations do *mediate* and *guide* our perceptual knowledge of the world, even if this knowledge is not a “second-class knowing” inferred from the knowledge of items like color and sounds: our knowledge of the world is *direct but mediated*.

For this reason sensations cannot be considered like knowings: they are *states of perceivers* that are nonepistemic in character and depending on external causes; sensations are a necessary condition of the *intentional order*, even if they do not belong to this order.

Sellars does not accept Ryle’s talk of “category mistake”, for he retains that not only inner episodes are not category mistakes, but they are quite “effable” in intersubjective discourse ; according to Sellars, as a matter of fact, the concepts of sense impressions must be:

Primarily and essentially *inter-subjective*, without being resolvable into overt behavioral symptoms, and that the reporting role of these concepts, their role in introspection, the fact that each of us has a privileged access to his impressions, constitutes a dimension of these concepts which is *built on* and *presupposes* their role in intersubjective discourse. It also makes clear why

the “privacy” of these episodes is not the “absolute privacy” of the traditional puzzles. For, as in the case of thoughts, the fact that overt behavior is evidence for these episodes is built into the very logic of these concepts.⁶⁹

Sellars, to some extent, warns against confusing the creative enrichment, made possible by the language of impressions, of the framework of the empirical knowledge with an analysis of knowledge in itself: to put it in other words, the *normative character* of knowledge cannot be confused with the *factual character* of the same; in some sense, the language of impressions is an *act of believing* and *deciding*, a *construing* of data and the Given in the sense of a *taking imposition*:

He [Jones] construes as *data* the particulars and arrays of particulars which he has come to be able to observe, and believes them to be antecedent objects of knowledge which have somehow been in the framework from the beginning. It is in the very act of *taking* that he speaks of the *given*.⁷⁰

As argued by Robert Brandom, our concepts of things cannot depend on the fact that we have first observed them, for, in observing things, we must presuppose in some way the concept of these.

To notice something amounts then, in epistemically terms, to answer to its presence by applying a concept in a non inferential judgment: I am aware of “red things” only if I possess the concept “red”; if we lack then the concept “red” we cannot observe or we cannot be aware of red things, even if we can respond discriminately to them.

Unfortunately, according to Brandom, Sellars does not make clear explicitly his attitude toward empiricism and this would depend on the difficulty to establish if he is giving his thesis or he is laying out thesis of other scholars.

Sellars, to some extent, shares the idea of the empiricists according to which the capacity of having classificatory beliefs of the form “x is F” is acquired, even if he does not accept the idea that the formation of concepts and the warranty of their non inferential application would depend on the existence of non verbal and non conceptual inner episodes.

At this point of the analysis, therefore, it arises the question if we can break out of our creative language and discourse to an archè beyond language and discourse; if every given is an act of taking, that is, something tied to our activities and, more generally, to our subjectivity, it emerges the question if we can climb over the boundary constituted by our languages toward the comprehension of a given intended in its autonomy; we cannot thus assimilate sensations to the intentional order, even if we are allowed to state that, in some way, these states of the perceiver are related to the cognitive order.

In Sellars' opinion, we are tempted to see sensations as epistemic firstly because there is a *grammatical similarity* between the language of sensations (“a sensation of a green and round thing”) and the language we adopt to refer to and characterize items of the cognitive order (“a thought of a green and round thing”); secondly, from a logical point of view, “there is a sensation of a green and round thing” fails to entail “there is a green and round thing” just as “there is a thought of a pink elephant” fails to entail “there is a pink elephant”.

It is also important to note that the use of *analogy* between sensations and physical things can be very dangerous: we can, for instance, introduce sensations of red triangles or sensations of green balls by analogy to red triangles and black blackboards, but we cannot make the same thing about sensations of pain or pleasure: these sensations, in fact, are not inner replicas of any physical objects.

We cannot neglect also the fact that the problem concerning sensations is tied, in Sellars, to how we can “define” a person: persons are individuals that have perceptible characteristics and behave in perceptible ways; the behavior concerns, first of all, the use of language intended as a “thinking-out-loud” and the meaningfulness of which is to be found in the *coherence* exhibits not only within it, but also in its relation to the contexts in which it occurs.

However, this “austere conception” of the person can be extended and, more particularly, enriched by introducing the notion of “sensing”:

Thus sensings were introduced as theoretical states involved in the explanation, for example, of how it could seem to a person that there is a pink ice cube in front of him when in point of fact there is not. In both the veridical perception of a pink ice cube and a perceptual experience which would be veridical if there were such a object in front of one, the person senses a-pink-cubely, or, in more familiar terms, has a sensation of a pink cube (where ‘of a pink cube’ is to be construed

depth-grammar-wise as an adjective) so that the expression might be parse ‘an of-a-pink-cube sensation’⁷¹.

Persons, according to Sellars, are basic objects for which a *value-free description* is meaningless: they have a *normativity* which is natural and intrinsic; in the manifest image then, the practical reality of persons is *foundational*: whereas persons possess intrinsic values, objects have value only in relation to persons; secondly, persons have states and behaviors which have value.

It comes into being also the problem of matching this analysis of persons with the conception that science ought to be considered as the measure of what is that it is and what is not that it is not, for, from an empirical point of view, persons are *dependent objects*, complexes of objects posited by science.

Persons, however, are not artifacts, even if they, together with their attendant properties (such as intentional states), bear some analogies with artifacts; beliefs or intentions, in Sellars’ theory of intentionality are *functional states* in that every attribution of intentionality to a human subject requires that the subject of the intentional state participates in a complete, *intersubjective community*; this functionality is all that counts to the concept of intentionality which is built on a background of *rule-governed* practices and institutions.

This does not mean that persons and their intentions are demoted by Sellars to mere illusions, lacking of ontological reality; they, as a matter of fact, are phenomena available only to a particular point of view: “The point of view of a self-conscious, rational, logic-using agent who is a member of a community that is, individually and collectively, engaged in pursuing various ends in a world it did not make”⁷².

3. *Perceiving as thinking*

Sellars regards knowledge as belonging in a *normative context* so that when we characterize an episode as that of knowing, we do not give an empirical description of that episode or state: we are placing it in the *logical space of reasons* where only justifications count.

If, as a matter of fact, the normative context in which knowledge is shaped is neglected, epistemology is liable to fall into a *naturalistic fallacy* as pointed out by John McDowell:

Sellars separates concepts that are intelligible only in terms of how they serve to place things in the logical space of reasons, such as the concept of knowledge, from concepts that can be employed in ‘empirical description’. And if we read the remark as a warning against a naturalistic fallacy, we are understanding “empirical description” as placing things in the logical space of nature, to coin a phrase that is Sellarsian at least in spirit⁷³.

Epistemology ought to avoid the impasses of *representationalism* and *phenomenalism*, affirming that the objects of basic knowings are physical objects and that there is no more basic form of knowledge than perceiving physical objects.

To investigate this matter further, we ought to be certain about the structure of perceptual experience; first of all, we must admit that perceiving essentially involves thinking: perceiving therefore presupposes *a knowledge of general truths about material things*.

To comprehend this point better, we ought to admit that ontology cannot be severed from epistemology “as with a knife”:⁷⁴ according to Sellars, as a matter of fact, attributions of objectual knowledge amount to attributions of generalized propositional knowledge and even of *know-how* knowledge: if “George knows Rome”, then “George knows how to get around in the city” where things are so and so.

Knowledge of particulars thus cannot itself be the *independent foundation* of all propositional knowledge; propositional knowledge itself depends *causally* on the *know-how* we manifest in making *material inferences*: at this point we find Sellars’ pragmatist strain.

Nevertheless, perceiving is not *merely* thinking: there is a *descriptive core* of seeing, e.g. a seen yellow square distinguishes itself from merely thinking about a yellow square; we have to sort out then a *propositional component* and a *descriptive core*.

In Sellars' view however, *perception is more than merely sensing* and, for this reason, can be characterized as an awareness of a *this-such*; seeing something as yellow is a conceptual process which is the slow building up of a *multi-dimensional pattern* of linguistic responses.

Experience is a matter of *identifying* individuals as *instances of a kind* and, for this reason, is literally a thinking involving a propositional component which cannot be reduced to a limited number of kind concepts, because it presupposes a *whole battery* of concepts.

This way of interpreting our perceptual awareness of any fact corresponds to our understanding of the way thinking goes on: *not in bit and pieces*.

What said above has much to do with Sellars' conception of philosophy: to understand the way we think or perceive, we have to "stumble on the familiar" and to feel a "haunting sense of alienation", trying to become *reflectively at home* in the full complexity of the multi-dimensional conceptual system in terms of which we suffer, think, and act. We must begin by constructing simple *models* of fragments of this multidimensional patterns even if we cannot be never satisfied with them for the reason that they can be connected with other systems:

And, indeed, the ultimate justification for system building in philosophy is the fact that no model for any region of discourse-perceptual, discursive, practical, can be ultimately satisfying unless its connection with each of the others is itself modeled.⁷⁵

To stress this idea amounts to reject a characteristic form of the Myth of the Given according to which there must be a structure of a particular matter of fact such that: i) each fact can be *non-inferentially* known to be the case ii) and this noninferential knowledge would constitute the ultimate *court of appeals* for all factual claims.

The idea of a privileged stratum of fact rests on the familiar assumption that knowledge, at this level, ought to be noninferential, ultimate and provided with *authority*; this amounts to say that the statements concerning this level, must involve a kind of *credibility* without which they cannot rise to the dignity of knowledge. The kind of credibility which gets into these statements would not

depend on the credibility of other statements: there seems to be a class of statements which fill some of these requirements, statements which report observations such as “This is green”.

These statements are made as to “involve those so called token-reflexive expressions which, in addition to the tenses of verbs, serve to connect the circumstances in which a statement is made with its sense”.⁷⁶

Anyway, it seems that a sentence token, whether it contains a token-reflexive expression or not, can acquire credibility in two ways:

- (a) *inherited* from a type authority as in the case of tokens of a sentence type like ‘ $2+2=4$ ’ ;
- (b) *gained* by the fact that credibility arouse in a certain set of circumstances as in sentences like “ This is green”.

Since no empirical sentence type appears to have intrinsic credibility, this means that credibility must accrue to some empirical sentence types by virtue of their logical relations to certain sentence tokens the authority of which is not derived from the authority of sentence types:

The picture we get is that of their being two ultimate modes of credibility: (1) The intrinsic credibility of analytic sentences, which accrues to tokens as being tokens of such a type; (2) the credibility of such tokens as ‘express observations’, a credibility which flows from tokens to type.⁷⁷

The second mode of credibility commits one to believe that the authority of the observation reports, also *Konstatierungen*, would rest on non verbal episodes of awareness which have an intrinsic authority:

One is committed to a stratum of authoritative nonverbal episodes (‘awareness’), the authority of which accrues to a superstructure of verbal actions, provided that the expressions occurring in these actions are properly used .⁷⁸

To surmount the perplexities bound to the empiricist view, we must begin to assume, firstly, that a report can be correct “as being an instance of a general

mode of behavior which, in a given linguistic community, it is reasonable to sanction and to support⁷⁹; secondly, that the authority of a report must be *recognized* by the person whose report it is.

According to this view then, to make an observation report expressed by a token like “This is yellow” does not amount to follow the uniform behavior of a thermometer.

4. Sellars on reductionism

The questions discussed hitherto make a point of another important issue treated by Sellars in an original way: *how to approach reductionism*.

According to Sellars, a principle of *object reduction* can be stated in the following way:

If an object is in a strict sense a system of objects, then every property of the object must consist in the fact that its constituents have such and such qualities and stand in such and such relations or, roughly, every property of a system of objects consists of properties of, and relations between, its constituents.⁸⁰

This is clearly and explicitly a principle of *object reduction* for: if an object has a property that does not consist of properties of and relations between its constituents, then that thing cannot be reduced within that framework: a person, for example, is a complex object and has constituents, but it is irreducible because not all of its properties consist in facts about its constituents, qualities and relations; a person is, in that framework, a *basic object*.

The principle of reduction nevertheless cannot be applied to colors of physical objects in the Manifest Image for the assumption that the micro-physical particles constituting the object ought to be colored makes no sense.

Being Sellars’ principle of reduction grounded on the criterion of *property reduction*, it is reasonable to think that manifest physical objects cannot be reduced to systems of microphysical objects, since the former have proper

sensible properties that cannot be reduced to the properties of the systems of microparticles.

Sellars distinguishes between an *intra-theoretic* property reduction and an *inter-theoretic* property reduction; in the case of the chemical theory and the micro-physical theory, he states that the current predicates and primitives of both theories are to be considered as *predecessors* of concepts in an *encompassing theory* in which there can be found an adequate *definitional relation* between the two different theoretical kind of predicates.

What about raw feel predicates?

It seems that any reduction must be dismissed, since raw feel predicates especially are untheoretical, but, according to Sellars, this is false for raw-feel predicates can be construed as theoretical:

...if both raw-feel and brain-state predicates are theoretical predicates, can we not conceive of a reduction of raw-feel theory to brain-state theory? ⁸¹

Raw-feel predicates can be also, according to Sellars, primitive predicates in a *unified theory*, because they remain non definable in this theory; but, to avoid misunderstanding, it is important to remark that undefined predicates are not for this reason meaningless, for their meaning depends on the role they play in *language-entry*, *language-exit* and *intra-linguistic transitions*⁸².

Returning to the question of reducibility, Sellars affirms that in a *to be* achieved sense-impression- brain-state theory, the logical space of sense-impressions shall be “transposed into a new key and located in a new context”⁸³, avoiding every possibility of reduction.

The non reductive alternative is preferable for Sellars, since he thinks that the set of primitives necessary to scientific explanation and description of non living-objects *are not adequate* to describe and explain sentience organisms: a proper explanation of sentience organism may introduce new entities that are not called in the explanation of the behavior of non-sentient objects.

According to Sellars, proper sensible, i.e. colors, odors, must receive a *special ontological treatment* in an ultimately satisfactory scientific theory: this argument has been dubbed the “grain argument” which can be divided in two stages:

1. Colors (odors and the like) cannot be really properties of physical objects *per se*; are then they modifications of mind?
2. Proper sensibles cannot be reduced to modifications of brain qua system of micro-particles.

As noticed by deVries this argument leaves us with a stark choice:

...either the proper sensibles are (modifications of) immaterial or nonphysical things, or they are so totally illusory that nothing in the world explains them, or we have to provide for them in the scientific picture of the world, for example, recognize in the ultimate scientific image basic particulars to which the sensible predicates directly apply.⁸⁴

According to Richardson and Muhlenberg⁸⁵ Sellars, in the long run, would not press for irreducibility; instead of it, he would appreciate an argument *designed to accomodate* sense impressions within a reductionist program.

In doing so, Sellars would make use of successive *approximations* and *revisions*, starting e.g. from an Aristotelian conception of persons as single logical subjects to arrive at a *final sophistication* according to which persons are complexes standing in relations to other complexes: persons, in this last image, sense even if their sensings are reducible states.

Even regarding Sellars as a reductionist, it does not mean that he would acknowledge the truth of the following statement: *manifest objects are identical with the systems of imperceptible particles countenanced by micro-theory*.

After having distinguished between *structural properties*, which are unproblematically reducible as a ladder and its constituents (rungs, frame and so on), and *content properties*, a red brick wall every constituent of which (brick) has the property redness, we can say that Sellars' point is to claim that manifest objects *cannot be construed as having structural properties*.

However, it seems plausible to say that the first step of Sellars' account of reductionism would be the rejection of the view which considers manifest and

scientific images as *consistent systems operating at distinct levels of analysis*: science, according to this thesis, would provide a superior account of the world.

The American philosopher, distinguishing between ontological and methodological arguments, denies that sciences have right to an *epistemological primacy* for the reason that they are dependent upon the framework of *common sense* for observations.⁸⁶

Sellars' acknowledgment of the superiority of the scientific image would depend, as it were, only on its *greater degree of explanatory coherence* a formulation of which might be termed, according to Richardson and Muhlenberg, an "inter-framework decision procedure":

In crude fashion, that framework which serves to most adequately describe and explain the phenomena concerned (i.e., the observable behavior of objects and persons, particularly the perceptual functioning of sentient organism) is the framework which must finally be taken the measure of what is real.⁸⁷

Explanatory coherence is a *multidimensional maximizing* of the integration of theoretical principles and the accuracy of prediction.

The weak point of Sellars' position seems to be the lacking of a criterion according to which we can judge a framework better than another, since there may be many successful ways of describing and explaining the world resting on different *purposes* and *ends*.

According to Richardson and Muhlenberg on the other hand, by using the notion of alternative modes of reconstruction or revision of conceptual frameworks, we could acquire a good criterion for choosing between contrasting alternatives; the criterion required would be: given two or more alternative modes of reconstruction or revision, that alternative is best which (a) is the *simplest* and (b) *maximizes* explanatory coherence.

Sellars seems interested, following Charles Peirce, in an *ultimate* normal science, that is, in a science as it will be in the future when all the facts are in; the American philosopher has the expectation that the ultimate scientific image of man will be *deterministic*, even if he recognizes that, in the present state of

science, it is *not reasonable* to held a deterministic position. At any sense, he wouldn't be so happy to abandon his belief in free will with a sense of liberation.

5. *The myth of the Given*

By rejecting the framework of traditional empiricism, Sellars don't stress the fact that empirical knowledge has no foundation, since there is some point to the picture of human knowledge as resting on a special kind of knowledge (e.g self-authenticating reports); however, the metaphor of foundation is misleading:

... in that it keeps us from seeing that there is a logical dimension in which other empirical propositions rest on observation reports, there is another logical dimension in which the latter rest on the former⁸⁸.

The rationality of empirical knowledge doesn't depend on the fact that it has a foundation, but much more on the fact that it is a *self-correcting enterprise*, questioning any claim, though not all at once.

Sellars' most important contribution to the demolition of the myth of the Given consists in his rejecting, as for Hegel, the idea of an *exogenous* Given and claiming that the Given is not something imposed from *outside* the activity of adjusting the system of our beliefs.

John McDowell underlines this point:

We must think of empirical rationality in a dynamic way, in terms of a continuing adjustment to the impact of experience. To reject the idea of an exogenous Given is to follow this prescription in part. It is to refuse to conceive experience's demands on a system of beliefs as imposed from outside the activity of adjusting the system, by something constituted independently of the current state of the evolving system, or a state into which the system might evolve. The required adjustments to the system depend on what we take experience to reveal to us, and we can capture that only in terms of the concepts and conceptions that figure in the evolving system. What we take experience to tell us is already part of the system, not an external constraint on it⁸⁹.

To paraphrase what is said above, we can appeal to the idea that conceptual capacities are *passively operative* in experience: a judgment that something is yellow is an exercise of spontaneity, although it needs, as any judging, a right

contribution of passive experience. According to McDowell, this would be the same as assuming that i.e. concepts of ,say, colors are only *minimally* integrated into the active business of accomodating one's thinking to the deliverances of experience, even if no color judgment can be uttered unless it fit into some view of the world, being equipped with such things as the concept of visible surfaces of objects or the concept of *suitable conditions* for telling what something's color is by looking at it: it is this kind of integration which enables experience to pass a scrutiny of its rational credentials. For this reason, concepts like *being red* and *looking red* are intelligible only on terms of each other as elements in a *bundle of concepts* that must be acquired together; only adopting this approach, we can make out that the *space of reasons* is more extensive than the conceptual realm so as to incorporate *extraconceptual impingements* from the outer world. The idea of the Given, according to McDowell, would offer "exculpations" for the outer influence of the world, whereas we would need "justifications":

But it is one thing to be exempt from blame, on the ground that the position we find ourselves in can be traced ultimately to brute force; it is quite another thing to have a justification. In effect, the idea of the given offers exculpations where we wanted justifications⁹⁰.

To better understand what is above discussed, we could attempt to think about a color concept: when this kind of concept is drawn into operation in an experience, the content of the latter is shaped by the conceptual linkages of the former; by virtue of this integration in a *whole network*, the understanding of the experience by the subject contains a wider reality, embraceable in thought, than those brought out by the very same experience:

Even in the case of colour experience, this integration allows us to understand an experience as awareness of something independent of the experience itself: something that is held in place by its linkage into the wider reality, so that we can make sense of the thought that it would be so even if it were not being experienced to be so.⁹¹

What philosophers as Sellars or McDowell see as the greatest contribution of Wittgenstein's thought is the idea that *thinking does not stop short of facts*; this means that the conceptual distinction *inward/outward* does not work:

What is in question could not be the thinkable world, or, to put it another way, our picture of the understanding's equipment could not be what it needs to be, a picture of a system of concepts and conceptions with substantial empirical content, if it were not already part of the picture that the system is the medium within which one engages in active thought that is rationally responsive to the deliverances of experience.⁹²

We ought to abandon thus the picture according to which there would be an outer boundary around the sphere of the conceptual which would *impinge inwardly* the system.

This rejection is justified by the idea that this kind of boundary crossing would be *a causal fact and not a rational*: the impressions which impinge on our conceptual system and keep it in motion are already *equipped with* conceptual content.

However, the arguments presented by Sellars' *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind* would not show, according to some scholars, that the Given is simply a myth.⁹³

A good philosophical move then would be to delete the idea of an outer boundary without falling into idealism, slighting in this way the independence of reality.

6. Philosophy as a practical enterprise

According to Sellars, the historical development of philosophy can be considered as the periodic formulation of *new* questions rather than as a *series of answers* to the same problems like *variations on the theme* in music.

Consequently, a philosophical system "dies" when the questions it attempts to answer are no longer asked; there is also another conception of philosophy according to which philosophy would give obvious answers, once questions are properly formulated:

It suggests that the evolution of philosophical thought is accurately conceived neither as a series of different answers to the same questions, nor as a series of different sets of questions, but rather as the series of approximations by which philosophers move toward the discovery of the very questions they have been trying to answer all the time.⁹⁴

A genuine advance of philosophy would consist then in the replacement of a *confused question* by a less confused one; in Sellars' point of view, a philosophical theory can be attacked in two ways: *reducing it to absurdity* or *tracing errors back to their roots*; he prefers the latter method because it is capable of bringing definitive results, while the former would leave the root confusion untouched:

A mistaken theory can be compared to a symptom of a disease. By the use of inadequate medicaments one can often 'cure' the symptoms while leaving the disease untouched.⁹⁵

Thence philosophers can be seen to leap from the frying-pan of one absurdity into the fire of another one, incapable of breaking into this *vicious circle*.

Sellars' philosophical perspectives are guided by the metaphysical conviction that the distinguishing mark of real things is the power to act or be acted upon;⁹⁶ this line of thought leads to a *thoroughgoing naturalism* that, remaining true to the "synoptic view", acknowledges, for instance the relevance of the mind without assigning an ontological status to intentional entities.

Sellars' naturalism then is intimately connected with the idea that the aim of philosophy is a *practical* one, a form of *know-how* whose success is measured by the reflective realization of the philosophical paradigm of *knowing one's way around*.

In this sense, to be a *good philosopher* would amount to face the *dialectical character* of philosophy itself, being disposed to put into question even the current conceptual framework: philosophy, in this sense, turns out to be not a *once-and-for-all* vision of humanity-in-the-world, since the way we fit into the world is *not static*; consequently, the achievement of a unitary vision of the world would resemble a Kantian *regulative ideal*.

The task of the philosopher does not consist in giving analysis in the sense of definitions for, according to Sellars, the *atomistic conception of philosophy*, that is, the idea that each philosopher fences himself off in his own philosophical garden, is an illusion: analysis, nowadays, means more than the *clarification of the logical structures of a multidimensional discourse*:

...discourse not longer appears as one plane parallel to another, but as a tangle of intersecting dimensions whose relations with one another and with extra-linguistic fact conform to non single or simple pattern.⁹⁷

Distinguishing then the “journeyman tactics” from the “grand strategy”, Sellars retains that only the latter, if taken by philosophy, can be directed toward an articulated and integrated vision of man-in-the-universe, that is, toward a *discourse-about-man-in-all-discourses*.

Modern philosophy shows interest in two conceptions of man-in-the-world, the *manifest* and the *scientific*, so that it cannot avoid the attempt to see “how they fall together in one stereoscopic view”; these two images represent two pictures of the same order of complexity which the philosopher ought *to fuse into one vision*.

7. *Naturalism*

Sellars’ commitment to naturalism, it has been said, seems very problematic, since he does not support the hard reductionism which in the last decades accompanies every naturalistic philosophical project: the kind of naturalism supported by the American philosopher can be expressed, according to him, in this way:

As for Naturalism. That, too, had negative overtones at home. It was as wishy-washy and ambiguous as Pragmatism. One could believe almost anything about the world and even some things about God, and yet be a Naturalist. What was needed was a new, nonreductive materialism. My father could call himself a Materialist in all good conscience, for at that time he was about the only one in sight. I, however, do not own the term, and I am so surprised by some of the views of the new, new Materialists, that until the dust settles, I prefer the term ‘Naturalism’ which, while retaining its methodological connotations, has acquired a substantive content, which, if it does not entail scientific realism, is at least not incompatible with it.⁹⁸

To appreciate what Sellars intend by the term “Naturalism”, we have to stress his dislike for every form of reductionism: at the end of *Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man*, Sellars points out that by confronting the manifest image of world

with the scientific image, we feel us compelled to choice between the following alternatives:

- i) a *dualism* in which men as scientific objects are contrasted with “minds” which are persons’ attributes;
- ii) a *monism* according to which we must accept the exclusive reality of scientific objects;
- iii) a thesis according to which the status of theoretical frameworks is “calculational” or “auxiliary” in the sense that they serve or are subjected to the *primacy of the manifest image*.

Sellars retains that none of these alternatives can be considered satisfactory and, believing this, he defends a philosophical approach that can be interpreted as nonreductionist; in his point of view, in fact, determinism itself is not among the conclusions of scientific inquiry, unless we intend it as part of a conceptual framework, i.e., the scientific image of man; following Charles Peirce, he has expectation that the ultimate scientific image of man in the world will be deterministic, even if he recognizes that, assumed the present state of science, contrary expectations can be reasonably held.

He rejects a *Spinozistic view* of the relation between the manifest image and the scientific one according to which the first would be false, while the second must be maintained; Sellars, as a matter of fact, aims at describing how the two images blend together.

This position falls on in his philosophy of mind in which he, unlike Ryle, treats a large part of our mentalistic vocabulary as being *explanatory* as well as *descriptive*: by uttering the sentence “it is raining”, a man expresses, by way of this utterance, not only a proposition about the weather, but also an *act of thought*; moreover, this performed act of thought is normally part of the *causal explanation* of why the man uttered that sentence.

What said above is part of Sellars’ antireductionist effort not merely *to reconcile* the conceptual framework of persons with the scientific image, but much more *to join* the former to the latter, enriching the scientific image with the language of community and individual intentions and making the world, as conceived by scientific theory, the world in which we live, even if the incorporation of the former into the latter is, for the present, realized only in imagination.

Sellars advocates scientific realism insofar *science is the measure of all things, of what is that it is, and of what is not that it is not*⁹⁹, but, in doing so, he is careful to distinguish between *ontological priority* (science) and *methodological* or *epistemological priority* (observational framework of common sense). The ontological priority is attributed to science for it would provide us with a *greater degree of explanatory coherence*; put in other words, the framework which more adequately describes and explains phenomena, ought to be taken as the measure of what is real.

Once we admit what said above, we are however not committed to reject *in extenso* the common sense framework since a proposition formulated in this *Weltanschauung* cannot be questioned by, for example, an empirical proposition pertaining to the scientific domain: a case study that bears out this thesis is the claim that the sentence “physical objects have colors” would express an empirical proposition which, even if believed by common sense, has been shown by science to be false.

Sellars explicates his ideas as follows:

The idea that physical objects are not coloured can make sense only as the (misleading) expression of one aspect of a philosophical critique of the very framework of physical objects located in Space and enduring through Time. In short, ‘Physical objects are not really coloured’ makes sense only as a clumsy expression of the idea that there are no such things as the coloured physical objects of the common sense world, where this is interpreted, not as an empirical proposition- like ‘There are non nonhuman featherless bipeds’- within the common sense frame, but as the expression of a rejection (in some sense) of this very framework itself, in favor of another built around different, if not unrelated, categories.¹⁰⁰

If for maximizing “explanatory coherence”, we have to *maximize* the integration of theoretical principles, the accuracy of prediction and the overall scope of the theory in question, we arrive at an understanding of this enterprise in the terms of a *multidimensional task*, which is a character shared a lot by Sellars’ analysis of the frameworks by which we encounter the world.

In effect, by reconstructing the two conceptual frameworks analyzed in *Empiricism and Philosophy of Mind*, Sellars makes use of a “principle of comprehension”, according to which “nothing in the phenomenal field is to be

completely repudiated, but rather relocated, and, hence, in an adequate explanation, accounted for”,¹⁰¹ in Sellars’ point of view, we have to accept the idea that we must be familiar with the trend of scientific enterprise, for, only in doing so, we can appreciate the framework categories of the manifest image of the world and the fact that scientific discourse is a *continuation* of a dimension of discourse already *embedded* in the common sense framework:

...then one would expect there to be a sense in which the scientific picture of the world replaces the common sense picture; a sense in which the scientific account of ‘what there is’ supersedes the descriptive ontology of everyday life.¹⁰²

ABBREVIATIONS

AKR Castañeda, H-N., (ed), *Action, Knowledge, and Reality*, Bobbs-Merrill, Indianapolis, 1975.

CDCM “Counterfactuals, Dispositions, and the Causal Modalities”, in *Minnesota Studies in the Philosophy of Science*, II, 1957, pp.225-308.

ENWW “Epistemology and the New Way of Words”, in *The Journal of Philosophy*, 44, 1947, pp.645-660.

EPM, “Empiricism and Philosophy of Mind”, chap. 5 of SPR.

IAMB “The Identity Approach to the Mind-Body Problem”, chap. 15 of PP.

ITSA, “Is There a Synthetic A Priori?”, in *Philosophy of Science*, 20, 1953, pp.121-138.

LRB “Language, Rules and Behavior”, in S. Hook (ed.), *John Dewey: Philosopher of Science and Freedom*, The Dial Press, New York 1949, pp. 289-315.

ML “Meditations Leibniziennes”, in *American Philosophical Quarterly*, II, 1965, pp.105-118.

NAO *Naturalism and Ontology: the John Dewey Lectures for 1973-1974*, Ridgeview Publishing, Atascadero (CA), 1980.

PP *Philosophical Perspectives*, C. Thomas Publisher, Springfield 1967.

PPPW *Pure Pragmatics and Possible Worlds: the Early Essays of Wilfrid Sellars*, Ridgeview Publishing Company, Atascadero (CA), 1980, pp.41-78.

PSIM “Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man”, chap.1 of SPR.

RNWWR *Realism and the New Way of Words*, repr. in PPPW.

SK “The Structure of Knowledge” in H-N. Castañeda (ed.), *Action, Knowledge, and Reality*, Bobbs-Merrill, Indianapolis 1975.

SM *Science and Metaphysics: Variations on Kantian Themes*, Routledge & Paul Kegan, London 1968.

SPR *Science, Perception and Reality*, Routledge & Paul, Kegan, London 1963.

SRLG “Some Reflections on Language Games”, in *Philosophy of Science*, 21, 1954, pp.204-228; chap.11 of SPR.