

## Dissertation Abstract

The role of the imagination in Kant's theory of experience is a perennial source of fascination and interpretive puzzlement. Most Kant scholars maintain that the imagination's primary role is to generate intuitions (*Anschauungen*). This dissertation argues that 'image' (*Bild*, *Einbildung*) is an overlooked technical term in Kant's work and that images in particular—and *not* intuitions—are products of the imagination. The project explains how, for Kant, the *imagination* (as image-maker) and the *senses* (as intuition-maker) make distinct but essential contributions to perceptual awareness. The result is a novel account of *sensibility*—the counterpart of the *understanding*—that recognizes Kant's systematic discussion of mental imagery.

I begin by enumerating and discussing underexplored passages in which Kant discusses images in his theory of cognition (chapter 1). The result is an interpretive burden: what exactly *are* images? I then argue that images are *not* intuitions in two steps. In the first step, I argue that the senses and not the imagination produce pure and empirical (i.e., sensation and non-sensation containing) intuitions—contrary to the interpretive orthodoxy cited above (chapter 2). Moreover, and again at odds with common interpretation, I argue that intuition is not *sufficient* for perceptual consciousness. In the second step, I proceed to provide a positive account of images on which they are distinct from intuitions (chapter 3). Put briefly, an image represents the contents of an intuition in a determinate manner even in the absence of its object. Moreover, images serve as the contents of perception or perceptual consciousness (*Wahrnehmung*) in Kant's sense. For instance, if I intuit an object that has a red triangle painted on it, I sense an object in space by entertaining a representation containing spatially ordered sensations, that is, an *intuition*. From here, the imagination can generate an *image* that groups together the parts of the triangle (its three sides and its redness, say) into a unified representation. When the imagination apprehends the contents of intuitions, and then reproduces and associates those contents with one another, the imagination generates an *image* that represents those intuitive contents in a particular manner.

With this model in hand, I then explain how images take on a special structure when they give rise to cognition for Kant. Both rational and non-rational subjects have imaginations that are subject to laws; however, only rational subjects (e.g., humans) have imaginations that are subject to *non-associative* laws grounded in consciousness, what Kant calls "apperception" (chapter 4). One might associate anything with a red triangle: cherries, the flavor of cinnamon, or the White House. Yet rational subjects can form images that group together *precisely* the three sides of a triangle, to the exclusion of these subject-relative associations. Ultimately, by means of image-producing routines Kant calls "schemata," these images exhibit structures that are subsumed under concepts (chapter 5). The image of a triangle singles out a structure in space to which one can apply the concept "triangle."

Consequently, the imagination makes a unique contribution to human psychology that is distinct from the contribution of both (a) the senses and (b) the intellect. Historically, this brings Kant closer to a long tradition stemming from Aristotle that theorizes the divide between the senses, imagination, and intellect. Systematically, the project contributes to the renewed interest in the imagination generally, the debate between "representationalist" and "naive realist" conceptions of perception, as well as discussions about the role of mental imagery in mathematical representation, metaphysics, and cognition.