

**How We Know: The Roles of Sensibility, Understanding, and
Synthesis
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Mind is formless
World-Idea given to mind
Space and time
Sensibility and understanding
Concepts
Synthesis

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NOTES:

- **RETYPE AD PAPER (V09P).**
- The concepts in this paper are also discussed in the 1983 Epistemology/Mentalism classes. See WG Classes 1983: 1/26, 2/2, 2/9, 2/11, 2/16, 2/25, 3/2, 3/9a (and associated paper 3/9b), 3/16, 3/21, 3/23, 3/30, 4/6b, 4/13a, 10/28, 11/11, 11/18, 11/25a, 12/09a.
- Selected in 2022 for possible inclusion in a book of Anthony Damiani inspirational essays (*From the Heart*), in honor of his 100th birthday.
- All spelling corrected, all abbreviations spelled out.

HOW WE KNOW: THE ROLES OF SENSIBILITY, UNDERSTANDING, AND SYNTHESIS

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Mind has the shape of space. It is the one attribute that cannot be abstracted away, therefore mind is formless, and it is to this mind that the world is given. That is, mind is affected by objects, and consequently it has a sensation which is the only way it can know the thing in itself, the W.I. [World-Idea]. This is an appearance, an image -- not an optical. Thus although our sensations are given, they can be ordered and related, but there is a distinction between the manifold and that which orders sensations. The forms lie ready in the mind, and two ultimate forms of sensibility are space and time.

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Understanding [AD handwrites '[Belief]' above 'Understanding'] is a faculty that creates and employs concepts. Sensibility is a faculty which passively receives sense impressions. The concept is a design to represent to ourselves the characteristic that marks all instances. I conceive squareness but see the square box. Perception is of an individual object(s), while a concept is an idea of the common characteristics of objects. If appearances are synthesized [AD handwrites '[pervaded by beliefs]' above 'synthesized'] in accordance with certain rules, (categories), there will be objects of experience, that is phenomenal objects. That which is given to sensation is undetermined and varied. It requires to be ordered and related, and then applied to appearances which turns them into perceptible objects . . .

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Experience is essentially temporal, and a succession of sensations being experienced. [We are conscious of this succession . . .] Now that which reproduces sensation in my memory is called the transcendental faculty of imagination, which is unreflective, but these images must be recognized, and that can only take place through concepts, without which experience would be impossible. So concepts introduce order and unity into the manifold of succession. The important use of concepts . . .

What is the ground of this unity of synthesis? The ground of time and objects, the apperceptive unity of the ego, this is the ultimate experience of time and objects which involves consciousness of self. Synthetic activity generative [of] conditions of consciousness -- the conditions by which we become aware.

(Synthesis in general)

Pure synthesis which is the work of the understanding brings the unity of synthesis into conception. The understanding carries forward the work of the Imagination to the stage when the unreflective act issues into a judgment.

So far --

In knowing or perceiving a house -- I am synthesizing the sensations here and now and unreflectively adding and supplementing from my memory images and etc. This is an act of synthesis in general and it is a synthesis mainly of empirical intuitions. This is not all, I am also imposing in the act of synthesis certain universal characteristics on all the objects of my perception and this is an act of pure synthesis.

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