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Phenomenology of Phantasy and Emotion

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Introduction

In one of the last sequences of Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds* (1963), Melanie Daniels (Tippi Hedren) hesitatingly climbs the stairs of her friend's house in Bodega Bay to find out the source of the noise coming from the attic. The spectators, as aware as Melanie of the uncontrollable and inexplicable menace that seagulls, crows, and sparrows represent in that town, hold their breath as she slowly opens the door. We all know what will happen to Melanie, we are all afraid and tense as she seems to be, and we – safely enjoying the movie in cinemas and living-rooms – experience the horror of that almost unstoppable last attack, as if it were directed against us or one of our dearest friends. Never mind the clearly fictional events, the irrationality of the birds' attack, the shelter provided by our home: the relief experienced after the sequence is finished is a trace of our actual previous fear.

Since the publication of Husserliana 23, *Phantasie, Bildbewusstsein, Erinnerung*, in 1980, the topic of the phenomenology of phantasy has experienced a renewal of interest among phenomenologists and researchers from different backgrounds. Not only philosophers, but also transdisciplinary investigators have paid attention to Husserlian insights related to the phenomenological method, the nature of pictoriality and aesthetic experiences, the classification of different kinds of re-presentations, as well as the differences between sensations and phantasms, among others. In the contemporary era marked by mass media products under constant reinvention, a phenomenological framework for disciplines trying to clarify experiences such as watching movies, listening to and reading literary fiction, or playing video games, continues to be promising and attractive. However, almost 40 years after the publication of Husserl's manuscripts on the phenomenology of phantasy, we can say that specialized works on the subject have neglected one of the problems mentioned by Husserl. This problem concerns an important feature difficult to avoid in our everyday phantasy experiences, namely, the relation between the fictional object and the emotions of the subject actually experiencing it. For instance, reading about the fate of Anna Karenina, we have sympathy for her, despite knowing she is a fictional character. Or watching a horror movie, we are afraid of the dreadful

events depicted on the screen. Also, looking at a painted landscape by Caspar David Friedrich, we might feel anguish and despair. What is the nature of such emotional responses to phantasied objects? Are emotions indifferent to the actual existence of what they relate to? How do these fictional emotions relate to their real counterparts?

The reader familiar with the concept of 'fictional emotions' (real and/or quasi-emotions prompted by fictional situations) might identify the target of this book within the sphere of problems raised in the famous paper by Colin Radford from 1975. Closely considered, this is not the case. First, the topic has been revised by phenomenologists, and the contemporary discussion is mostly – but not only – focused on configuring its preliminary setup. Second, and more importantly, from a phenomenological perspective, the analysis of the mentioned scenarios entails a broader study of such related, though different phenomena as phantasy experiences and emotions. Some of the issues pertaining to a phenomenology of phantasy and emotion include the constitution of phantasy objects, the intertwinement of re-presentations and originary acts, the self-awareness of these experiences, and the performance and the limits of empathy regarding imaginary human and non-human characters. For a rich phenomenological account, our emotional engagement in experiences like role-playing games, watching films, reading literary works, or merely daydreaming cannot be analyzed in isolation. The topic 'phenomenology of phantasy and emotion' thus becomes a label for a cluster of interrelated issues, connected to the following questions: Can we, as phenomenologists, adequately access the vague and fluctuant realm of phantasy? What is the status of self-consciousness in phantasy experiences? How can empathy be experienced through reading about the actions of a fictional character? These are some of the questions that the authors of this volume address in a collective effort to shed light on the intertwinement of phantasy and emotion.

On this ground, hoping to reach a broader standpoint that should open up the possibility of finding commonalities among different approaches and 'schools,' we decided to refer in the title of this volume to 'phantasy' as a traditional philosophical concept with Greek roots. In the context of phenomenological discussions, this term has commonly been privileged with respect to its relative with Latin roots: 'imagination,' even though both nouns translate into a multiplicity of concepts used by phenomenologists and the philosophical tradition in different languages and contexts, which will be signalled in each contribution.

JAGNA BRUDZIŃSKA uses the tools of genetic phenomenology to reveal how affects and phantasy shape a sphere of emotivity that plays a pivotal sense-bestowing role in the pre-reflective realm of primal subjectivity. Her analysis shows how, from an inner perspective, genetic phenomenology provides intuitive evidence that is a necessary complement to the externalist research that dominates contemporary neurosciences. Thus, Brudzińska emphasizes the sense-making functions of the intertwinement of kinesthesia, affections, and phantasmata in the constitution of the life-world and of the unity of the person. Finally, she defends the possibility and the necessity of a dialogue between genetic phenomenology and the theory and practice of Freudian psychoanalysis.

SONALI ARVIND CHUNODKAR investigates the phenomenological structure of the experience of reading literary works. Following Sartre's and Husserl's respective observations, her chapter ventures to provide a phenomenological clarification of the absence of any intuitive phantasy or imagination of corresponding literary objectivities in the act of reading. She then argues that the empty representational account of the phenomenology of reading still contains a possibility of emotional response on the part of the reader.

CHRISTIAN FERENCZ-FLATZ evaluates recent literature on the phenomenology of fictional emotions with reference to the hitherto neglected question of method. Can phenomenology contribute to an adequate description of fictional emotions or do its methodological constraints prevent us from grasping the real nature of such emotional responses? Fictions indeed play a central role in phenomenology's procedures of eidetic variation, but this results in a 'methodological paradox' when fictions become the very object of those procedures. This general issue applies to the case of fictional emotions in particular. Hence, Ferencz-Flatz suggests reinterpreting the tradition of method acting developed by Constantin Stanislavski as a technique for working with phantasy to genuinely elicit specific emotional responses first hand in order to then be able to perform their eidetic variation.

SAULIUS GENIUSAS deals with the differences of pre-reflective self-awareness in presentations and re-presentations in order to detail the specifics of inner self-consciousness in phantasy experiences from a Husserlian standpoint. Even though the non-thematic sensed character of self-awareness is acknowledged by most if not all

phenomenologists, its function is frequently overlooked when regarding complex acts such as reproductive re-presentations. Geniusas argues that reproductive acts are modified at the level of self-consciousness, too. Moreover, phantasy experiences suppose a double self-awareness involving 'a mineness that is not mine'. Geniusas suggests using this key to address emotions experienced while we are engaged in pure phantasies.

AZUL TAMINA KATZ revisits the history of the mediate model of image-consciousness (also known as *Abbildtheorie*) and the reproductive model of phantasy as re-presentation in Husserl's philosophy. After a thorough revision of the different phases of Husserl's theory of phantasy, Katz focuses on the roots of the discussion in the early problem of objectless representations. Thus, by confronting Husserl with Twardowski, she reveals some of the motives that might have driven the passage from a mediate to a direct account of phantasy re-presentations and claims that the direct model of reproductive re-presentations was meant to replace the Husserlian account of image-consciousness.

DIETER LOHMAR studies the role emotions play in the non-linguistic system of thinking he calls the scenic-phantasmatic system. In order to think of objects, states of affairs, and events, this system uses phantasy scenes, similar to daydreams or videoclips. Phantasy scenes 'express' knowledge through their connection with emotions: feelings supplement the imaginary scenarios with elements that cannot be otherwise depicted. With several examples, Lohmar's contribution explores the multiplicity of purposes that feelings can fulfill in the different layers of this non-linguistic system that he locates at the source of language-based thinking.

TOM POLJANŠEK aims at proving that fictional emotions are normal emotions. His chapter fosters a reinterpretation of the Husserlian distinction between fullness and positing as a difference between 'phenomenal actuality' and 'existential belief'. Drawing on a study of the history of the concept of perceptual apprehension (*Auffassung*) and apperception (*Apperzeption*), Poljanšek analyzes the way in which phenomenal actuality and existential belief are confirmed or disputed independently in a harmonic experience. Finally, he evaluates their performance in perceptions and illusions to explain what happens when we participate in fictions.

CLAUDIO ROZZONI discusses an original phenomenology of cinematic experience by drawing on Husserl's analyses of phantasy and image consciousness. His main concern is to provide a phenomenological clarification of fictional emotions arising from the experience of cinematic images. Furthermore, he calls attention to the relationship between fictional emotions and values, thereby tackling the issue of the legitimacy of distinguishing between 'genuine values' experienced in reality and 'quasi-values' experienced through fiction.

MICHELA SUMMA focuses on the kind of self-experience that goes along with the pre-reflective phenomenon of imaginative resistance. According to Summa, imaginative resistance is an affective response to the loosening of boundaries between reality and fiction when imagining from a first-person perspective the assertion of something that conflicts with our deepest moral convictions. Since it is a non-distant engagement in the fiction, this kind of imagining entails the real assent to the imaginary situation; nevertheless, it is a real assent regarding something that touches values we identify with. Drawing on Sartre, Summa analyzes this affective defense as the resistance of consciousness to itself: a tension between spontaneity and will, which aims at keeping the imaginary within the realm of fiction.

ÍNGRID VENDRELL FERRAN tackles the traditional issue of fictional emotions from a novel perspective. Her chapter focuses on the problem of explaining the phenomenal quality of such emotions by calling into question the assumption that emotions towards fictions feel similar to emotions that target real objects. She does so by, first, distinguishing the essential components of emotional experience in general and, second, by stressing how each type of emotion (real or sham, genuine or non-genuine) presents a different configuration of those components. The chapter concludes by arguing that fictional emotions differ from real emotions solely with regard to their qualitative feel and can, therefore, be labelled 'real non-genuine emotions.'

The idea for this volume originated in the wake of a workshop on "Husserl's Phenomenology of Phantasy and Emotions" held at the University of Cologne in July 2019. The editors would like to thank all participants for the lively discussions and their interest, which motivated us to edit this collection of essays. The workshop was co-organized by the *a.r.t.e.s. Graduate School for the Humanities Cologne* and the Husserl Archives Cologne. Our warmest thanks go to these institutions.

Furthermore, we thank Anne Korfmacher and Paula Vosse for their help in proofreading the manuscript, as well as Erik Norman Dzwiza-Ohlsen for his editorial assistance. Since our collection is the first volume in the new book series “Studies in Phenomenology and Anthropology” (*Schriften zur Phänomenologie und Anthropologie*), we want to express our sincere appreciation to Jan-Pieter Forßmann and Jens Seeling at Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft (WBG) for their invaluable support in setting up this programme. Last but not least, we are grateful to the German Research Foundation (DFG) via the Collaborative Research Center 806 “Our Way to Europe” for the financial aid necessary for publishing this book.

Thiemo Breyer, Marco Cavallaro, Rodrigo Y. Sandoval

Beyond the Image: Phenomenology of Emotive Consciousness¹

JAGNA BRUDZIŃSKA

Abstract: The phenomenological description and particularly Husserl's genetic phenomenology provide important instruments for highlighting the dynamic and processual character of emotive consciousness and its efficacy in shaping human experience. In this way, modern interpretations of phantasy as a mere reproductive faculty as well as the devaluation of human affects and passions as disturbances of the purity of reason are overcome and the path is open for a revision of phantasy and affects as decisive components of sense-bestowing consciousness. By stressing the emotive character of conscious experience, phenomenology takes into consideration not only the reflective level of experience given in fully shaped feelings and mental images but also the affective-imaginary sphere of pre-reflective intentionality. This approach also allows one to point out the relationship between phantasy and corporeality and to draw on psychoanalytic therapeutic and theoretical experience to shed light on the interaction between phantasy, perception, and self-perception.

Keywords: Phantasy, Affects, Emotive, Pre-reflective, Genetic Phenomenology, Psychoanalysis, Bodily Phantasy

1 Introduction

Similar to phantasy and imagination, human passions, affects, and emotions have not been highly regarded in the history of modern philosophy. Above all, their

¹ This research has been funded by the National Science Centre, Poland, Project No. UMO-2018/29/B/HS1/02953.

original creative potential remained unrecognised. Phantasy and imagination were regarded primarily as reproductions or imitations of perception, and their productive power was sought in art rather than in rational cognition.² A similar fate befell human affects and emotions, especially the simpler ones, those that seemed to be intertwined with instinctive inclinations like pleasure and displeasure. It is true that, in the course of the Enlightenment's exploration of cognitive reason, René Descartes, Baruch Spinoza, or Wilhelm Leibniz all dealt intensively and constructively with human affects and passions. Emotions, affects, and imaginations also received great recognition in the moral philosophy of British Empiricism. But that recognition concerned only the practical realm, the realm of morality and ethics.³ And even there, Immanuel Kant's transcendental critique of experience drew a radical line, denying any constitutive capacity of the simpler emotions, instinctive inclinations, and affects, attributing to them the status of 'lower desires' and degrading them as disturbing moments of both theoretical and practical cognition. Kant's diagnosis was unmistakable: Inclinations are blind. They show our lack of freedom and the weakness of our autonomy. According to Kant, particularly in moral matters, reason should dominate and take full control over our affects and inclinations (Kant 2000, 272).

This diagnosis was effective in at least two ways. The philosophical critique of cognition to date (i) tends to consider only the heuristic, but not the constitutive functions of affects, emotions, and phantasies when it comes to the building of (theoretical and practical) cognition, and (ii) it focuses on the higher modes of affectivity, considering primarily feelings as formations that find expression in mental representations and images.

Unfortunately, at these higher levels, we are not able to adequately capture the efficacy of the dynamic and processual character of affectivity in human experience. At the deeper levels of experience, on the other hand, there are still no conventional empirical representations. I, therefore, prefer to speak here of the

² A fruitful discussion of approaches to productive imagination in modern philosophy is presented in two volumes recently edited by Geniusas and Nikulin (2018) and Geniusas (2018). On the creative power of imagination in Husserl's work, see Brudzińska (2019, esp. ch. 3).

³ A very informative overview of the theories of emotion from Plato to Wittgenstein, including individual accounts by modern authors, can be found in Landweer and Renz (2008).

character of emotivity rather than of affects or feelings. I use the term ‘emotivity’ to denote a pre-reflective affective sphere of effectiveness. We will see that this sphere of effectiveness cannot simply be assigned to a separate faculty, such as the faculty of feeling, but that we encounter here an interaction of affective, bodily, instinctual-driving, and imaginative-imaginary moments. Even if we are moving in the pre-reflective realm (where we would search in vain for fully developed mental representations), the experiences in this sphere are certainly characterised by intuitive evidence. However, instead of clear and unambiguous intuitions, we deal here with ‘soft,’ often unclear and ambiguous evidences that are to be sought in bodily expressions, tendencies, and aspirations, and that can also be experienced bodily-phantasmatically as primary passions of pleasure and displeasure.

The present analysis focuses on some aspects of this pre-reflective, highly affective dimension of experience that seems especially important to me when it comes to addressing phenomenology’s contribution to the clarification of the experiential foundations of the human sciences. Thus, it involves an approach to human beings as objects of research with a focus on bodily affects, emotions and phantasy, including bodily phantasy. In the following, I will interpret both bodily affects and phantasy phenomenologically as structures of *emotive consciousness* in order to discuss how this consciousness, as a personal and concrete field of experience, opens up a justified access to human experience, not only theoretically, but also practically and clinically.

2 Genetic-Phenomenological Description of Emotivity

Today, emotions and feelings, as well as phantasies and imaginations, are being re-discovered as a legitimate field of philosophical research. This rediscovery is motivated, on the one hand, by the modern cognitive sciences, which intensively investigate the role of emotions and phantasies in the formation of cognitions. On the other hand, it is challenged by neuroscientific research that attempts to explain these phenomena by revealing corresponding brain activities and investigates causal interactions between mental-emotional and imaginative phenomena, on the one

hand, and neuronal-physical processes, on the other.⁴ In both cases, we are dealing with a certain scientific attitude – the externalist attitude of observation, which is considered the only one preserving objectivity in the sciences. From this perspective, however, it becomes very difficult, if not impossible, to elicit the emotive structures of subjectivity in their sense-making functions. The latter appear from the experiencing inner perspective as intentional moments of sense-bestowing subjectivity. Such performances also shape the deep pre-reflective and pre-predicative layers of experience in the form of affections, kinestheses, and phantasmata.

Already the multi-faceted investigations of early descriptive phenomenology, which is also often referred to as phenomenological psychology, provide several examples of such an analysis (as in the works of Alexander Pfänder, Moritz Geiger, Edith Stein, Gerda Walther, Dietrich von Hildebrand, Aurel Kolnai, or Max Scheler, to mention just a few).⁵ However, descriptive phenomenology as psychology mainly applies the method of eidetic description, while the phenomenological-genetic approach is less present.⁶ At the same time, feelings, emotions, and phantasies are primarily considered here in their empirical-existential dimension, less in the epistemological one. With Husserl's intentional-genetic method of transcendental phenomenology, however, it becomes possible to make important epistemological differentiations and to obtain findings that are of significance above all with regard to the epistemological foundation of personal experience – a possibility which, however, was not sufficiently considered in the existentialist orientation of the second generation of phenomenologists (Heidegger, Levinas, Merleau-Ponty, and others).

Genetic phenomenology as an investigation of concrete, living, world-experiencing subjectivity shows that sensibility, affect, and phantasy play an essential role in all cognitive activity, on all levels of pre-predicative and predicative, passive and active experience. From a transcendental phenomenological point of view, these are constitutive moments of the intentional structure of consciousness. From a lifeworldly

⁴ See De Houwer and Hermans (2010), bringing together essential approaches and results of current research on emotions in the cognitive sciences. On the relationship between imagination and emotion, see also Ellis (1995) and Kosslyn et al. (1995).

⁵ In a very fruitful and systematic way, Vendrell Ferran (2008) discusses these authors and their analyses in connection with current cognitivist approaches.

⁶ An exception here is perhaps the work of Gerda Walther (1923), who – in her discussion with Husserl – also develops a genetic perspective with regard to the structure of social experience.

perspective, they also play a decisive role as possible motives of action and as media of experienceability, as well as in the constitution of primordial-subjective and above all intersubjective meanings in personal and interpersonal practical life.

From the intentional-genetic perspective, it becomes clear how emotions, affects, and phantasies are accessible even within the deep layers of experience. Affections are seen here as awakenings of subjective interests in the experiential process. Kinestheses as the sense of movement undergird all bodily processes. Finally, phantasmata condition our capacity of expectation and anticipation, thus determining not only the facticity, but also the possibility of subjective experience.

Furthermore, the genetic-phenomenological description shows that these three moments are closely connected. If one understands affection in the broadest sense as the awakening of subjective interests in the experiential process, awakenings that motivate the turning towards or away from the apperceptive process, then it becomes apparent in genetic terms that these awakenings are always also experienced kinaesthetically-affectively. As such, they go hand in hand with pre-objective bodily processes in the sensation of movement and signify intentional anticipations of what is to come in the experiential event. They even find expression in a certain form of bodily phantasy.

In the interpretation of performing intentionality, the affections prove to be essential structural moments of any formation of meaning, being 'responsible' not only for the constitution of our practical world, but also for the theoretical world, the world of science and scientific knowledge. Husserl determines the role of affection in the process of turning-towards (*Zuwendungsprozess*) in his last book, *Experience and Judgment* (§ 17). Phenomenology proves here to be a comprehensive, profound, and at the same time modern and powerful method of analysing experience, with which it becomes possible to approach the areas of emotive dynamics in their sense-bestowing functions.

In this context, however, the term 'emotive' must be defined more closely in its genuinely phenomenological sense. This is a term that could seemingly be easily replaced with the conventional concept of emotion. But this would be misleading. The concept of emotion would situate our analysis in the empirical-psychological realm. For in empirical research, 'emotion' stands for mental-bodily processes that accompany perceptions of various kinds, or occur epiphenomenally to physiological processes. It is assumed that emotions are accompanied by physiological changes and that they influence cognitions as well as the behaviour of psychological subjects without, however,

being constitutive for them. In the cognitive sciences, feelings and emotions are regarded as acts and stimuli that are linked to specific objects and belong to empirical subjects. Their sense-bestowing functions are thereby completely misunderstood or formulated in a reductionist way.⁷ The concept of the emotive, on the other hand, is meant to designate an intentional structure of experience. It fulfils constitutive functions and operates in the realm of pre-objectivity. With the concept of the emotive, I thus emphasise the *basic character of the bodily-affective relationship of effectiveness* (*leiblich-affektiven Wirkungszusammenhang*) in subjective experience. This *relationship* must not be confused with empirical processes of the epiphenomenality of emotions.

Genetic phenomenology shows that the emotive also encompasses very deep layers of constitution. It is the *basic situation of being permeated and interwoven by affective tendencies, strivings, and volitions in the entire intra- and intersubjective sphere*.⁸ With the instruments of intentional-genetic analysis, the pre-objective and pre-reflective functioning of the emotive can be revealed in its bodily effects and phantasmatic manifestations. The common talk of the anonymity of this sphere should not make us think that we are in a merely hyletic and a-subjective realm here. Rather, we are dealing with the primal-subjective sphere of affectivity and sensibility, where affections and self-affections are at work, which co-determine the structure of all cognitive processes in a sense-bestowing way. As a dynamic, pre-reflective sensible realm of experience, this sphere constitutes one of the most important discoveries of genetic phenomenology and, at the same time, marks a still open research dimension, which, however, remains deeply rooted in Husserl's thinking.

3 The Primordial Sphere of Bodily Affect

In 1932, Husserl notes the following in the context of his analysis of affection and feeling in the primordial sphere: "It is the feelings, after all, which or as which the

⁷ For a comprehensive discussion of the concept of emotion from a phenomenological point of view, I refer above all to Vendrell Ferran (2008), who – in her comprehensive and differentiated study of emotions – strives to integrate the contribution of so-called realist phenomenology, as a research conducted from a first-person perspective, into the discussion, doing justice to the phenomena of the genuine intentionality and corporeality of emotion.

⁸ I originally developed this thesis in Brudzińska (2012).

hyletic data or the sensual objects motivate (affect) the active ego, ‘attract’ or ‘repel’ it” (Hua Mat 8, 318).⁹

This addresses a fundamental aspect of the affective tendency: motivation. Feelings are thereby rediscovered in their motivational potential. They are not a mere resonance of the external world but play an essential role in the practical and cognitive orientation of the subject. Even more, with the concept of primary feeling (*primäres Gefühl*), the structure of hyletic data acquires an experiential quality. Husserl clarifies this quality by referring to the dynamics of attraction and repulsion and conceiving the feeling subject as a dynamic one:

To attract corresponds to (or <it> is) wanting towards, to repelling an opposite wanting. We generally say that the disgusting, the malodorous, etc., arouse aversion. To say that we have an aversion to something is equivalent to saying: <it is> very unpleasant. (Hua Mat 8, 318)¹⁰

In this description, subjectivity – the ego – is conceived as a volitive subject since the beginning. The will, however, is also anchored with deep roots in affections of pleasure and displeasure. Husserl asks, “what is the affecting moment [*das Affizierende*] for itself?” and explains that this is a “pleasure affection [*Lustaffektion*]” of the ego. The ego follows a promise. Following the promise brings it into an anticipatory mode, which Husserl calls the “pre-mode of every ‘enjoying’ being-there [*Vormodus jedes ‘genießenden’ Dabei-Seins*].” This makes clear that the pleasure affection fulfils the emotive moment of reaching beyond oneself, which allows for transcending the present as well. This can only be realised through an elementary structure of phantasmatic grasping. In emotive consciousness, then, affect and phantasy meet when the pleasure affection tending towards the future transcends the mode of presence. In relation to the experience of concrete personal subjectivity, such processes fulfil fundamental functions that enable the formation of the unity of the

⁹ “Die Gefühle sind es doch, die oder als welche die hyletischen Daten bzw. die sinnlichen Objekte das aktive Ich motivieren (affizieren), es ‘anziehen’ oder ‘abstoßen.’” All translations from Husserl are mine, J. B.

¹⁰ “Dem Anziehen entspricht (oder <es> ist) Hin-Wollen, dem Abstoßen Wider-Wollen. Wir sprechen allgemein davon, dass das Ekelhafte, Übelriechende etc. Widerwillen erzeuge; ja zu sagen, wir hätten gegen etwas einen Widerwillen, ist gleichwertig mit: <Es ist> sehr unangenehm.”

person. In this context, Husserl speaks of “dynamic streams of feeling [*dynamischen Gefühlsströmen*]” and distinguishes between something like the core feeling of the person and its propagation:

We have here a core feeling that expands and spreads and not only increases according to “aliveness.” The unity of the person is not only unity as an object, but the various acts of feeling gain unity, unity of feeling. (Hua 43/2, 113)¹¹

With this observation, Husserl succeeds not only in integrating emotivity into the constitution of partial acts of consciousness, but also in highlighting it as fundamental to the constitution of the unity of the person. The meaning of human affectivity cannot be conceived more radically. This step should not be seen as a relapse into empiricism, though. Rather, we find ourselves in the midst of the transcendental constitution of the person. Contrary to the fear prevailing since the Enlightenment that the passions fragment personal unity and threaten the dignity of the person, Husserl seems to recognise precisely the unity-forming forces of human affectivity and to appreciate them in their practical relations. This offers a way of overcoming the polarisation that repeatedly plagues emotion research: the opposition between rationality and emotion.

The emotive expresses itself in affective-phantasmatic manifestations such as pleasure and displeasure, processes of affection, affective-associative connections, instinctive strivings, tendencies of expectation, and desire. At the same time, affectivity contributes to all cognitive processes. If one considers the teleological aspect of every activity of consciousness, it becomes clear that it is precisely the affective moments that carry the goal-related striving for the fulfilment of any intention. From the beginning, striving is also realised kinaesthetically, i.e., through bodily movement, instinctive tendency, and libidinal desire. The expressivity of these processes always exceeds the present, it cannot be exhausted in the perception of mere presence. Its meaning is only revealed through its reference to the future, its volitive orientation towards the future, and its motivational anchoring in the past. Affect, bodily sensation, and imagination work hand in hand.

¹¹ “Wir haben hier ein Kerngefühl, das sich erweitert und verbreitet und nicht nur sich steigert nach ‘Lebendigkeit.’ Die Einheit der Person ist nicht nur Einheit als Gegenstand, sondern die verschiedenen Akte des Gefallens gewinnen Einheit, Gefühlseinheit.”

Here, the phenomenological analysis of corporeality and passivity comes into play. This analysis grasps the experience as a performing unity of body and soul. It becomes clear that the experience itself always carries with it a practical dimension. In the practical effectiveness of experience, a new kind of rationality emerges: the rationality of the emotive performing unit of consciousness, which is provided with its own order and lawfulness. The specific lawfulness of emotive performing consciousness is based on the motivational connection. The motivational web grounds the unity of experience and thus of the person, despite (and even through) contradictions, changes, and transformations of the person. Here, there are no loose experiences; the experiences are not comprehensible as isolated elements, but only in their developmental context. Structurally, connections between experiences are ensured by the transmission of affective content. We are dealing here with passive processes that take place in the subjective and intersubjective realms. In these two realms, corporeality cannot be understood separately from the functions of phantasy. As a final point, therefore, we turn to the question of phantasy as a mode of experience of subjective reality. This is where phenomenology and psychoanalysis meet.

4 Phenomenological and Psychoanalytic Significance of Emotive Phantasy

The genetic-phenomenological conception of phantasy is characterised by the fact that it is taken not only in its weak, post-perceptual function, but emphasised in its strong, creative meaning. Its sensible formations, the phantasmata, are not understood as weakened, expired sensations, but rather as creative affective intrusions into experience. However, the re-evaluation of phantasmata as originally creative experiences cannot be fully accomplished with the instruments of phenomenological analysis. Rather, it is worthwhile considering psychoanalytic evidence. It is precisely psychoanalysis, thanks to its methodical instruments, which is able to guide us into the pre-reflective and pre-predicative experience that we have already indicated with the concept of the emotive. In this process, phantasy plays a decisive role by providing the primary content of the unconscious psychic processes and at the same time accomplishing the inner coherence of psychic reality.

For Freud, psychic reality does not consist of a mere collection of objects of perception, but it is based on a complex substrate of desires, feelings, memories, etc. A large part of such a complicated inner reality remains unconscious, but it is nevertheless effective and affects the conscious life of the subject. The effectiveness of the unconscious becomes visible through fears, joys, and other emotional states that determine our behaviour towards internal and external reality. From a phenomenological point of view, this is an almost infinite field of conscious and unconscious phantasies.

As we have explained above, human beings live in a highly affective dimension, and on this basis, they are able to shape their own behaviour in the world. Human experience is never indifferent to the objects of perception. We always encounter objects by wanting or fearing them, on the basis of need or rejection. In this sense, psychoanalytic observations confirm that psychic reality and the primordial sphere of the emotive are dependent on phantasy. The subject grasps the truth of its world not in terms of neutrally existing objects, but through its own fears and desires. Similar to Husserl, for psychoanalysis the truth of experience is measured by the inner reality of the experiencing subject and not by the existence of subject-independent things in the world.

By opening up the realm of the unconscious, psychoanalysis also interprets phantasy as a valuable way of expressing and manifesting the unconscious dynamic in the form of desire, dream, association, daydream, and art. All these different forms are grounded in personal longings and needs. Freud summarises this in a forceful way by emphasising that only the unhappy person has phantasies, not the happy, content person:

Let us now make ourselves acquainted with a few of the characteristics of phantasying. We may lay it down that a happy person never phantasies, only an unsatisfied one. The motive forces of phantasies are unsatisfied wishes, and every single phantasy is the fulfilment of a wish, a correction of unsatisfying reality. (Freud 1908, 216)

In relation to the unconscious sources of phantasy, Freud also uses the metaphor of 'nature reserve': phantasy is the subject's shelter, the place where the inner life can unfold independently of the objective and material conditions of life.¹²

¹² "The creation of the mental realm of phantasy finds a perfect parallel in the establishment of 'reservations' or 'nature reserves' in places where the requirements of agriculture,

This view of phantasy as a reserve, however, seems to be at odds with the phenomenological interpretation of phantasy as a creative achievement of consciousness highlighted above. Yet, Freud's notion of reserve does not point to a passive, merely conservative quality of phantasy. Instead he understands 'reserve' as the source of wish-fulfilling, archaic thought and representations where wishes can survive, preserved from the challenges of reality. Phantasy establishes this 'reserve' as a protected area for the proliferation of infantile desires. These are to be understood, in phenomenological terms, as primary tendencies and needs, guiding the genesis of subjectivity. In Freud's words, they are immortal tendencies of our inner reality:

These wishes in our unconscious, ever on the alert and, so to say, immortal, remind one of the legendary Titans, weighed down since primeval ages by the massive bulk of the mountains which were once hurled upon them by the victorious gods and which are still shaken from time to time by the convulsion of their limbs. But these wishes, held under repression, are themselves of infantile origin, as we are taught by psychological research into the neuroses. (Freud 1900, 552)

Even though Freud associates phantasy with images, we should not imagine this dimension as a separate, merely inner, private mental sphere. Just as we have grasped the bodily rootedness of phantasy and the emotive in a phenomenological perspective, we are here to highlight the connection between phantasy and the body in psychoanalytic terms. For Freud, it is clear that phantasies deeply affect both the psychological and physical dimensions of life. Significant phenomena in this respect are the so-called conversion symptoms, e.g., in hysteria, when the patient goes blind because she unconsciously avoids what she is afraid of or disgusted by. From a phenomenological point of view, we are dealing with a radical effect of unpleasure affects that are realised bodily-kinesthetically and influence perception.

communications and industry threaten to bring about changes in the original face of the earth which will quickly make it unrecognizable. A nature reserve preserves its original state which everywhere else has to our regret been sacrificed to necessity. Everything, including what is useless and even what is noxious, can grow and proliferate there as it pleases. The mental realm of phantasy is just such a reservation withdrawn from the reality principle." (Freud 1917, 371)

Other examples are provided by neurotic symptoms such as washing compulsion, in which unconscious sexual phantasies associated with forbidden objects are warded off by compulsive hand-washing. Here, too, bodily-affective phantasies that protect the subject from embarrassing experiences have an effect on the pre-reflective level. The emotive sphere remedies itself through dissociative and obstructive behaviours. Once again, the emotive phantasy shows its potential by offering creative solutions to subjective distress. However, we observe this not only in the field of pathology, but in all fields of subjective and intersubjective experience.

In the intersubjective context, for example, the dynamic of transference offers a broad field of investigation. The term 'transference' is used in psychoanalysis to describe a process that is decisive for the therapeutic setting. The patient experiences the analyst according to their previous, above all unconscious experiences with relevant persons of their past. Thus, they expect criticism and interpret the behaviour of their analyst, for example, as punitive, cold, and dismissive. In a phenomenological sense, this is an anticipation that is realised by means of bodily-affective phantasy.¹³ The patient reacts to their own anticipation. They not only experience their opposite as a punishing and rejecting instance, but also experience themselves as punished and rejected. This experience has its origins in the deep sphere of affections and self-affections and finds an immediate bodily-atmospheric expression: patients freeze, their muscles tense, their mouths feel dry, it becomes gloomy and threatening around them.

As such, transference always takes place in an intersubjective exchange. In the psychoanalytic context, however, it becomes an instrument for the exploration of subjective reality, especially unconscious reality, on its formative emotive layers. From a phenomenological point of view, these are pre-predicative dynamics of intentional sense-constitution, which is grasped both by phenomenology and psychoanalysis as forms of association.

The associative dynamics of transference include mental and bodily elements, with tolerance for contradiction and conflict. Phantasy here serves the fulfilment of deep desires or the transformation of fears. Thereby creative and productive performance of phantasy comes into play beyond merely pictorial imagination. It plays a key role in the formation of the psyche itself and shows its constitutive power in

¹³ Bodily phantasy constitutes a wide and complex field of research for both phenomenology and psychoanalysis. I have tackled this issue in Brudzińska (2017; 2019).

the processes of the person's becoming. Moreover, together with the analysis of the emotive primordial sphere, the concept of bodily phantasy contributes to a radical revision of the body-mind dualism. This requires rethinking the experiential foundations of human experience, which in my view can be provided by genetic phenomenology in unison with psychoanalysis.

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On the Absence of Intuitive Phantasy During the Act of Reading

Toward an Empty Representational Account of Emotional Response to Fiction

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Abstract: At first glance, Edmund Husserl's analyses of phantasy, image, and symbolic consciousness in *Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory* (1898–1925) offer themselves as suitable analogues or models for investigating the objective structure of the act of reading literary works. Any resulting analysis based on these models assumes as a given the co-occurrence of intuitive acts of phantasy that presentify the corresponding literary objects and states of affairs. This assumption – also observed in Roman Ingarden and Wolfgang Iser's respective phenomenological accounts of the aesthetic cognition of literary works – in turn permits the possibility of Husserl's specific understanding of aesthetic consciousness in the case of the act of reading. Rather than unquestioningly upholding such views, this paper investigates the implications of Jean-Paul Sartre's and Husserl's observations concerning the absence of mental images and that of intuitive phantasy, respectively, during the act of reading as well as the latter's passing – but highly relevant – comment on the possibility of non-intuitive art. These observations, which can be corroborated by reflecting upon our own acts of reading, disclose the human impossibility of achieving any intuitive or fulfilled imagination of literary objects and states of affairs during any ongoing act of reading. However, this impossibility does not thereby preclude the possibility of emotional response to fictional characters, objects, situations, and so on during the act of reading. Accordingly, this paper ventures to provide a working outline of an empty representational account of the act of reading

that looks at the nature of empty representations, what they presuppose and entail, as well as how they are able to facilitate emotional response in the reader.

Keywords: Phenomenology of Reading, Intuitive Phantasy, Empty Representation, Aesthetic Response, Edmund Husserl, Roman Ingarden

1 Introduction

What is common among diverse literary and philosophical theories concerning the reading of literary works and any attendant aesthetic or emotional response is their implicit presupposition of or explicit reliance on the reader's vivid imagination of the corresponding literary objectivities. Even phenomenological inquiries into the cognition of literary works have assumed as a given the occurrence of what can be described in Husserlian terms as intuitive or fulfilled acts of imagination. Rather than unquestioningly upholding such views, in this paper,¹ I attempt to outline a phenomenology of the act of reading literary works in the absence of any intuitive phantasy or imagination of the corresponding literary objectivities while still maintaining the possibility of emotional response on the part of the reader. Before proceeding with this outline, I first discuss the significance of the role played by intuitive phantasy or imagination in Edmund Husserl, Roman Ingarden, and Wolfgang Iser's respective accounts of the aesthetic experience or object in what follows.

2 Intuitive Phantasy and Aesthetic Response: A Standardized Model of the Act of Reading

At first glance, Husserl's analyses of phantasy, image, symbolic, and aesthetic consciousness in *Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory (1898–1925)* offer

¹ This paper presents in brief some arguments from my unpublished doctoral dissertation titled "Memory and Forgetting in Tolkienian Literature: Toward a Phenomenological Exposition of Literary Belief," written under the supervision of the late Prof. Aniket Jaaware. I am grateful to Rodrigo Y. Sandoval, Marco Cavallaro, and Prof. Thiemo Breyer for their helpful comments and suggestions toward clarifying and improving some of the arguments in this paper.

themselves as suitable analogues or models for comparatively understanding the objective structure of the act of reading literary works.² Before proceeding to an analysis of this structure, however, it would prove helpful to briefly discuss Husserl's analyses. In keeping with his then-adherence to the image theory of phantasy,³ Husserl had identified two distinct objective correlates of the act – the phantasy image and the phantasy object or subject. The image theory of phantasy dictated that the intended phantasy object could not be given directly to consciousness; instead, it was the function of the phantasy image to represent the intended or “meant” subject (see Husserl 2005, 19, 20, 25). Because of its ability to present the subject, one can safely conclude that this mediating image was an intuitively given one. His critical rejection of the image theory by 1909 – besides his reservations concerning the problematic presence of the immanent phantasms – led Husserl to revise his understanding of phantasy, thereafter considering it to be a “*modification* [of consciousness] *through and through*” (ibid., 326). This revised understanding of phantasy permits the immediate, unmediated, but still intuitive presentifications of the intended subjects of phantasy (ibid., 327, 426). The act of reading, however, is necessarily dependent on the perceptual givenness of the written work, because of which it cannot claim to be a thorough modification of consciousness as is the case with phantasy. Instead, its objective structure reveals itself to be comparatively similar to those of image and symbolic consciousness.

Image consciousness, according to Husserl, involves the three objective strata of the physical image or substrate, the image object, and the image subject. The physical substrate is “the image as physical thing, as this painted and framed canvas, as this imprinted paper, and so on. In this sense we say that the image is warped, torn, or hangs on the wall, etc.” (ibid., 20). The function of the physical substrate is to bring about the appearance and awareness of the image object. It also facilitates

² For passing glimpses of his implicit application of the structures of phantasy and image consciousness as well as his views of aesthetic consciousness to the act of reading literary works, see Husserl (2005, 42, 81, 129, 251, 452, 462, 656).

³ As Robin D. Rollinger (1999) points out, Husserl criticized the image theory of perception as early as in an 1894 text titled “*Intentionale Gegenstände*.” However, while critically engaging with the views of Kazimierz Twardowski and Bernard Bolzano in this text, Husserl upheld views that were in keeping with the image theory of phantasy (ibid., 148). Husserl displayed reservations concerning the validity of the image theory of phantasy in 1904–1905 and finally abandoned it by 1909 (see Brough 1999, xlii; 2005, liv–lv).

the “identity, stability, and public character” (Brough 2005, xlv) of the image object thereby allowing one to think of the latter as an intersubjective object. With the destruction of the physical substrate, no scope remains for the possibility of any corresponding image consciousness. While the physical substrate is the object that properly belongs to the perceptual level of the complex act of image consciousness, the primary object of this consciousness remains the “directly and genuinely” (Husserl 2005, 18, 48) appearing image object. The image object is that which appears “in such and such a way through its determinate coloration and form” (ibid., 20) and depicts or represents the image subject.⁴ Thus, the appearance of the image object is also an intuitive rather than a non-intuitive one or one “in the manner of an empty sign” (ibid., 169, 461). The image subject, depicted by the image object through its “plastic shapes” (ibid., 49), is the intended subject of the painting, photograph, film, and so on.⁵ This subject is not given in a new act of phantasy; rather, it is *seen in* the image object (ibid., 28). As Husserl elaborates, “no appearance corresponds to it. It does not stand before me separately, in an intuition of its own; it does not appear as a second thing in addition to the image. It appears in and with the image, precisely because the image representation arises” (ibid., 29).

Like image consciousness, the act of reading is also determined by the presence of a corresponding physical substrate. While the characteristics and functions of this substrate are the same as those in the case of image consciousness, this substrate does not bring about the appearance of images in which one can see the image subject. Rather, it brings about the appearance of signs or symbols. Unlike image consciousness, the intended subjects in the case of the act of reading are not seen in the appearing signs or symbols themselves. The intuitive appearance of these intended subjects requires new presenting or presentifying acts. Because of this shift

⁴ Husserl’s adherence to the image theory of phantasy led him to identify the image object of image consciousness as the analogue for the phantasy image. After his abandonment of the image theory, this equation and its attendant implications become void. Image consciousness is then understood to be fundamentally different from phantasy consciousness.

⁵ Jean-Paul Sartre similarly identifies three separate “stages” or “intentions” when it comes to the consciousness of objects such as photographs. Like Husserl, he distinguishes between the coloured material substrate, the appearing generalized figures and shapes, and the specific intended or meant subject (Sartre 2004, 19).

in the appearance of the intended subject, the act of reading proves to be closer to symbolic consciousness, which is taken up for discussion further on in this section.

As far as Husserl's views on aesthetic consciousness are concerned, an important point to remember is that aesthetic interest is directed toward the *manner of appearance* of the image subject in the image object. In this connection, it must be emphasized that a mere intuitive phantasy of an object does not amount to an aesthetic consciousness thereof: one must remember Husserl's cautionary observation that when one "lives in" (ibid., 41) an act of phantasy, one's interest is usually directed toward the phantasied objects themselves and not toward their specific manner of appearance. However, this does not imply that the act of phantasy thereby precludes the possibility of aesthetic consciousness.⁶ Nevertheless, for Husserl, it is an intuitive appearance – regardless of whether it is perceptual or phantasied – rather than an empty one that can sustain the very possibility of any such aesthetic interest in the first place.⁷ The exclusive interest of aesthetic consciousness in an object's manner of appearance also results in a unique neutralization of belief: "*in living in aesthetic consciousness I do not live in the respective positing of existence; the positing of existence does not found the aesthetic consciousness*" (ibid., 463).⁸

However, as Husserl suggests in his 1907 Letter to Hofmannsthal, such aesthetic neutralization is conditional upon the type as well as the contents of the work of art in question:

⁶ While this text is from 1904–1905 – the period of Husserl's continuing but reservation-filled adherence to the image theory of phantasy – one can safely assume his cautionary observation to be valid even in the case of his later understanding of phantasy as a thorough modification of consciousness. Despite the fundamental difference between the act of phantasy and that of image consciousness as well as the former's unmediated givenness of the phantasied object, aesthetic consciousness can still be directed toward the latter's manner of appearance.

⁷ The aesthetic contemplation of actual landscapes, for example, similarly presupposes their perceptual intuitive givenness. Even Sartre's (2004, 189, 191f.) understanding of the depicted subject as the object of aesthetic contemplation – as opposed to the Husserlian focus on its manner of appearance – relies on that object's intuitive, albeit mediated, appearance in an imaging consciousness.

⁸ Husserl (2005, 464) clarifies what this "living in" aesthetic consciousness involves: "*Living in feeling has a double significance. In one sense, it means turning toward: here, in aesthetic feeling, turning toward the manner of appearing, which thereby gains a distinctive mode. In the other sense, it means thematic primacy.*" The phrase "living in" in this paper refers to this dual sense of thematic attentiveness.

The more of the existential world that resounds or is brought to attention, and the more *the work of art demands an existential attitude of us out of itself* (for instance a naturalistic sensuous appearance: the natural truth of photography), the less aesthetically pure the work is. (Husserl 2009, 2, emphasis added)

Challenging this claim of aesthetic impurity where belief positings are involved, Husserl finally concedes, in Text no. 15 (written in 1912), that existential positings can indeed play a role in bringing about aesthetic feelings, stating that “it can thus be the case that the belief in actuality is itself aesthetically co-determining” (Husserl 2005, 464). Conversely, it can also be the recognized empirical impossibility or fictionality of an object with regard to its manner of appearance that facilitates aesthetic feelings. With regard to aesthetic feelings and the positing or non-positing of existence, it must be noted that at one point Husserl held the view that actual feelings can only be directed toward actual objectivities, while phantasied objects can only bring about quasi-feelings (*ibid.*, 462ff.; cf. Walton 1978; Radford & Weston 1975). He later revised this view, noting that aesthetic feelings that are directed toward phantasied objects, while “modified,” are still “actual” ones (Brough 2005, xl; Husserl 2005, 465). What remains unrevised is his view that such feelings still presuppose the intuitive appearance of the objectivity in question.

In texts dated to 1904–1905, Husserl elaborates on some of the similarities and differences between image and a kind of symbolic consciousness, which in turn is founded upon image consciousness: he (2005, 54, 37) understands such symbolic consciousness as “transcendent image consciousness,” where “the meaning regard is pointed away from the symbol,” as opposed to “immanent image consciousness,” in which the “seeing” of the intended subject is “contained” within or “pointed toward” the image. If image consciousness is a “consciousness of identity,” then symbolic consciousness is a consciousness of “resemblance,” of “difference,” of “disparity” in varying degrees (*ibid.*, 163ff.). Such disparity is also a characteristic feature of the consciousness of signs. Sign consciousness – another constitutive aspect of the act of reading – is, according to Husserl, yet another form of symbolic consciousness. In fact, Husserl goes on to distinguish between “*two classes* in symbolic presenting” (*ibid.*, 38). The first of these he understands as “symbolic presenting in the old, original sense of the word, the presenting of something externally by means of images, symbols, hieroglyphs” (*ibid.*, 38f.). In this connection, he also claims that “speech and writing originally have, respectively, a symbolic or hieroglyphic character”

(ibid., 39, 186). Nonetheless, he rightly assigns “signs that are utterly without relation to the things they are signs of” to the class of “signitive re-presenting” (ibid.; cf. ibid., 96). Husserl also rightly questions whether these two classes involve “a mixture of imaging and symbolic functions” (ibid., 38, note 1). Indeed, a kind of imaging function is necessary when one sees letters and verbal signs instead of curved or straight lines, dots, and so on, especially during the act of reading. The apprehension of such meaningful shapes is then a function of image consciousness – albeit one that occurs in passivity.⁹

In the *Sixth Logical Investigation*,¹⁰ Husserl, in fact, questions whether “a purely *signitive act*” can exist without being founded upon some “intuitive basis,” to which

⁹ While comparing the “significational consciousness” involved in considering a picture of Titian’s *Sacred and Profane Love* as a “photographic reproduction” of the original painting, Husserl also explicitly refers to the visually as well as the acoustically given word or verbal sign in terms of “images” (2005, 178).

¹⁰ In the *Sixth Logical Investigation*, Husserl (2001b, 218ff.) provides a similar account of the consciousness of images, which he also understands as “likenesses.” Relying on the example of a marble bust as the physical substrate, he observes that “not merely a thing of marble appears before us, but we have, based on this appearance, a reference to a person through a likeness” (ibid., 219). It is this person (i.e., the image subject) that one sees rather than the mere marble bust as such. Husserl also points out that this marble bust “is related to the thing by *similarity*: where there is no *similarity*, there can be no talk of a likeness, an image” (ibid.). Indeed, a kind of actual correspondence “between what appears and what is meant” is crucial in such cases, which is also a determining characteristic of the image object–image subject relation of image consciousness. Regarding the consciousness of signs, Husserl acknowledges that “the sign as object is constituted for us in an act of appearing” (ibid.). However, he cautions that this appearance itself “is not significant: it needs [...] to be tied up with a new intention, a new way of taking things, through which a novel, signified object takes the place of the old, intuitively apparent one” (ibid.; cf. 2005, 37). Unlike likenesses or images, “the sign has in general no community of content with the thing it signifies” (2001b, 219). He points out that any claim of “mutual resemblance” or “casual likeness” between the “sign and the thing signified” is to be differentiated from that “peculiar consciousness of identity, when similar is referred to similar and made to coincide with it in the manner of likeness and original thing,” thereby implying that the latter relation already involves a consciousness of identity (ibid., 220). In other words, when a letter is grasped as a “sign of a sign,” for example, “when we write ‘A is a letter of the Latin written alphabet,’ we treat A, despite its representational similarity, as a sign, and not as a likeness” (ibid., 219). Nonetheless, it must be noted that he does not thereby reject the possibility that sign consciousness can be founded upon an appearing “image,” where this “image” is merely a letter. What he argues against is the assumption that image and sign consciousness can be reduced to each other – that “the same intention which, in the one case is tied to the appearance

he replies in the negative: “An act of signification is only possible in so far as an intuition becomes endowed with a new intentional essence, whereby its intuitive object points beyond itself in the manner of a sign (whether as a sign regularly or fleetingly used)” (2001b, 241).¹¹ He acknowledges here as well that the “intuition of a sign may have ‘nothing at all to do’ with the object of the significative act” (ibid.).¹² However, he observes that in such cases it is not the “*founding intuition as a whole, but only its representational content*, which really assists the signitive act” (ibid.). Husserl uses the example of verbal signs to explain what he means by the “founding intuition” and “founding content” in this context:

For what goes beyond this content, what pins down the sign as a natural object, *can be varied at will* without disturbing the sign’s signitive function. Whether the letters of a verbal sign are of wood, iron or printer’s ink etc., or seem to be such objectively, makes no difference. Only their repeatedly recognizable shape is relevant, not as the objective shape of the thing of wood etc., but as the shape actually present in the intuitively presentative sensuous content of intuition. If there is only a connection between the signitive act and the intuitively presentative content of our intuition, and if the quality and matter of this intuition mean nothing to this signitive function, then we ought not to say that each signitive act requires a founding intuition, but only that it requires a founding content. It would seem that any content can function in this fashion, just as any content can function as the intuitively presentative content of an intuition. (Ibid., 241f.)

of an object *like* the object referred to, is in the other case tied to the appearance of an object *unlike* it” (ibid.). It must be noted that this work does not provide a clear distinction between signitive and symbolic consciousness, often using examples such as letters when discussing symbolic consciousness on the one hand, and referring to geographical maps as “signs” or as a “sign-presentation resting upon” an “image” on the other (see ibid., 356, 232f., 173).

¹¹ In *Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory* (1898–1925), Husserl relies on the example of reading a word to explain the difference between its visual appearance and the signitive consciousness that grasps this appearance as a “sign” (2005, 26; see Sartre 2004, 21).

¹² Discussing the possibility of mixed acts in addition to “*purely signitive*” and “*purely intuitive*” ones, Husserl (2001b, 242) further clarifies that “*to the extent that this content functions as a purely signitive or purely intuitive representative, or as both together, the act is a purely signitive, a purely intuitive or a mixed act.*”

As far as the signitive consciousness of visually given letters and verbal signs is concerned, any intuitive appearance – an appearance that Husserl (*ibid.*, 242) prefers to term as the “founding content” – is restricted to the “image” that functions as the sign.¹³

However, one does not *live in* these “images,” and barring the exceptional cases of self-reference, one does not *see* the intended subject *in* such “images” (see *ibid.*, 219). Similarly, any aesthetic consciousness brought about by their manner of appearance occurs only in rare instances (e.g., when viewing typographical, calligraphic artworks or runic or other script inscriptions and historical epigraphical artefacts) (see *ibid.*, 105). As Husserl (2005, 185) elaborates, the apprehension of the sign itself is not usually foregrounded during signitive consciousness:

[...] not only does the act of meaning aim at what is signified, but the sign also sensibly possesses the tendency to push the meaning away from itself and toward what is signified. Phenomenologically, therefore, something indeed fastens to the sign; when we focus our attention on it, we notice that it has the function of the sign. It is supposed to function as the bearer of an intention, of an attentive act of meaning that aims at something else; it is not supposed to be taken independently, by itself.

Since it is not seen in the appearing “image,” the “intended subject” of signitive consciousness, as also noted in the case of the act of reading earlier, requires new acts such as those of imagination, memory, perception, or image consciousness in order to be apprehended in an intuitive manner.¹⁴ Because of the possibility of intuitive fulfillment through such supplementary acts, especially that of intuitive phantasy, signitive consciousness – and consequently, the act of reading too – can still stake a claim to the possibility of aesthetic consciousness.

¹³ In the case of such “images,” the appearing shapes function as the “image objects” and the letters or words are the “image subjects” that are seen in the “image objects.” One way of disclosing the difference between the stratum of the appearing shapes and that of the letters is to observe how the self-same letter is seen in the various possible typographical glyphs thereof. However, this “image subject” is not the intended subject of the corresponding signitive or sign consciousness.

¹⁴ Sartre (2004, 66f.) concurs that reading is a kind of “hybrid consciousness” that comprises “half-sign and half-imaging.”

The importance of the role played by the act of intuitive phantasy in the constitution of an aesthetic object during the act of reading is especially brought to the fore by Roman Ingarden in *The Cognition of the Literary Work of Art*. He begins this work with a summary of his account of the essential structure of a literary work, which comprises four distinct strata. The first of these comprises “verbal sounds and phonetic formations and phenomena of a higher order,” while the second involves “semantic units: of sentence meanings and the meanings of whole groups of sentences” (Ingarden 1973, 12). The third stratum is that of “schematized aspects, in which objects of various kinds portrayed in the work come to appearance,” whereas the fourth stratum comprises the “objectivities portrayed in the intentional states of affairs projected by the sentences” (ibid.). In connection with the cognition of the literary work, he differentiates between two types of reading: “ordinary, purely passive (receptive) reading and active reading” (ibid., 37). As Ingarden elaborates, passive reading, which is the more frequent as well as “mechanical” of the two, is mostly restricted to the achievement of the first and second strata and does not involve any intuitive imaginative appearance of the corresponding objects and states of affairs:

Nevertheless, in many cases the whole effort of the reader consists in thinking the meanings of the sentences he reads without making the meanings into objects and remaining, so to speak, in the sphere of meaning. There is no intellectual attempt to progress from the sentences read to the objects appropriate to them and projected by them. Of course, these objects are always an automatic intentional projection of the sentence meanings. In purely passive reading, however, one does not attempt to apprehend them or, in particular, to constitute them synthetically. Consequently, in passive reading there is no kind of intercourse with the fictional objects. [...] One still knows what one is reading, although the scope of understanding is often limited to the sentence which is being read. But one does not become clearly aware of what one is reading about and what its qualitative constitution is. One is occupied with the realization of the sentence meaning itself and does not absorb the meaning in such a way that one can transpose oneself by means of it into the world of the objects of the work; one is too constrained by the meaning of the individual sentences. (Ibid., 38)

The stratum of portrayed objectivities in those rare instances where it is achieved through passive reading remains vague, distant, and obscure (ibid., 41). While passive reading, according to Ingarden, does not imply a purely receptive attitude and is still marked by activity, active reading is especially distinguished by the intuitive imagination of the corresponding objects and states of affairs: "Suppose we assert that in 'active' reading one not only understands the sentence meanings but also apprehends their objects and has a sort of intercourse with them" (ibid., 39). This imaginative experience is marked by such qualities as "greater plasticity," "distinctness," "vividness," "concreteness," "intensity," and "richness" (ibid., 62). Furthermore, in active reading, "we project ourselves in a cocreative attitude into the realm of the objects determined by the sentence meanings" (ibid., 40). Understood in a Husserlian context, such projection would also imply a sort of "doubling" or "splitting" of the ego (see Cavallaro 2017),¹⁵ thereby categorizing the act of reading as a peculiar type of phantasy experience as opposed to being, as Sartre (2004, 64) claims, "a sui generis consciousness that has its own structure."

For Ingarden, active reading is not simply restricted to the intuitive grasp of the portrayed objectivities as such. It also involves further creative, imaginative supplementation to such objectivities on the part of the reader. This creative activity is called for by the inherent descriptive incompleteness of the stratum of portrayed objectivities in particular. Ingarden (1973, 50) terms such instances of descriptive incompleteness "places of indeterminacy:"

We find such a place of indeterminacy wherever it is impossible, on the basis of the sentences in the work, to say whether a certain object or objective situation has a certain attribute. If, for instance, the color of Consul Buddenbrook's eyes were not mentioned in *Buddenbrooks* (and I have not checked to see), then he would be completely undetermined in this respect. We know implicitly, through context and by the fact that he is a human being and has not lost his eyes, that his eyes are of some color; but we do not know which. There are many analogous cases. I call the aspect or part of the portrayed object which is not specifically determined by the text a "place of indetermi-

¹⁵ For reasons that will become obvious in what follows, such "ego-splitting" or "doubling" is not an essential characteristic of the act of reading; it is mostly restricted to the reading of those works that employ second-person narration.

nacy.” Each object, person, event, etc., portrayed in the literary work of art contains a great number of places of indeterminacy, especially the descriptions of what happens to people and things.

According to Ingarden, it is only through active reading that the reader is able to creatively “fill-in” what “places” or “gaps” of “indeterminacy” this stratum affords:

Thus, in order to apprehend the whole work, it is necessary above all to reach all of its strata, and especially the stratum of portrayed objectivities. [...] Only an active reading, however, permits the reader to discover it in its peculiar, characteristic structure and in its full detail. But this cannot be accomplished through a mere apprehension of the individual intentional states of affairs belonging to the sentences. We must progress from these states of affairs to their diverse interconnections and then to the objects (things, events) which are portrayed in the states of affairs. But in order to achieve an aesthetic apprehension of the stratum of objects in its often complex structure, the active reader, after he has discovered and reconstructed this stratum, must, as we shall see, go beyond it, especially beyond various details explicitly indicated by the sentence meanings, and must supplement in many directions what is portrayed. And in so doing, the reader to some extent proves to be the cocreator of the literary work of art. (Ibid., 40f.; cf. Husserl 2005, 706)

The creative “concretization” of the literary work that results from such readerly contribution is the aesthetic object, and it functions as the locus of any emotional response (see *ibid.*, 52–58, 199ff., 207f., 220ff., 329).¹⁶ Thus, it is intuitive, co-creative phantasy that founds the possibility of emotional response in Ingarden’s highly influential account of the aesthetic cognition of a literary work.

¹⁶ Ingarden was not the first to recognize the characteristic incompleteness of literary descriptions and the aesthetic importance of the reader’s imaginative contributions. As early as in the 18th century, which saw the rise of the English novel, one finds Laurence Sterne (2003, 92; quoted in Iser 1978, 108) foregrounding this issue through his fictional narrator, Tristram Shandy: “no author [...] would presume to think all: The truest respect which you can pay to the reader’s understanding, is to halve this matter amicably, and leave him something to imagine, in his turn, as well as yourself. For my own part, I am eternally paying him compliments of this kind, and do all that lies in my power to keep his imagination as busy as my own.”

On the other hand, Wolfgang Iser (1978, 96), who engages with Ingarden's views in *The Act of Reading*, locates the aesthetic object in the overall "meaning" or "significance" of the literary text – a significance that is characterized as serving a socio-cultural, psychological, and pedagogical purpose. At first glance, this shift of locus from the intuitive, co-creative imagination of the literary objectivities to the text's overall meaning or significance might be taken to imply that such imagination is not necessary for the possibility of any aesthetic or emotional response. Nevertheless, for Iser, any apprehension or achievement of this overall meaning or significance depends upon the "building" and "revising" of the mental images of schematized aspects and their corresponding literary objects (ibid., 135–159).¹⁷ Iser's continued reliance on such imagining is symptomatic of the ubiquitous belief in its occurrence during the act of reading. The poverty or richness of "mental images" and a literary work's ability to evoke them continue to serve as critical touchstones concerning the aesthetic value(s) of a literary work. The occurrence of such imagination indeed functions as the backbone of almost every theory of aesthetic response barring the exceptions offered by those concerning mathematics and other abstract sciences.

A standardized structure of the objective correlates of the act of reading, which is jointly based on Husserl and Ingarden's respective accounts, would accordingly involve the strata of (1) the physical object or substrate, (2) the sign, (3) the meaning, (4) the phonetic aspect, and (5) the intuitive appearance of the mentioned objectivities. As in the case with the objective structure of image consciousness, any apprehension of the stratum of signs during the act of reading presupposes the perceptual givenness of a physical substrate (e.g., a printed book or an e-book device).¹⁸ This physical substrate similarly facilitates the "identity, stability, and

¹⁷ Interestingly, Iser (1978, 138) makes note of "the optical poverty" of mental images; however, instead of connecting it to the non-intuitive givenness of such images, he considers such "poverty" to be a characteristic feature of the act of imagining that distinguishes it from the vivid determinacy of perceived objects.

¹⁸ The reader's perceptual experience of the e-book device is somewhat different from that of a printed book: for instance, in the case of their respective appresentation of non-appearing "pages." In the case of a printed book, the materiality of each "page" is distinct from the other and can be apperceived as such; however, the "pages" of an e-book cannot be appresentatively co-given with the presently given "page(s)" with the same kind of distinct materiality. However, these minor differences in the perceptual givenness of the

public” (Brough 2005, xlv) or intersubjective character of the stratum of signs.¹⁹ This physical substrate can similarly be torn or even burned so that its destruction negates the very appearance of visual marks and thus of any corresponding sign consciousness. The perception of this physical substrate also shares such issues as its proper orientation as well as other situational and physiological conditions that allow for its adequate or “optimal givenness” (Husserl 2000, 63–80).²⁰ The stratum of signs, as mentioned earlier, is characterized by its self-effacing tendency, which shifts the reader’s attention away from living in their appearance to the apprehension of their culturally and habitually determined meanings (see Husserl 1969, 20). The apprehension of the stratum of the meanings of the words, sentences, and so on, curiously enough, includes the (passive) positing of a peculiar kind of belief – not the positing of the existence of the signified object but that of the meaningful word itself.²¹ It is perhaps because of the perceptual nature of the givenness of the book as well as the sign, in addition to the intersubjective characteristic of meaning and language, that the reader posits the meanings of the words with (passive) simple belief certainty. An easy way of disclosing the occurrence of such positing is to consider those instances that involve the belief modalities of doubt, questioning,

physical substrate do not affect the objective structure of the act of reading or the quality of the act itself (see Husserl 2001b, 241f.).

¹⁹ Ingarden (1973, 177), on the other hand, rejects the essential necessity of a physical substrate by claiming that “we could very well read the work by the aid of merely imagined written signs.” In keeping with Ingarden’s views on concretization, the intuitive imagination of such “written” signs would, however, require simultaneously occurring supplementary acts of equally intuitive, co-creative phantasy, the sustainability of which – if not its very possibility – is highly suspect in the case of humans.

²⁰ Any change in the external lighting conditions, for example, affects the visibility of the object; in total darkness, the book remains invisible, which in turn negates any apprehension of the stratum of signs and thus the act of reading itself. Similarly, any pathological change in the “normal” condition of the body results in a change in the attentiveness toward or in the manner in which the object is given.

²¹ Here, “meaning” is to be understood in keeping with Ingarden’s notion of meaning in connection with the semantic stratum of a literary work (1973, 24ff.). It must be noted that Ingarden does not subscribe to Husserl’s specific understanding of meaning as a kind of ideal entity as discussed at length in the latter’s *First Logical Investigation* (see Husserl 2001a, 187ff., 217ff., 228ff.; cf. 1969, 20f.). An attempt to account for the peculiar belief positing at stake here within the respective frameworks of the different ways in which Husserl’s notion of the noema is interpreted, unfortunately, requires the space of another paper.

cancellation, affirmation, or confirmation through verification with regard to the correctness of one's previous apprehension of a sign or its meaning (cf. Husserl 1983, 251).²²

The phonetic stratum, following Ingarden, involves either the auditory perception or the intuitive imagination of the phonetic forms of the visually (or even tactually) apprehended signs (see Husserl 2005, 179, note 3). However, the inclusion of this stratum in the objective structure of the act of reading discloses an underlying presumption of physiological normality, thus raising questions concerning its essential necessity: the necessity of the achievement of this stratum is challenged by the practice of reading followed by those who are born deaf and are thus unable to perceive or imagine the corresponding phonetic forms of the apprehended signs.²³ As far as the stratum of the intuitive appearance of the mentioned objectivities is concerned, it can be achieved through image consciousness or, more commonly, through intuitive phantasy.²⁴

²² As an experiment, one can actively doubt, affirm, question, or even reject the intended sense of the word "meaning" here — one word among the many others that are included in this very paper. These modalities of belief, best observed in cases of ambiguity, help disclose how the meanings of these other words are, in comparison, unambiguously posited with (passive) simple belief certainty. Such modalities also help disclose the reader's underlying assumption concerning the existence of the "correct" meanings of such words. This operating assumption can be best observed when readers come across words, the meaning(s) of which is not known to them at all (e.g., "gobemouche" or "sesquipedalian") (cf. Husserl 2001a, 201f.; 2001b, 67f., 71). This peculiar kind of belief positing of meaning — that these words have some meaning — can also be observed in the case of as-yet undeciphered ancient scripts and languages or when one comes across scripts or languages with which one is unfamiliar.

²³ While it could lead one to speculate about what a literary work that does not essentially possess a phonetic stratum would look like, the possibility of such non-phonetic reading does not negate Ingarden's claim that the phonetic aspect is an essential part of the structure of a literary work, particularly of poetical works; however, it does serve as a caution against any ontological conflation between the objective structure of the literary work as such and that of the act of reading.

²⁴ The intuitive appearance of the mentioned objectivities through image consciousness can be observed, for example, in the case of graphic novels, comics, and other illustrated works. Such fulfillment, however, is contingent upon the extent as well as the degree of correspondence between what is read and what is represented in the accompanying image(s).

3 On the Absence of Intuitive Phantasy during the Act of Reading

However, the possibility of the occurrence of intuitive phantasy during the act of reading as such is open to question: a rare challenge to the ubiquitous belief in the occurrence of such phantasy during the act of reading can be found in Sartre's early phenomenological works on the imagination. In *The Imagination*, he discusses the French Bergsonian philosopher Albert Spaier's observation concerning an interesting characteristic of cognitive processes involving mental images:

Subjects point out a tendency of thought to economize its effort. It happens that the full comprehension of an idea precedes the full blooming of an image. Hence the image vanishes without having reached the end of its possibilities, without our even having been able to know exactly what the end of its actualization would be. (Sartre 2012, 60f.)

Spaier (1914; quoted in Sartre 2004, 62) understands this stage, which can be said to involve an adequate comprehension of the intended "idea," but not any intuitive imagination of the corresponding object, as the "dawn of the image."²⁵ In *The Imaginary*, Sartre (2004, 63) unpacks the implications of Spaier's observation where the act of reading is concerned:

I read a novel. I am highly interested in the fate of the hero who will escape from prison, for example. I learn with great curiosity about the least details of his preparations for escape. However, writers are agreed in pointing out

²⁵ According to Sartre (2012, 60), Spaier's Bergsonian understanding of the image assumes a "movement" of becoming from "potentiality" to "actualization and complete individuation, that is to say, towards the existence of an individuated *thing*." This view firmly adheres to the problematic image theory of not just phantasy, but also perception. While there are key differences between Sartre, who rejects the image theory of perception if not phantasy, and Husserl's later understanding of the "mental image" and "phantasy," respectively, this paper will not venture into a comparative study of their respective accounts. The aim of this paper is to emphasize the absence of the "intuitive" aspect of imagination during the act of reading, regardless of whether the intended object of phantasy is given mediately through mental images or directly in phantasy.

the poverty of the images which accompany my reading. In fact the majority of the subjects have very few and they are very incomplete. I would even have added that the appearances are generally outside the activity of reading, properly so-called, when, for example, the reader retrogresses and remembers the events of the preceding chapter, dreams about the book, etc. In brief, the images appear with the stops and failures of reading. The rest of the time, when the reader is engrossed, there is no mental image. I have noted this in myself on many occasions and several people have confirmed it to me. A multitude of images is the characteristic of an inattentive and frequently interrupted reading.

Significantly, in Text no. 18 from 1918, Husserl (2005, 616) acknowledges the possibility that some types of works of art could be grasped without recourse to intuitive imagination:

Art is the realm of phantasy that has been given form, of perceptual or re-productive phantasy that has been given form, of intuitive phantasy, but also, in part, of nonintuitive phantasy. It cannot be said that art must necessarily move within the sphere of intuitiveness.

In an undated marginal note to Text no. 15 from 1912, he significantly revises his earlier views on the matter by unequivocally pointing out:

I am reading a fairy tale, for example; but although I certainly understand everything, make all the statement [*sic!*], I nevertheless have no clear intuitions. Here and there something flashes out; the rest remains in the dark. One will say in this case: I am living in the world of the fairy tale. Indeed I am, although I do not view it with the intuiting eye of intuitive phantasy. (Ibid., 454, note 129)

Rather than blindly accepting Sartre's or Husserl's respective observations concerning the poverty of mental images or the absence of intuitive phantasy, one can undertake a phenomenological reflection on one's own myriad acts of reading in order to verify whether any such intuitive imaginative appearance does occur during the act of reading and whether it is possible to simultaneously carry out the different

founding acts that together comprise the complex act of reading – particularly, whether the act of reading is “compossible” in simultaneity with that of intuitive imagination (see Husserl 1998, 143, 148).²⁶ What such independently undertaken reflection helps disclose is that regardless of whether the literary work in question belongs to the genre of fiction or non-fiction, the act of reading as such in the case of the human reader is indeed impossible in simultaneity with that of any intuitive imaginative appearance of the corresponding objectivities.²⁷ The act of reading, however, does permit the simultaneous compossibility of the intuitive or fulfilled phantasy of any corresponding phonetic forms of the words.

4 The Genetic Turn: Empty Representations, Conceptual Apprehensions, and Abiding Senses

The impossibility of any intuitive phantasy of the mentioned objectivities does not thereby imply that the act of reading necessarily stops at the stratum of the apprehended meaning (cf. Ingarden 1973, 38). As noted by Husserl and Sartre, there are instances where the reader can indeed imagine some of the mentioned or described literary objectivities. However, such imagination, *contra* Ingarden, is of a non-intuitive sort: it is characterized by incompleteness, discontinuity, vagueness, indirectness, and non-correspondence (cf. *ibid.*, 38, 41, 50, 62). Nevertheless, it must be emphasized that any identification of such non-intuitively imagined

²⁶ As Husserl (1982, 74) also observes in the Fourth Meditation, “in a *unitarily possible* ego not all singly possible types are *compossible*, and not all compossible ones are compossible in just any order, at no matter what loci in that ego’s own temporality.”

²⁷ Any claim of ‘impossibility’ is restricted to our current understanding of the human body. Whether radical genetic evolution or manipulation, or human technological absorption and transformation can bring about the compossibility of these acts is open to speculation. Nonetheless, intuitive, and even co-creative, imagination of the corresponding objectivities is compossible when one is engaged in *listening* to a literary work (e.g., audiobooks, radio plays, and poetry recitations). In other words, the act of reading is not the only mode through which a literary work can be cognized. The difference in the mode of perception involved in the act of listening affects the objective structure of the cognitive experience and allows for the possibility of intuitive imagination. Since this paper is concerned with the act of reading as such, any discussion on the objective structure of the act of listening to literary works is beyond its scope.

objectivities as the exclusive locus of any aesthetic or emotional response during the act of reading would be premature without first examining the possibility of such response even in the absence of such imagination. Under such conditions of absence, the act of reading still involves an emptily intended representation of the corresponding objectivity.

These empty representations can be of three types. The occurrence of the first of these can be observed when one is ignorant of the corresponding objectivity or when the description of the objectivity in question is incomplete, general, ambiguous, and so on, at that specific temporal moment during the reading process. In the latter case, the reader usually seeks or expects an 'informational fulfillment' of the states of affairs in the further, as-yet unread parts of the work (e.g., the disclosure of the identity of the till-then emptily intended unknown killer in a murder mystery novel). Any 'informational fulfillment' need not entail an intuitive imagination of the corresponding objectivity. Such 'informational fulfillment' can, nonetheless, bring about an aesthetic or emotional response on the part of the reader. The second type of empty representations is not marked by such contextual ignorance; rather, it involves known but logically impossible objects (e.g., round square), conceptually impossible states of affairs (Husserl 2001b, 67f., 209), and uncommon physiologically conditioned experiences.²⁸ The third type of empty representations involves known objectivities that can readily achieve imaginative fulfillment, provided one ceases the act of reading. What remains to be considered is what the empty representations of known objectivities presuppose as well as entail, and whether they can facilitate any aesthetic or emotional response.

Before proceeding to identify the specific nature of the third type of empty representations, it would be helpful to first note the difference between the intuitive givenness and the conceptual apprehension of objectivities. In this connection, one can turn to Husserl's comment on the Kantian differentiation between the intuition of individual objectivities and that of universals, which leads him to point out that the former kind of intuition

²⁸ Such experiences involve, for instance, seeing sound or tasting light, which remain intuitively unimaginable to those readers who do not have the neurobiological condition of synesthesia. Conceptually impossible states of affairs, on the other hand, involve objects that transgress their commonly known essences (cf. Husserl 2005, 340).

[...] is opposed to generalization, and so, further, to the categorial acts implying generalization, and also, in unclear admixture, to the significative counterparts of such acts. “Intuition,” we now say, *merely presents the individual*, while “thought” points to the *universal*, is carried out by way of “concepts.” One generally speaks in this context of the opposition between “intuition and concept.” (Ibid., 318)²⁹

One can also turn to Sartre (2004, 63–68), who also acknowledges this Kantian differentiation but relies instead on what he calls “imaging knowledge,” which he considers to be a “degradation” of pure knowledge,³⁰ and arrives at a similar realization:

If we start from knowledge, we see the image born from an effort of thought to make contact with presences. This birth coincides with a degradation of knowledge that no longer aims at relations as such but as substantial *qualities* of things. This empty imaging knowledge – which Spaier names the dawn of images – is very frequent in the life of consciousness. It passes and disappears without being realized in images, but not without having put us, however, on the side of the image properly called. The subject does not then know [sic!] whether it was a “flash-image,” a “dawn of an image,” or a concept.

Significantly, Sartre also emphasizes that this “empty imaging knowledge” cannot be reduced to “pure sign knowledge” or to “the state of ‘meaning’” (ibid., 62, 63; cf. Husserl 2005, 95).

Relying on such differentiation, it would be more appropriate to state, *contra* Ingarden in particular, that the objective structure of the act of reading usually culminates with the conceptual apprehension of the corresponding literary objectivities. In other words, the third type of empty representations comprises conceptual objectivities. However, readers are not aware of or attentive toward

²⁹ I am also indebted to a 1942 short story by Jorge Luis Borges (1998, 131–137) titled *Funes, His Memory*, which highlights the necessity of ignoring or forgetting the specifics of an object or a state of affairs in order to even ‘think’ about it in the first place. As this story amply demonstrates, such forgetting is a characteristic feature of language itself.

³⁰ In what is a significant departure from Husserl, Sartre (2004, 51) claims that perception and intuition also involve a degradation of pure knowledge.

the conceptual nature of their apprehensions while living in the act of reading.³¹ In addition, as far as the act of reading is concerned, the corresponding conceptual objectivities cannot lay any claim to being phenomenologically pure concepts (see Husserl 1983, 165–167). Rather, because of their genesis in processes of abstraction undertaken in the natural attitude, such objectivities are of the empirical sort:

When our abstractions are based solely on actual, worldly examples as we perceive or remember them, we arrive at an empirical generalization, an empirical concept, say, of a material thing or of a tree or of green. When our abstractions are based not only on actual examples but systematically, by means of eidetic variation, consider possible cases as well as actual, we arrive at the ideal a priori concept of an essence. (Drummond 2007, 85f.)

Husserl's genetic phenomenology and its notions of secondary passivity (see Moran & Cohen 2012, 236), habituality, and sedimented, abiding senses can shed more light on what such conceptual apprehensions presuppose as far as the act of reading is concerned. Considered phenomenologically, the reader is a temporal phase of what Husserl (1982, 67f.; 2000, 314) terms the monad, which is "*the ego taken in full concreteness*" and "is the bearer of its habituality" as well as "its individual history." Significantly, he also points out that belief positings become an important aspect of the monad's habituality:

Obviously, belief, and any position-taking, is an event in the stream of consciousness and therefore is subject to the first law, that of "habit." Having once believed M, with this sense and in a certain mode of representation, there then exists the associative tendency to believe M again in a new case. If I ask whether A is and proceed to affirm that A is, then in a new case there may be joined "by habit" to the question whether A' is (thought as similar to A with respect to its matter) the affirmation that it is. (Husserl 2000, 235)

³¹ Sartre (2004, 66), for instance, considers such unawareness or inattention as a characteristic feature of "imaging knowledge," which he describes as "a consciousness that seeks to transcend itself" and as "a will to reach the intuitive, as a waiting for images."

Accordingly, the influence of habitually determined belief positings is not restricted to the apprehension of the individual object in question or of its type; rather, it extends to that of any associated or similar types of objectivities.

Thus, it is the reader's stock of sedimented, abiding senses or of knowledge that facilitates the conceptual apprehension of most – if not all – of the objectivities mentioned in a literary work. It would not be farfetched to claim that the possibility of such senses, which also include the sense of being and other characteristic features of an object or state of affairs (see Husserl 1973, 122f.), founds that of the act of reading as such. For instance, the very possibility of the act of reading unavoidably depends upon the learnt acquisition of, and thus possession as a *habitus*, the primary language in which the work is written (see Ingarden 1973, 15f.; Fish 1980, 42–48).³² This condition does not imply that the reader should know all the words belonging to the language in question, nor does it assume any correct understanding of the meanings and pronunciations of such words. The possibility of the reader's continued engagement with as well as any aesthetic or emotional response to a literary work, however, depends upon more than linguistic, semantic competence.

As indicated by the process of achieving generalizations, any conceptual apprehension of objectivities during the act of reading requires prior experience(s) of some – if not all – of the types of objects and states of affairs that are usually mentioned in a fictional work along with some understanding of their respective characteristic features and capabilities. Such types of objectivities are usually those that one considers to be mundane: for example, the individual species and genera of trees, animals, birds, and so on; objects of daily use such as cups, plates, tables, chairs, clothes, food items, and so on; higher-level concepts like cities, nations, realms, money, and so on; sensible qualities of objects like colour, smoothness, roughness, jaggedness, and so on; as well as physical, cognitive, and emotional experiences such as perception, imagination, remembering, thinking, reasoning, pain, warmth, coolness, tiredness, joy, grief, sadness, and so on. The sedimented senses corresponding to such objectivities also include senses derived from socio-cultural customs and traditionally determined associations. Furthermore, the act of reading also involves the passive operation of such sedimented senses as the different types

³² This condition does not differentiate between the 'original' language employed by the author and the languages into which the work has been translated.

of fictional and non-fictional genres in circulation as well as the known generic category of the work in question.

The operating influence of the sense of the genre of a work in particular plays an important role in determining whether the act of reading is accompanied by belief positings or by their absence: a difference in position takings can be observed while reading, for example, news articles, political allegories, scholarly tomes on phenomenology, as well as works of realistic, historical, philosophical, science, and fantasy fiction. However, the genesis of such sedimented senses as those listed above in the prior – often lived – experiences of the reader serves to challenge any straightforward claim concerning the absence of belief positings when it comes to the reading of fictional works. With the absence of intuitive phantasy, the disclosure of the conceptual apprehension of literary objectivities, and the inescapable dependence on what are essentially “memorial” sedimented, abiding senses, the certainty of any claim concerning the non-positing or neutralization of belief that is a characteristic of pure intuitive phantasy is lost as far as the act of reading fictional works is concerned.³³ What this loss and the possibility of passive belief positings – occurring as a result of the operating influence of sedimented senses of objectivities of the

³³ The claim that phantasy must necessarily be a non-positing or neutralized act is later revised by Husserl (1973, 300), who states that “we can make up imaginary themes which, as not belonging to the unity of our world of imagination upheld until now, get canceled. And just as everything which appears in actual experience and in the actual world has its parallel here in the as-if, so also with existence and nonexistence. There is a *quasi-existence* on the ground of a coherent world of imagination and, in the same way, a *quasi-non-existence* and judgments of existence relating to it.” Such modified positings of quasi-existence and its various modalities are a characteristic feature of the act of reading fictional works. Thus, the act of reading involves at least two simultaneously occurring levels of belief positings in addition to the general positing of the world and the passive certainty of one’s own being: (1) the unmodified level belonging to one’s own embodiment and its field of perception and to the signitive apprehension of the meanings of words and sentences, and (2) the variously modified levels belonging to the objectivities mentioned or described in the work. The quality of the modifications of the latter level(s) is also determined by the genre of the work in question: for example, a fantastic or improbable object, when mentioned in a work of magic realism or fantasy fiction, is readily posited by the reader as quasi-existent *vis-à-vis* the fictional world; however, it would be doubted or undergo immediate cancellation if claimed to be an existing object in the otherwise harmonious world of a realistic or historical fiction. In addition to these levels, the reading of fictional works also reveals an analogous “general positing” of a fictional “world.”

mundane sort – entail is an epistemic rather than an ontological blurring of the actual and the fictional during the reading of fictional works.³⁴

In this connection, one recalls Husserl's (1973, 298) differentiation in *Experience and Judgment* between "predications of existence, which have their counterparts in negations of existence" and "predications of actuality, which have their counterparts in predications of nonactuality, of fiction." This distinction plays a crucial role when thinking about the respective modifications of belief during the reading of fictional and non-fictional works. As Husserl further observes, the concepts of actuality and fictionality first arise in connection with phantasy:

In the natural attitude, there is at first (prior to reflection) no predicate "actual," no genus "actuality." It is only when we imagine, and, taking a position beyond the attitude which characterizes life, we pass to actualities given in the attitude of imagination (the attitude of quasi-experience in its different modes), and when, in addition, going beyond the occasional isolated act of imagination and its objects, we take them as examples of possible imagination in general and of fictions in general that there arise for us the concept of fiction (or of imagination) and, on the other hand, the concepts of "possible experience in general" and "actuality." (Ibid.)

Positings of unmodified existence proper are restricted to that which is immediately given in one's perceptual surroundings. Such perceptually given objectivities are readily accepted to be actual as a matter of habit. When it comes to the reading of a non-fictional work, the mentioned or described objectivities, which are not perceptually present, are nonetheless accepted as actual and thus as existent precisely because of such matters of habit.

Further, if one considers the categories of "possible experience in general" and "actuality," one finds those objectivities that have some "connection" or "agreement"

³⁴ I had presented a more in-depth consideration on empathy, language, and the epistemic blurring of actuality and fictionality in a paper titled "Edith Stein and Language: On the Empathic Blurring of Actuality and Fictionality during the Reading of Fictional Autobiographies" at the Forty-third Annual Cambridge Conference organized by the World Phenomenology Institute. What follows here is in part a summary and in part a further development of select arguments from this paper, due to their relevance to the topic under consideration.

with the reader's abiding, sedimented senses arising in past perceptual experiences along with those acquired through learning *qua* knowledge. The positing of such objectivities as actual also implies a belief in the possibility of achieving in principle a corresponding unmodified positing of their existence – modalized or otherwise. The objectivities of “fictionality” or of “possible imagination in general,” on the other hand, are marked by an awareness of their “disconnection” with or “opposition” to such a possibility (see *ibid.*, 300; Husserl 2005, 487). However, even a passing consideration of the kind of objects and states of affairs that are mentioned in literary works reveals that it is difficult to achieve a clear-cut epistemic separation between the objectivities of “possible experience in general,” “possible imagination in general,” and “actuality.” Any attempt to distinguish between such objectivities faces further challenges in light of the fact that much that is included in fictional works does not exclusively belong to the restricted category of fictionality (cf. Husserl 1973, 302).

In keeping with Husserl's (2005, 487f.) insights in Text no. 15 from 1912, the reading of fictional and even non-fictional works can instead be said to involve “nonhomogeneous” positings. For instance, it is often difficult for a reader to posit known actual persons, geographical locations, objects, events, facts, and other literary works as “fictional” during the reading of fictional works. Conversely, it is also possible for a reader to apprehend an objectivity, if ignorant of its otherwise actual or historical status, as uniquely fictional. Any positing of actuality in such instances shares the characteristic feature of what Husserl understands as “mixed” rather than pure phantasy: “in mixed phantasy not everything turns into the as-if, but the as-if character does infect what is actually given” (*ibid.*, 713f.). When those objectivities that would otherwise belong to the restricted category of fictionality are mentioned in non-fictional or scholarly works, the “as if” character of fiction in their case is similarly “infected” as it were by the otherwise predominant positings of actuality. Accordingly, a reader might apprehend a non-existing objectivity, a non-actual though possibly experienceable objectivity, or an unknown fictional one that is not explicitly highlighted as such in a non-fictional or scholarly work as an actual and thus existing one.

5 On the Empty “Intuitions” of Empathy

There are a few categories of such otherwise actual or possibly experienceable objectivities that reveal themselves to be an inescapable part of any literary, fictional

work – those involving “living” beings such as human, human-like, or non-human narrators, characters, and so on. The apprehension of such beings is markedly different from that of inanimate objectivities: regardless of whether they are known to be actual or fictional, such apprehension is necessarily brought about by the passive operations of empathy. Indeed, without empathy, the reader is incapable of even understanding the very notions of “narrator” or “character” as well as any of their specific instances in fictional works. The very “givenness” of such beings during the act of reading is founded upon what Husserl (1982, 110f.) understands as “an *apperceptive transfer*” of the sense of animate organism through the operations of “pairing” and its non-inference-based associations, albeit in passivity. Just as the perceived voice or speech of other beings co-presents their speakers, the apprehension of the narration, description, as well as cited or reported speech or thought during the reading of fictional works involves the passive empathic constitution of a corresponding narrating, remembering, describing, speaking, thinking, and feeling psychic being (Husserl 2000, 101; Stein 1989, 79f.; cf. Heidegger 1977, 213). One can go so far as to state that the passive positing of the fictional “world” occurs because it is the object correlate of such empathically constituted fictional egos.

In this connection, it must be emphasized that empathy is not a neutralized act even in passivity (see W. Stein 1989, xviii; E. Stein 1989, 11). What this implies in the case of the apprehension of fictional narrators, characters, and so on, is the non-neutralized positing of a necessarily correlated psychic aspect or being with its own stream and horizon of lived experiences. Accordingly, while such individuals can be fictional, they are nonetheless grasped as essentially possessing a psychic life of their own. When it comes to the act of reading, the empathic transfer of the sense of being facilitates a signitive analogue of the three stages of empathy identified by Edith Stein, beginning with the emergence of the specific psychic experiences of such fictional beings.³⁵ This signitive emergence facilitates the possibility of the non-essential operations of empathic explication and objectification. Such empathic operations in turn allow the more crucial extensions of “fellow feeling” or “sympathy,” and “the contagion or transference of feeling.”³⁶ The passive operation of the former empathic extension is what founds the readers’ own primordially

³⁵ For a brief account of the three stages of empathy, see Stein (1989, 10, 19, 25).

³⁶ For a brief account of these two empathic extensions or appropriations, see Stein (1989, 14f., 23f., 34).

experienced emotional responses to the fates of fictional characters. Regardless of whether it involves existing, actual, or fictional beings, an essential feature of empathy is its cognitive insight into – rather than any direct or immediate experiencing of – their psychic experiences (ibid., 10). This essential inability to achieve any immediate experience restricts the manner in which the psychic experiences of such beings can achieve intuitive givenness in general, which brings empathy closer to other presentifying acts such as memory and imagination.

However, the specific issue here is to determine whether empathy and its extensions are adversely affected by the absence of intuitive phantasy. In this connection, one can safely conclude that the act of reading would not be able to achieve any intuitive imagination of the physical body/Body (*Körper/Leib*) of the fictional characters, narrators, authors, and translators as well as editors.³⁷ Nevertheless, the imaginative fulfillment of the phonetic stratum permits an intuitive apprehension of the “voices” or “thoughts” of such fictional beings. The intuitive imagination of such fictional beings’ “speech” or “thoughts” – or even the mere description of their emotional states, thoughts, desires, and motivations³⁸ – renders the intuitive imagination of their corresponding bodies/Bodies superfluous as far as empathic operations are concerned. In other words, it is not necessary for the reader to intuitively imagine a crying, laughing, or scowling person to empathically grasp a fictional (or actual) person’s sadness, happiness, or anger. Empathic “intuition” in such cases is directed toward that person’s experienced emotion or feeling itself. The empathic apprehension of the psychic state and experiences of fictional beings in this manner can readily facilitate the empathic extension of “fellow feeling” or “sympathy” in the reader. The passive operations of empathy are thus not adversely affected by the absence of intuitive imagination of literary objects and states of affairs.

³⁷ The possibility of non-intuitive imagination, as well as that of image consciousness (e.g., through the illustrations on the book’s covers and/or those included in the work), of the bodies/Bodies of such beings remain unaffected. Literary examples of fictional authors, translators, and editors can often be found in works of fantasy, science, and historical fiction, as well as other sub-genres of speculative fiction. Unlike fictional characters and narrators, such fictional individuals are usually restricted to what Gérard Genette (1997) considers as “paratextual” spaces, which include prefaces and forewords, dedications, appendices, and notes.

³⁸ For an account of the reiterative operations of empathy, see Stein (1989, 18, 63).

In conclusion, these highly important operations of empathy and any resulting aesthetic or emotional response to fictional works are only possible because of the operating influence of the corresponding sedimented senses, which in their turn are guaranteed by our inescapable intersubjective condition (cf. Radford & Weston 1975, 74f.). Thus, it is the conceptual apprehension of the corresponding objectivities; the operating influence of previously acquired sedimented, abiding senses along with their associated, variously modified belief positings; and the crucial, inescapable dependence upon the operations of empathy along with the possibility of its extensions that facilitate the possibility of emotional response to fiction on the part of the reader in the absence of intuitive phantasy during the act of reading.

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The Phenomenologist as a Method Actor¹

Some Methodological Concerns Regarding the Debate on Fictional Emotions

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Abstract: The present article departs from several recent papers, which engage the question of fictional emotions from a phenomenological perspective. They are all shown to have certain difficulties in clearly establishing whether or not there is an essential difference between real and fictional emotions; whether or not fictional emotions can be voluntarily reproduced; or whether or not they need to draw from our prior actual experience. Without settling any of these questions in its turn, the article shows that there are key methodological constraints which necessarily lead phenomenology to an ambiguous treatment of these issues. These have to do with the methodological paradox of using imaginative procedures for exploring the relationship between fantasy emotions and actual emotional experiences.

Keywords: Imaginative Variation, Husserl, Stanislavski, Phenomenological Method

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1 Phenomenologists on Fictional Emotions

As is well known, fictional emotions are at the core of a long-standing philosophical debate, which circles around the question of whether such emotions – for instance, those experienced by the spectator of a horror film or the reader of a heart-rending novel – are indeed actual emotions or not. Given that at least some of these emotions only seem justified in regard to a real referent (for example fear when danger actually lies ahead), to claim that they are genuine implies a highly irrational account of emotions. To claim that they are not brings the difficult burden of defining more accurately the exact nature of such emotional phenomena, which are not full-blown emotions proper. These questions, which can be traced back all the way to Hume and even to Shakespeare's Hecuba soliloquy in *Hamlet*, led to heated debates among analytic philosophers peaking in the 1990s, focusing mostly on Walton's conception of 'make believe' and his interpretation of Radford and Weston's 'paradox of fiction.' More recently, several phenomenologists have joined these discussions as well, trying to show that phenomenology has the resources to satisfyingly settle the key issues under scrutiny.

Among these recent interventions, three papers – Vendrell Ferran (2010), Summa (2019), and Cavallaro (2019) – stand out especially. Ingrid Vendrell Ferran's article puts the phenomenological contribution to the aforementioned debates in a historical perspective. She shows that the phenomenological account of fictional emotions is by no means just a belated addition to the analytic discussions of the subject matter, but that the former actually predates the latter by far. To this extent, she revisits a substantial debate carried out at the turn of the 20th century in the early phenomenological school of Franz Brentano, in order to demonstrate how the richness of those accounts – which also include discussions of the intertwining of real aesthetic emotions and fictional emotions, or the role of bodily engagement in such experiences – could fruitfully enrich the current debates as well.²

² The topic is developed more extensively in its own context in Vendrell Ferran's dissertation (2008) on emotions in early realist phenomenology. In her more recent papers on the subject matter, Vendrell Ferran (2018) moves on to approaching the issue of fictional emotions from the perspective of a phenomenology of values.

In her more systematically oriented article, Michela Summa explicitly sets out to show how, despite having fictional objects as a reference, fictional emotions are nevertheless both genuine and rational. She thus opposes a phenomenologically refined concept of fictionality to the stark contrast in the analytic discussions between sheer existence and non-existence. This allows her, by further expanding on co-imagination as a specifically intersubjective way of engaging artistic fictions, to argue for an intrinsic normativity of fictional emotions, which helps prove their implicit rationality. In further drawing on Husserl's theory of foundation – according to which non-objectifying acts such as emotions are necessarily founded on objectifying acts, whereas the latter can, in turn, be either positional (as in perceptions) or quasi-positional (as in phantasies) – Summa is able to show that emotions never necessarily demand the real existence of their objective reference and that, therefore, emotional responses to fiction can be rationally justified. In the final section of her paper, Summa tackles the question of why fictional emotions do not motivate action. This is indeed a common objection: since spectators of a horror film, for instance, do not flee the cinema in fright, it is tempting to claim that they are not really afraid. In responding to this objection, Summa turns to Sartre's conception of imagination. If one follows Sartre's account, according to which imaginary experience necessarily also entails a 'virtualization' of the experiencing subject, the actual subject of the fictional experience is only an imaginarily co-constituted I, which should not be confounded with the real, empirical subject – hence the latter is not motivated to any real-world reactions.

Marco Cavallaro's paper sketches out a similar argument following Husserl rather than Sartre. It has the merit of explicitly specifying two points, which remain slightly ambiguous in Summa's article. Referring to Husserl's earlier version of Sartre's 'virtualization' thesis, Cavallaro takes note of the fact that setting up an essential divide between the imaginary I of fictional experience and the real, empirical I, as both Husserl and Sartre do, one is bound to ascribe the emotions experienced while receiving a work of fiction to the former. This, however, implies regarding them as mere quasi-experiences and not as actual experiences, which seems to somewhat contradict Summa's initial thesis. Moreover, Cavallaro stresses the fact that, according to both Husserl and Sartre, one is ultimately led to regard emotions toward fictional artworks, as scrutinized in analytic philosophy, as equivalent to imaginary emotions, that is: to sheer phantasized emotions, since both only involve emotions under the auspices of a fictional 'as-if' attitude.

Despite bringing to the fore relevant clarifications with regard to the subject matter, all three papers ultimately seem somewhat hesitant in deciding the main questions at hand. Neither of the three papers convincingly settles the issues of whether or not there are essential differences (say in the corresponding bodily experience) between real and fictional emotions; of whether or not fictional emotions can be voluntarily reproduced; of whether or not they necessarily feed on prior experience. While I will not try to directly respond to these questions in the following considerations either, I intend to show more specifically that there may be central methodological reasons why a phenomenological approach necessarily leads to an ambiguous treatment of these issues.

2 Imaginative Procedures in Phenomenology

As the aforementioned articles show, Husserl's philosophy can indeed serve as an enlightening tool for tackling the question of fictional emotions. There is however one point in his phenomenology which is of crucial importance here, but which is nevertheless constantly overlooked in the aforesaid discussions, namely Husserl's methodological reflections on the use of phantasy in phenomenological research. As is well known, phenomenology should – in Husserl's view, at least in its earlier static version – strive to offer structural analyses of the main types of lived experiences. To this extent, it is supposed to first depart from intuitive examples of such experiences by imaginatively modifying them in various ways such as to lay bare what invariably defines them. On Husserl's account, however, the guiding examples used in such imaginative procedures do not need to be real, empirical lived experiences from the onset, but they can just as well be mere phantasy examples. His argument goes as follows:

The Eidos, the pure essence, can be exemplified for intuition in experiential data – in data of perception, memory, and so forth; but it can equally well be exemplified in data of mere phantasy. Accordingly, to seize upon an essence itself, and to seize upon it originarily, we can start from corresponding experiencing intuitions, but equally well from intuitions which are non-experiencing, which do not seize upon factual existence but which are instead “merely imaginative.” (Husserl 1983, 11)

Moreover, in his detailed discussion of this point in his *Ideas I*, Husserl even goes a step further in claiming that phantasy examples are not just equivalent to actual experiences, but most often even preferable to the latter. Undoubtedly, there are important advantages of using actual experiences as a support for phenomenological analyses, because they are incomparably clearer and more stable than mere phantasies, as comes to view especially when considering external perception. However, according to Husserl, these advantages of original experience are not methodologically invaluable for phenomenological research. If they were, phenomenology would urgently have to consider “where, how, and to what extent they are realizable in the various kinds of mental processes, which kinds of mental processes come especially close in this respect to the privileged sphere of sense perception, and many other similar questions” (ibid., 158).

To be sure, some of Husserl’s later reflections add some nuances to this account. Already in the third book of his *Ideas*, he indeed seems to be much more keen in stressing the advantages of actual experience over phantasy, without however abandoning his initial position. If actual perception warrants the clarity of all its fully given moments while offering a stable intuition and lasting fulfilment of the intended aspects, phantasy is on the contrary often difficult to sustain, it quickly loses its intuitive density and risks lapsing into full obscurity. Therefore, Husserl unequivocally concludes: “Naturally the phenomenologist will therefore, wherever he can, draw from the primal source of clarity, from the fully living ‘impression,’ no matter how little he may be interested in factual existence” (Husserl 1980, 45). While this consequently leads to intricate theoretical debates concerning the precise type of acts and phenomena where actual experiences are easily accessible and thus preferable, it nevertheless remains a given throughout Husserl’s oeuvre that, if preference cannot be given to sheer phantasies from the onset, actual experiences are still anyhow treated in principle as if they were mere phantasies in disregarding their sheer factuality, while eidetic variation further on reduces all experiential content to the status of mere phantasy variants.³

In Husserl’s view, these reflections certainly apply to all classes of lived experiences in general, but they become especially relevant when considering the particular case of emotions. For if the example of emotions is indeed brought up in this context on several occasions as a case in point of lived experiences with regard

³ I have dealt with these issues more extensively in Ferencz-Flatz (2011 and 2018).

to which it is debatable whether phantasy instantiations are preferable over actual experiences or the other way around, the sheer fact that a phenomenological approach treats phantasized emotions and actually experienced ones in principle as equivalents becomes highly significant against the backdrop of the ongoing debates concerning 'fictional emotions.' For, in linking up these two theoretical discussions, the obvious question arises: how can phenomenology ever settle the debate about whether fictional emotions are similar or dissimilar to real emotions if it presumes as its core methodological principle that phantasy emotions and real emotions can be treated as equivalents? What is needed here, then, is a more thorough reflection on how the methodological principle of regarding phantasy emotions as full-blown substitutes for real emotions impedes the theoretical definition of fictional emotions and vice versa.

3 A Methodological Paradox

Of course, when discussing the advantages and disadvantages of using phantasy examples, the question of emotions does not come up merely as a generic case in point. Instead, it plays a key role as an argument in this debate. Thus, in the aforementioned paragraph of *Ideas I*, Husserl indeed begins his argument by expanding on the various strongpoints of original experience for phenomenological analysis. In this context, he focuses especially on sensory perception because, in his view, the latter has certain advantages over phantasy, which are not shared by other types of originally lived experiences, most notably emotions. He illustrates this by speaking of anger:

Anger may be evaporated, its content may be quickly modified by reflection. Nor is it always available like perception, producible at any time by easy experimental arrangements. To study it reflectively in its originariness is to study an evaporating anger which, to be sure, is by no means insignificant, but may not be what ought to be studied. In contrast, external perception, which is so much more accessible, is not "evaporated" by reflection; its universal essence and the essence of its components can be studied within the limits of originariness without particular efforts to produce clarity. (Husserl 1983, 158)

In brief, Husserl argues that, although perception has all such obvious virtues over mere phantasy, without suffering the drawbacks of original emotional acts, these advantages are nevertheless not methodologically indispensable for phenomenology. If they were, Husserl continues, phenomenology would have to struggle to reproduce them as far as possible for all types of experiences, emotions included. In other words: if the conditions of originariness were indeed indispensable for phenomenology, it would have to develop techniques for experimentally provoking anger outbursts, or for maintaining them under reflection in order to gain insights into the structure of such emotions. In Husserl's view, this is however not necessary. On the contrary, phenomenological analyses do not require the originariness of their starting examples. Moreover, there are substantial reasons why phantasies are preferable even in the treatment of perception itself – and one can easily notice Husserl's preference for discussing perception on the ground of merely phantasized examples throughout his work –, while this is all the more so in the case of emotions, given that they do not even share the experimental upsides of perception. Consequently, analyzing them in the mode of originariness appears to be highly difficult, if not impossible, while working with phantasy instantiations seems to be the only plausible solution.

This is precisely where the debate on fictional emotions becomes relevant for questioning the phenomenological method and vice versa, as I would like to sketch out in the following four points.

(1) What the aforementioned passage in *Ideas I* shows is that, in Husserl's view, phantasized emotions do not share the vicissitudes of actual emotions. More precisely, this means on the one hand, that they do not evaporate when one approaches them reflectively, that is: they can be maintained more stably for analysis. On the other hand, they can be experimentally produced at any time by simply imagining oneself to be angry, sad, etc. Both aspects obviously imply that, in contrast to actual emotions, phantasy emotions are better suited methodologically for a phenomenological analysis insofar as they are voluntarily accessible.

Now, this point is subject to some debate in the phenomenological literature on fictional emotions. According to Vendrell Ferran's (2010, 143) account, several of the proponents engaged in the early discussions of fictional emotions within the Brentano school, e.g. Witasek, held these emotions to be basically voluntary in nature. On the contrary, in his paper, Cavallaro sees the main point of difference between fictional emotions, which occur while experiencing literary, dramatic, or

filmic works of fiction, and merely phantasized emotions in the fact that the former are not voluntarily produced: “Surely, I can decide to imagine having such and such an emotion. But this is not the phenomenon we refer to by speaking of fictional emotions. Fictional emotions are not willingly imagined” (Cavallaro 2019, 78). This difference is surely important to note insofar as Cavallaro explicitly uses the concept of fictional emotions to designate indiscriminately both emotional responses to real works of fiction and emotions put forth with respect to phantasies.⁴ Both are thus interpreted – following Husserl’s account of emotions as non-objectifying act components that require objectifying albeit not positional acts as their foundation – as emotions elicited in response to quasi-positional representations. If this is indeed the case, however, one obviously needs to distinguish in the case of phantasized emotions between concrete emotional engagements with phantasized representations, triggered just as involuntarily as emotional responses to real events or works of fiction while living through vividly phantasized situations (which is the main topic for Cavallaro), on the one hand, and emptily phantasized emotions, that one can conjure up any time at will by simply thinking one is angry, sad, joyful, etc., on the other hand. The question is: which one of these would be best suited to serve as support for a phenomenological analysis of emotion?

While voluntary empty emotional phantasies seem to best satisfy Husserl’s aforementioned criteria of stability and experimental producibility, they nevertheless also have at least three obvious and insurmountable downsides. *Firstly*, conceiving emotional phantasies as fully voluntary acts poses the question of whether they indeed abide Husserl’s principle of foundation, according to which non-objectifying acts require objectifying acts as their fundament, or whether we can on the contrary, also imagine being angry or sad out of the blue without phantasizing an underlying behaviour or context, or likewise: whether we can imagine the same event or situation in entirely different emotional colourings, for instance being happy about something that would normally cause us grief. If this is not the case, then phantasy emotions are certainly not entirely voluntary, but themselves motivated by their objectifying fundament and thus similar to what we have before termed as genuine emotional responses. *Secondly*, the question is whether such imagined

⁴ See for instance Cavallaro (2019, 60): “When in this paper we speak of fictional emotions without further qualification, we refer to both seeing in and simple imagining as experiential basis of emotional responses.”

emotions still resemble actual emotions sufficiently in order to consider them phenomenologically as intuitive instantiations of one and the same essence. According to Vendrell Ferran (2010, 136), several early phenomenologists already took note of the hybrid nature of fictional emotions, situating them somewhere between actual emotions and mere representations. More importantly, from a methodological perspective, phantasized emotions of the aforementioned sort would have to be situated as such between mere signitive intentions and actual intuitions proper. While this is, of course, an argument brought forth already by Dieter Lohmar (2005, 67) against the employment of phantasy examples in eidetic variation, the point here is more specifically that such phantasy instantiations no longer actually 'give' the phenomenon in the flesh for analysis as they should, but only offer a very abstract schema of it. By considering these schemas as if they were the emotion itself, phenomenology *thirdly* tends to oversimplify, be it only because it isolates specific emotions that normally only come in complex entwinements with other emotions, or because it ascribes to them a mode of certainty, which is in real life most frequently contaminated with doubt, self-illusion, etc. The point here is that the complexities of our actual emotional life do not come into view by considering voluntarily phantasized empty emotions unless they are from the onset constructed such as to include them – which is to say that they only reflect our prior knowledge of what those emotions are and how they work, while as such they can only confirm our prejudices and clichés and do not yield any novel insight.

Considering these points, a phenomenological analysis of emotions is confronted with a methodological paradox: on the one hand, voluntarily produced empty phantasy emotions are ill-suited to serve as a basis for actual research into emotions; on the other hand, real-life emotions are themselves, as shown by Husserl with regard to anger, hardly available for phenomenological consideration. In contrast to both claims, it is worth considering the exemplary use of genuine emotional responses generated by vividly phantasized situations, since this clearly allows one to hold on to both the freedom of manipulating the phenomenon in phantasy and the need for a concrete intuitive basis. Such concrete phantasy emotions are, on the one hand, similar to fictional emotions as discussed in the aforementioned contributions in that they also entail genuine emotional responses to quasi-positional objectifications. They differ from the latter, however, insofar as, though not being voluntarily produced *per se*, they can nevertheless be provoked quasi-experimentally by wilfully delving into possible motives for anger, sadness, etc., that is,

by deliberately feeding emotional reactions in shaping the underlying objectifying act. If this were so – and this is the hypothesis I wish to entertain in the following – it would, *pace* Husserl, still leave the question open as to how the primacy of originariness is realizable in the case of emotions, but without losing the specificities of the phenomenological method. In the present case, this amounts to developing techniques for working with phantasy in such a way as to genuinely elicit specific emotional responses first hand in order to then be able to perform their eidetic variation.

(2) As is well known, such techniques have been developed extensively in the tradition of method acting, especially in the writings of Constantin Stanislavski.⁵ The reference is relevant in the present context insofar as both Summa and Vendrell Ferran explicitly refer to the experience of the actor as a guiding example for interpreting fictional emotions in general and particularly the receptive experience of readers of literary works, spectators of film and theatre, etc. Summa (2019, 17f.) draws on Sartre's account of how an actor playing Hamlet uses his own body and his emotional experiences as analogues for those of the imaginary character in "ir-realizing" or virtualizing himself in order to show that the same interplay between realizing and irrealizing consciousness characterizes fictional emotions in general, in the case of the spectator as well. Similarly, Vendrell Ferran (2010, 133) refers to Moritz Geiger's analyses of *Scheingefühle*, a term he applies to both the emotions of the actor on stage and those of the spectator or recipient in the theatre hall in order to prove that early discussions of fictional emotions included a far wider range of theoretical nuances than those tackled in recent analytic philosophy.

Now, if one indeed compares the emotional experience of the trained actor and that of the spectator or reader, it is obvious that, regardless of all points of intersection, what differentiates them is precisely the fact that the spectator gets emotionally engaged with the play or film passively in virtue of his participatory attendance, while the actor on the contrary voluntarily works at producing and maintaining a particular emotion. Thus, Stanislavski indeed developed a wide range of techniques and exercises intended to allow the actor to arrive at wilfully experiencing the inner life of his character. This involves both what Stanislavski (1989, 54f.) termed the 'magical if,' a psycho-technical exercise by which the actor vividly imagines himself

⁵ See for this especially his three most influential books translated into English: *Building a Character*, *An Actor Prepares*, and *Creating a Role* (Stanislavski 1981; 1989; 2001).

in the specific circumstances of the character in order to properly engage them emotionally, as well as physical exercises of improvisation and variation, wherein gestures and forms of object interaction are explored in order to help develop the corresponding emotional determination.

It is not necessary for the present context to go into the details of these techniques at length. Considering them here only serves a twofold purpose. On the one hand, it helps specify the aforementioned analogy between the complex construction of emotions put into play by trained actors and the participatory experience of spectators, who often only empathically reduplicate or react to the depicted affective states of given characters in the manner of 'feeling-with,' or 'feeling-for.' In other words: it brings into play a relevant distinction that should be kept in mind when considering fictional emotions. At the same time, however, Stanislavski's reflections also allow to draw a perhaps even more accurate parallel between the method actor's work with emotions and the phenomenologist's work in analytically exploring emotions 'from within.' Just as the actor employing Stanislavski's techniques, the phenomenologist is himself, according to our earlier consideration, bound to work his way into specific emotional states and complexes by intensively using his phantasy and whatever exercises or experiments are at hand. While the actor is interested foremost in obtaining the 'sincerity of feeling' for his character, thus rendering him credible in his concrete individuality by putting his own individuality as an actor into play, the phenomenologist is on the contrary supposed to arrive by similar procedures of variation at the general structures of such or such emotional experiences. In fact, the phenomenologist would surely not strive to consolidate a specific individual character and a given context, but would rather need to more flexibly go through a wider range of circumstances and individual characters in order to reveal the structural nuances of a specific emotional complex. Regardless of such substantial differences, the phenomenologist might nevertheless – in lack of his own tools for such an inquiry – find some relevant preliminary guidance in the highly nuanced and reflected methodological considerations on the subject matter put forth in the tradition of method acting. If this is indeed the case, one might at some point even consider if the traditional understanding of phenomenological research as performed by a passive 'transcendental spectator' does not perhaps essentially miss out on the more relevant points wherein his own exercises and activities more closely resemble the position of an actor than that of a spectator.

(3) The grounding concept in Stanislavski's methodological depiction of how actors should endow their characters with genuine emotions is that of "emotion memory" (ibid., 163f.). In his view, the greatest danger for an actor is that of only mechanically repeating but the exterior aspects of his part, his gestures, movements, and lines, without re-actualizing its inner intensity, that is, the emotions driving the character. The observation is important as it sheds light on why it is not sufficient for a phenomenologist either to simply replay the recollection of an emotional episode as a starting point for his analyses, insofar as the recollection does not revivify the emotion itself but only provides a review of its exterior circumstances. To this extent, Stanislavski makes a fundamental distinction between sheer sensation memory, which allows us to recall what we initially experienced through our senses, and emotion memory proper, which helps us recall previous emotions *per se*, such that a subject may well retain the mere emotional atmosphere or mood of a certain situation without recalling their specific context in its details (ibid., 168f.). However, according to Stanislavski, sensory information such as a certain smell, taste, or sound can nevertheless on occasion help awaken our emotion memory, too, and therefore such stimuli can be used programmatically to reactivate emotional content. While actors can be more or less naturally endowed with the capacity for emotion memory, what is essential is that they use their training to learn to master the techniques necessary for managing and expanding the scope of their emotion memory. Consequently, the entire technique primarily consists in a wide range of exercises intended both to identify and use exterior circumstances to bring out and maintain dormant emotions as well as to modify and combine emotional elements from different prior experiences to articulate precise emotional nuances for an emotionally truthful character.

For Stanislavski, it goes without saying that actors can only bestow their characters with a genuine inner life if they resort to their own emotional past. In other words: their 'fictional emotions' can only be genuine if they are built out of past actual emotional experiences. One finds similar thoughts expressed with regard to the spectator's fictional emotions as well. Vendrell Ferran (2010, 144) shows in her extended account of early phenomenological theories of fictional emotions that, according to Witasek's interpretation, the quasi-feelings of a spectator or reader are primarily grounded on a form of "emotional resonance;" such that he or she is emotionally moved by the dramatic or literary work of art only insofar as the latter re-activates the recollection of prior lived experiences of such emotions. Similar views

are also widely shared in contemporary discussions of emotions in film reception. One finds, for instance, the same thesis expressed bluntly in an interview with the late Iranian director Abbas Kiarostami (Khoshbakht 2014): “the spectator only uses the film as a pretext to cry about his own worries and concerns;” but also, in a more sophisticated version in Jacques Derrida’s account of the various forms of cinematic ‘haunting,’ among which he also includes the spectator’s projection of his own intimate emotional qualms on the screen as a key aspect of the cinema’s emotional intensity (de Baeque et al. 2015).

Whether this is indeed the case or not would certainly be a question for genetic phenomenology to decide. While Husserl himself devoted extended genetic inquiries into various doxic acts ranging all the way from judgments to the most basic forms of spatial and temporal perception, similar analyses could and should also be carried out with regard to emotions and their ‘inner historicity.’ One can fairly surmise that the emotional experiences of the full-grown adult similarly point back at the subject’s ‘emotional biography’ by evoking prior emotional experiences, just as it is the case in Husserl’s discussions of doxic typifications (Lohmar 2003; Ferencz-Flatz 2014). Just as our experiential apperceptions of novel objects are always guided and anticipated by our earlier experiences of similar objects, one might also speak of emotional typifications, apperceptions, and anticipations, which define how our current emotional responses draw from earlier lived encounters. And one can for sure, readily illustrate this by referring to both trivial examples like how a subject’s fear of dogs, for instance, most likely refers back to some early episode of intensive fright, as well as to more sophisticated accounts of the genesis of emotional complexes or emotional transfers as addressed in classical psychoanalysis (Freud 2000). If one could show that emotion memory plays an important role in shaping our emotional reactions in general, it would be easy to argue that this is all the more so in the case of phantasized emotions, by means of a genetic account of phantasy representations aiming at verifying the widespread belief according to which phantasies can only result from combinations, variations, and mutations of prior actual experiences.

While one may pursue such highly relevant genetic questions phenomenologically, my concern here is with a different issue. If one considers the methodological implications of ‘fictional emotions’ as discussed above, engaging the aforementioned questions automatically leads to a major difficulty, which could be spelled out by saying that the choice of the method put into play for phenomenologically tackling

these questions depends on theoretical claims that already presuppose an interpretation and an answer to the questions that method is supposed to settle. Depending on the role ascribed to emotion memory in shaping fictional emotions, for instance, a phenomenology of emotions should either work (à la Stanislavski) with rudiments of earlier experiences, that is, with recollections of actually experienced emotions, or else it is allowed (as Husserl seems to suggest at times) to freely phantasize emotional responses to situations – while the two not only allow for entirely different insights, but actually entail entirely different philosophical and theoretical statutes for their claims. In brief, the problem here is that a phenomenology of emotions already presupposes, by its very method, a theoretical clarification of fictional emotions, which it is itself first supposed to provide.

(4) For sure, in his aforementioned reflections, Stanislavski (1989, 175f.) does not entirely rule out the possibility of unpredicted emotional flashes during play-acting either. In his view, such outbursts, which indeed amount to “genuine emotional responses to fictional situations,” give spice to an actor’s performance by adding to its truth and sincerity. However, they are fundamentally unreliable in that they only occur involuntarily and depend on chance, whereas emotion memory offers an equally authentic, but far more dependable resource for actors. The point is relevant for our present discussion not only insofar as it helps settle the question of whether ‘fictional emotions’ are voluntary or involuntary, but also because it allows one to tackle the question of whether ‘fictional emotions’ are necessarily reproductive of emotional experiences primarily lived through in the original, or whether they also offer access to entirely new emotional content. While Stanislavski suggests the latter and exemplifies this by referring to the blood-thirst an actor might experience for the first time while play-acting a duel without ever having experienced such emotions in actuality, the question also comes up explicitly or implicitly in the aforementioned early phenomenological debates on ‘fictional emotions.’ According to Vendrell Ferran’s (2010, 148) account, in Ernst Schwarz’ view, aesthetic emotions do not rely solely on reproduction, but they can also unchain previously inaccessible emotional responses, and it is precisely on account of this that literature and art can be said to enrich the emotional life of the reader or spectator.

What stands for debate here is not simply the question of whether new emotions are generally accessible via fictional experience or not. One could, for instance, easily make a case for the former by drawing from early phenomenological

contributions to the vast discussions on how new emotions come about historically. Günther Anders (2010) has argued extensively already in the 1950s that the emotions of a given society are historically conditioned. His reflections were concerned more specifically with how the atomic bomb made necessary an expansion of our capacity for anguish. Later on, Anders (1986) further developed the topic, which became an important field for historians as well, in his book *Lieben gestern*, which tries to trace the fine-grained differences in the phenomenology of love between his generation of German migrants in America during the 1940s, after the first wave of sexual emancipation, and that of their parents. If, however, novel historical circumstances can lead to generating new emotional complexes, just as they can render specific forms of emotions obsolete, one could just as well argue that literature and art in general can imaginatively anticipate or crystalize such new situations so forcefully that they indeed elicit a corresponding new emotional response, not to speak of the fact that they simply allow the individual readers or spectators to participate in emotions they have not yet experienced originally.

This, of course, also has methodological consequences, insofar as one may well similarly ask whether or not the phenomenologist in his foray into the structures of emotional experience has access to new emotional material or not, and if so, by what means. To this extent, it is clear from the outset that a mere voluntary empty imaginative sketch could by no means offer the convincing intuitive instantiation of a new emotion. Instead, this would again only be possible by transposing oneself into a new phantasized situation so vividly that one genuinely elicits an emotional response that does not simply draw from earlier experiences. Stanislavski's reflections often touch on this issue as well, recommending various techniques intended to help the actor fully embody all the emotional nuances of his part in working with his phantasy. In his view, this is only possible insofar as the actor first imaginatively develops the situation of his character in all its minute details in order to render it particular and concrete, and then adds various incentive elements to his phantasy to trigger himself to actively respond to those imagined circumstances in his phantasy (Stanislavski 1989, 54f.).

While one could plausibly argue that the phenomenologist interested in imaginatively exploring the structures of emotional experience should follow a similar path, it is far more important in the present context to stress why the question of the imaginability of new emotions, which may seem remote and irrelevant, is, in fact, central from a methodological point of view for phenomenology. Insofar as the

entire gist of the phenomenological method of eidetic variation resides in the phenomenologist's ability to imaginatively produce a potentially infinite set of variants of the phenomenon under scrutiny, a phenomenological inquiry into emotional experience fundamentally rests upon the assumption that it ideally has access to a far broader range of possible emotions than the mere spectrum of the phenomenologist's actual past experiences. This is certainly not possible if fictional emotions are restricted solely to the scope of one's own emotion memory, which is the individual phenomenologist's emotional biography up to the present.

In his reflections, Stanislavski indeed confronts this problem by generally claiming that actors can only truly play themselves by working with the emotions they have actually experienced, while being fundamentally unable to play parts that appeal to feelings unavailable to them (ibid., 186f.). However, in his view, one can nevertheless also artificially expand one's spectrum of accessible emotions by, on the one hand, varying, combining, and mutating one's lived impressions, and by, on the other hand, acquiring further material indirectly from keen observation of one's surroundings as well as from "reminiscences, books, art, science, knowledge of all kinds, from journeys, museums and above all from communication with other human beings" (ibid., 192). Interestingly, in his aforementioned considerations on the methodological import of phantasy for phenomenological research in *Ideas I*, Husserl (1983, 160) arrives at remarkably similar observations. On his account, phenomenologists, too, need to exercise their phantasy abundantly and moreover

[...] to fertilize [their] phantasy by observations in originary intuition, which are as abundant and excellent as possible [...]. Extraordinary profit can be drawn from the offerings of history, in even more abundant measure from those of art, and especially from poetry, which are, to be sure imaginative but which, in the originality of their invention of forms, the abundance of their single features and the unbrokenness of their motivations, tower high above the products of our own phantasies and, in addition, when they are apprehended understandingly, become converted into perfectly clear phantasies with particular ease owing to the suggestive power exerted by artistic means of presentation.

The passage is relevant foremost in that it obviously confronts the phenomenologist with criteria that are not usually brought up in Husserl's technical discussions of the phenomenological method: abundance of detail, originality of invention, or

motivational consistency. While Husserl's methodological reflections most often strive to present phenomenological variation as an equally cogent equivalent to geometric variational procedures, the specific case of emotional experience and its methodological intricacies highlighted above seem to relegate phenomenological research in dangerous proximity to artistic experimentation. However, the association of phenomenology with art or play-acting, as well as its use of materials drawn from such diverse sources as history, everyday observation, and literature, poses less of a problem to the phenomenological method here.⁶ What is more problematic is the fact that with this the entire discussion of fictional emotions tends to get bogged down in a convoluted, circular, and self-contradictory argument, which could be summed up as follows: (1) Emotions stirred by literature or artworks are interpreted as 'fictional emotions' and thus determined as akin to phantasized emotions. (2) In phenomenology, phantasized emotions are in principle supposed to offer access to a far wider variety of emotions than actual experience in order for the procedure to qualify as more than sheer empirical induction. (3) However, phantasy by itself – with its limited possibilities of variation, modification, and combination – admittedly only offers access to little more than one's own biographically and psychologically confined emotion memory. (4) Thus, a possible remedy is seen in resorting not only to direct experience, but also to literary and artistic fictions, which are supposed to help expand and sophisticate the horizons of one's emotion memory. (5) However, the reception of fictional artworks poses problems of its own, since it is debatable whether or not the emotions they stir are themselves accessible without some form of 'emotional resonance,' which depends on emotion memory. (6) In a phenomenological perspective such an interpretation would, however, have to be ruled out from the onset as incompatible with the grounding presupposition of its own methodology. Thus, phenomenology ultimately proves to be incapable of deciding whether fictional emotions are similar or dissimilar to real emotions, insofar as it takes them as equivalents, just as it is incapable of deciding whether fictional emotions can or cannot expand our emotional horizon, since its entire methodology rests upon the assumption that they can.

⁶ This line of criticism could indeed easily be dismissed by pointing out that phenomenology does not aim to simply establish scientifically sound facts by indiscriminately drawing from such heterogeneous sources, but instead, it only aims to build up a 'repertoire' of emotions one can recall truthfully at any time so as to be able to enact them first hand in one's work as a phenomenologist – just as an actor does when employing Stanislavski's techniques.

4 Conclusion

The present paper focused on some methodological difficulties facing a phenomenology of emotions. To this extent, it was mainly aimed at stressing two points. On the one hand, I tried to show that, when basing such an inquiry on merely phantasmized examples as required in principle by the phenomenological method, such phantasies should nevertheless amount to more than just the verbal supposition that one is angry or sad. While Husserl is right to state that perceptions are far easier to experimentally produce in originariness than emotions, the same obviously applies for mere phantasies of perceptions when compared to phantasies of emotions, for one can at any time imagine perceiving something, whereas imagining a specific feeling by quasi-feeling it as such is not always possible. In fact, as I tried to show above, concretely reproducing the semblance of a feeling in phantasy requires a complex technique of luring out emotional reactions by drawing from one's own emotion memory and manipulating and reshaping emotional residues. If this is indeed the case, however, a phenomenology of emotions can find inspiration in the techniques developed in the tradition of method acting. While this tradition has faced consistent criticism in its own field – suffice to consider Brecht's early charges against Stanislavski, accusing him of fostering a counter-emancipatory form of theatrical reception⁷ –, it can nevertheless remain of interest for phenomenology as it provides techniques for creatively producing, reproducing, and varying emotions.

To be sure, such synthesized emotions as produced in the exercises of method acting are themselves prone to criticism. One might suspect that a methodologically reproduced anger is not equivalent to an actual outburst of anger, be it only because it lacks the spontaneous and un-reflected dynamics of the latter. Instead – and this was the second point I was trying to make here –, phenomenology has a general difficulty in establishing such differences because its very methodology rests upon assuming a structural identity between actual and fictional experience. This becomes obvious not only when considering its particular treatment of emotions proper, insofar as it resorts to mere phantasies in analyzing them as if they were the actual experience, but it would similarly come to view when considering

⁷ See, for instance, his two notes on Stanislavski from 1937/38: “Stanislavski (1)” and “Stanislavski (2)” (Brecht 2005).

a phenomenological approach aiming to tackle *fictional* emotions *per se*. For one might ask: if phenomenology holds the view that in order to analyze any type of lived experience, phantasy reproductions can serve as starting examples just as well as actual instances of that experience, does this apply for emotional phantasies as well? Or, to make the point more clearly and more generally: is it all the same for a phenomenology specifically aiming to clarify phantasized acts, whether it departs from actual samples of experimentally produced phantasies, or from mere phantasies of phantasies? Accepting such a consequence obviously leads to absurd consequences.⁸ But even without going into such subtle details, this point lends itself to precisely the same argument brought up by Husserl against evaporating emotions: “[it] is by no means insignificant, but may not be what ought to be studied” (Husserl 1983, 158).

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⁸ Husserl (1983, 255f.) would presumably respond in noting that phantasies *qua* modified lived experiences allow for a double intentionality: as a modification of perception, they can be regarded both as fictional exemplifications of the perception they feign and as real or actual exemplifications of mere phantasies. But this argument poses its own difficulties, for in Husserl’s view, phantasies are indeed in contrast to mere neutrality-modifications, which are reiterable in that one can at any time produce – say – the phantasy of a phantasy of a perception (ibid., 262f.). But, while it is indeed easy to verbally construct such a reiteration by constructing an example like “I imagine myself sitting at home imagining to travel someplace else” and so on, it is questionable whether or not one can really experience the phantasy of a phantasy in a distinctive quality, as Husserl seems to imply when referring to the far less problematic example of images of other images, as illustrated by the genre of gallery paintings (ibid., 247f.). But even if we could experience such higher-order phantasies distinctively as such, the problem would recur, since each level of such a highly complex act should then accordingly, in view of the phenomenological method, count as equal to all others, and ultimately to sheer perception modified by first-degree phantasy. And this is, of course, all the more questionable in the case of emotions where (a) the question of whether phantasized or fictional emotions really differ from actual emotional experiences is up for debate, and (b) it is unclear what it would even mean to have the phantasy of a phantasy of an emotion.

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Phantasy and Self-Awareness: Remarks on the Phenomenology of Mineness¹

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Abstract: According to the dominant standpoint in contemporary phenomenology, all our experiences are marked by a tacit, immediate, pre-reflective, and non-objectifying self-awareness. The goal of this paper is to problematize this thesis and to argue that experiences are *not* self-aware in one and the same sense. My argument consists of four major steps. First, the paper provides a detailed analysis of some crucial manuscripts collected in Hua 10 and especially Hua 23 and on this basis clarifies the sense in which every conscious act can be said to be self-aware. Second, it clarifies the fundamental structure of presentational and re-presentational consciousness. Third, it argues that these two types of consciousness are marked by fundamentally different kinds of self-awareness. Fourth, paying close attention to phantasy, the paper provides a detailed analysis of self-awareness characteristic of phantasy and shows the unique role that judgments and emotions play in phantasy. In my conclusion, I show why the recognition that phantasy is marked by a unique self-awareness is of great importance for the phenomenology of mineness.

Keywords: Husserl, Phenomenology, Experience, Phantasy, Mineness, Self-Awareness, Self-Consciousness.

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Each of us is several, is many, is a profusion of selves.
(Fernando Pessoa, *The Book of Disquiet*)

1 Introduction

In phenomenological circles it is common to distinguish between different types of self-consciousness and to claim that alongside a self-consciousness that is explicit, reflective, thematic and intentional, there is also an implicit, pre-reflective, non-thematic and non-intentional awareness that the subject has of its experiences while undergoing them. *Pre-reflective self-awareness* is the common term used to designate this kind of self-consciousness. When phenomenologists argue that all consciousness is self-conscious, they mean thereby that all conscious experiences are characterized by pre-reflective self-awareness. To justify this view, they commonly focus on the most basic forms of intentional experiences, viz., on presentations (*Gegenwärtigungen*), and demonstrate that these basic experiences are fundamentally and irreducibly self-aware. Such a strategy has served its purpose well: it is not easy to find a phenomenologist who would disagree with the proposed view (frankly, I do not know any). However, this common strategy also has its downside. It suggests that what is characteristic of the most basic experiences must be also common to more complex experiences. One thereby overlooks that *not all experiences are self-aware in one and the same way*. In what follows, I would like to argue that *just as there are different forms of self-consciousness, so also, there are different kinds of pre-reflective self-awareness*. To corroborate this view, I will focus on re-presentational consciousness and argue that phantasy, memory, and anticipation are characterized by a different kind of self-awareness than perceptual consciousness. I will build on Husserl's manuscripts that are collected in Hua 23.

2 Consciousness and Self-Consciousness

In Hua 23, Text No. 14, Husserl (2005, 369) writes: "Must we not say: Every act is consciousness of something. But there is also consciousness of every act. Every experience is 'sensed,' is immanently perceived (internal consciousness), although

naturally not posited, not meant.”² Here, Husserl suggests that each and every intentional act, besides being conscious of an object, is also and at the same time self-aware. The self-consciousness of which we speak here is neither thematic nor reflective. Rather, each act, conceived as lived-experience, is “sensed” (*empfunden*). It is neither posited nor intended as a meaning but only “inwardly perceived” (*immanent wahrgenommen*). In his subsequent revisions of this manuscript, Husserl placed the term “perception” in quotation marks and also added a marginal note: “Perceiving here does *not* signify being turned toward something and grasping it in an act of meaning!” (Ibid.)³ In short, each and every conscious act is characterized by a tacit, immediate, pre-reflective, and non-objectifying self-awareness.

Do we not face an instance of an endless regress here? The proposed view suggests that each experience is inwardly perceived. However, is this inward perception not itself an experience? And if it is, is the experience of inward perception not also inwardly perceived, and so on *ad infinitum*? To avoid an infinite regress, Husserl further notes: “Every ‘experience’ in the strict sense is internally perceived. The perceiving of the internal, however, is not an ‘experience’ in the same sense. It is not itself again internally perceived” (ibid.).⁴ This allows us to escape the endless regress. Still, what else could inward perceiving (*das innere Wahrnehmen*) be if not an experience (*ein Erlebnis*)? To this question, Husserl’s answer runs as follows: it is not an experience (*Erlebnis*), but experiencing (*Erleben*). What sense are we to make of this distinction between *Erlebnis* and *Erleben*, and can it be supported by any evidence?

Let us follow up on Husserl’s analysis: “Every experience [...] presents itself as an experience that endures, that flows away, and that changes in such and such a way” (ibid.).⁵ That is, experience (*Erlebnis*) has its own specific temporal unity: it follows and precedes other experiences. To this, Husserl further adds: “The present, now existing, enduring experience [...] is already a ‘unity of consciousness,’ of time

² “Müssen wir nicht sagen: Jeder Akt ist Bewusstsein von etwas. Aber jeder Akt ist auch bewusst. Jedes Erlebnis ist ‘empfunden’, ist immanent wahrgenommen (inneres Bewusstsein), wenn auch natürlich nicht gesetzt, gemeint” (Hua 23, 307).

³ “Wahrnehmen heisst hier *nicht* meinend Zugewendetsein und Erfassen!” (Hua 23, 307)

⁴ “Jedes ‘Erlebnis’ im prägnanten Sinn ist innerlich wahrgenommen. Aber das innere Wahrnehmen ist nicht im selben Sinn ein ‘Erlebnis’. Es ist nicht selbst wieder innerlich wahrgenommen” (Hua 23, 307).

⁵ “Jedes Erlebnis [...] gibt sich als ein dauerndes, dahinfließendes, sich so und so veränderndes” (Hua 23, 307).

consciousness” (ibid.).⁶ Thus, while experience (*Erlebnis*) is conceptualized as a temporally constituted unity, experiencing (*Erleben*) here is conceived as a time-constituting consciousness (*zeitkonstituierendes Bewusstsein*). This time-constituting consciousness (*Erleben*) entails its own retentions and protentions, through which the unity of all experiences (*Erlebnisse*) is constituted. “Behind this perceiving there does not stand another perceiving, as if this flow itself were again a unity in a flow” (ibid., 370).⁷

Thus, acts of judgment, of joy, or of external perception – these are Husserl’s own examples – are experiences (*Erlebnisse*), which are constituted as temporal unities in time-constituting consciousness. Their constitution relies on a temporal synthesis that joins impressions to a series of retentions and protentions. Without such a time-constituting synthesis, no unity of experience would be possible. As Husserl puts it in Appendix XXXV to Hua 23, “[e]very experience belonging to internal consciousness is given in this consciousness as an enduring being in ‘internal’ time” (ibid., 394).⁸

In this context, it is helpful to recall the view Husserl had defended in his *Lectures on Internal Time-Consciousness* from 1905 (Hua 10, 80f.; Husserl 1991, 84f.). In these lectures, Husserl presented his strongest argument to support his view that each and every act of consciousness is at the same time self-conscious (i.e., self-aware). I am referring to Husserl’s well-known distinction between transversal and longitudinal intentionality (*Querintentionalität* and *Längsintentionalität*). Transversal intentionality is what enables consciousness to intend an object in an enduring act. By contrast, longitudinal intentionality enables consciousness to constitute the endurance of the act. On the basis of longitudinal intentionality, consciousness, in each of its phases, remains aware of the retentional phases (i.e., the past phases of consciousness). Since longitudinal and transversal forms of intentionality characterize each conscious act and are inseparably bound to one another, we have all the reasons needed to maintain that every conscious act is characterized by a tacit self-awareness. In the absence of nonreflective self-awareness, consciousness would not be

⁶ “Nun, dieses gegenwärtige jetzige, dauernde Erlebnis ist schon [...] eine ‘Einheit des Bewusstseins,’ des Zeitbewusstseins” (Hua 23, 308).

⁷ “Hinter diesem Wahrnehmen steht aber nicht wieder ein Wahrnehmen, als ob dieser Fluss selbst wieder Einheit in einem Fluss wäre” (Hua 23, 308).

⁸ “Jedes Erlebnis des inneren Bewusstseins ist in diesem bewusst als dauerndes Sein in der ‘inneren’ Zeit” (Hua 23, 324).

capable of intending any object whatsoever. If it were divested of longitudinal intentionality, consciousness could only intend a succession of impressions, without being conscious of the succession itself. Such a consciousness would be a consciousness of mere senseless data, a consciousness without any sense of the past or future, a consciousness that is imprisoned in senseless presence. The constitution of any meaning would lie beyond its reach.

3 Erleben – Erlebnis – Gegenstand

What must the structure of consciousness be like if consciousness is to be capable of constituting meaning? It is common to answer this question by pointing one's finger at intentionality. This answer suggests that consciousness that constitutes meaning is fundamentally and irreducibly two-sided: (1) the intending of meaning and (2) the intended meaning are the two irreducible components that make up the essential structure of intentional consciousness. Such an account, however, remains deficient in that it overlooks pre-reflective self-awareness that is characteristic of all conscious acts. Not surprisingly, therefore, in Appendix XXXV (Hua 23, 320–328; Husserl 2005, 389f.), Husserl singles out not two, but three structural moments that characterize presentations: (1) the inner consciousness, the *experiencing* (*das innere Bewusstsein, das Erleben*), (2) the *experience* (*das Erlebnis*), and (3) the intentional *object* of the experience (*der intentionale Gegenstand des Erlebnisses*) (Hua 23, 326; Husserl 2005, 397).⁹

These three components make up the essential structure of perceptual acts, which Husserl also identifies as presentations (*Gegenwärtigungen*). Otherwise put, there are no perceptual acts, there are no presentations, which would not include these three components. We can see this by considering any example taken from

⁹ The first structural moment, which Husserl here calls *experiencing*, refers to the pre-reflective self-consciousness of which I spoke above. That is, all experiences are not only experiences of something, but also and at the same time they are lived through in a specific way, and in this sense, they are self-conscious (to live through an experience is to “sense” it, and in this sense to be conscious of it). The second structural moment of intentional acts, *experience*, refers to that component of the act, through which any intentional object is intended. Finally, thirdly, each and every intentional act intends a meaning. The third structural moment, which Husserl here identifies as the intentional *object* of experience, refers to this essential structural moment of intentionality.

perceptual experience. Suppose you are sitting in the Husserl Archive and reading Hua 23. The book itself, considered in terms of its givenness, refers to the third structural component, the intentional *object* (*der intentionale Gegenstand*). Yet the structure of the intentional act (or rather, the series of intentional acts) cannot be explained if one only considers the object intended in the act and ignores the act itself, or the experience itself, i.e., the experience of reading the book (*Erlebnis*). This experience has its own temporal extension: it is preceded, accompanied, interrupted and followed by other experiences. Moreover, this experience has different phenomenal qualities than other experiences (say, listening to John Coltrane, or preparing tiramisu for dessert). However, this temporal duration of experience, taken along with its phenomenal qualities, is itself a constitutive accomplishment – an achievement of time-constituting consciousness. Only a consciousness that is capable of binding its impressions to their retentions and protentions, as well as the retention of the retentions and the protention of the protentions, is capable of undergoing a temporally extended experience. In the terms that Husserl employs in the manuscripts under consideration, this means that each experience also entails a moment of experiencing (*Erleben*). We can consider any other example of perceptual experience and in each case, we will rediscover the same three structural moments. We face here an eidetic insight into the essential structure of perceptual experience.

4 The Structure of Re-Presentational Consciousness

One should stress that this threefold structure does *not* characterize all experiences, considered without any further qualifications. This point becomes especially evident in Texts No. 14 and 15 that are collected in Hua 23. In these texts, Husserl does not focus on presentations, but on re-presentations (*Vergegenwärtigungen*). Husserl (2005, 391) qualifies re-presentation as a reproductive mode of consciousness and he conceives of reproduction as an experience in which another experience is reproductively re-presented: “A reproduction is itself an experience in which

an experience is ‘represented’ reproductively.”¹⁰ We have just seen that, according to Husserl, all experience is accompanied with experiencing. With regard to reproductive modes of consciousness, this suggests that not only reproductive consciousness, conceived as an actual experience, but also the reproduced experience that is re-presented in a reproduction, is bound to experiencing. Does this not mean that reproductive experience is necessarily accompanied with a twofold self-consciousness?

According to Husserl, all of my experiences are of either one of two kinds: “Every experience is either a reproduction or not a reproduction” (ibid., 394).¹¹ Husserl qualifies presentations as *original* acts and conceives of re-presentations as their *modifications* (Hua 23, 323; Husserl 2005, 393). What exactly does it mean to claim that a re-presentation is a modification of a presentation?

We can begin answering this question by turning to a short text entitled “Definition of a Strict Concept of Reproduction” (*Definition eines prägnanten Begriffes von Reproduktion*, Hua 23, 310ff.; Husserl 2005, 372ff.). Here, Husserl argues that a re-presentation of an object goes hand-in-hand with a reproduction of an intentional act. That is, a reproduction (*Reproduktion*) of a perceptual act is inseparable from a re-presentation (*Vergegenwärtigung*) of the object given in this act.¹² When I remember, anticipate, or phantasize the sun rising over the horizon, I at the same time and necessarily reproduce the act of seeing it. Thus here, in this manuscript, reproduction is conceptualized as a twofold modification, which simultaneously affects the mode of givenness of the intentional object and the intentional act that intends this object.¹³

¹⁰ “Eine Reproduktion ist selbst ein Erlebnis, in dem ein Erlebnis reproductiv ‘vergegenwärtigt’ ist” (Hua 23, 321).

¹¹ “Jedes Erlebnis ist entweder Reproduktion oder Nicht-Reproduktion” (Hua 23, 324).

¹² Husserl presents here the following formula: $R(Wa) = Va$, which John Brough has translated into English using the following abbreviations: $Rep(Pe) = Re$. That is, a reproduction of the act of external perception equals the re-presentation of the object intended through the act of perception. To use Husserl’s own example: the reproduction of perceiving the house equals the re-presentation of the house as given in the act of perception.

¹³ Let us return to the earlier example to illustrate this point: suppose that Hua 23 is lying on your desk. It is one thing to see it, to flip through its pages, to place a cup of coffee on it, or to move the volume to the side of the desk. Yet, your experience is fundamentally different when you close your eyes and imagine seeing the book in front of you. When you imagine the book in front of you, you do not perceive the book, but reproduce the act of perceiving it; so also, when you imagine the book, you do not see it, but re-present it.

However, such an account cannot close off the matter. As Husserl himself explicitly admits in Appendix XXXV to Hua 23, re-presentational consciousness is made possible not by a twofold, but by a threefold modification of original experience (Hua 23, 326; Husserl 2005, 397). As we already saw above, there is no experience without the experiencing of experience through which the temporal unity of experience is constituted. With the distinction between *Erleben* and *Erlebnis* in mind, we can further say that re-presentational consciousness is accompanied by a modified inner self-consciousness. In Husserl's (2005, 397) own words: "Now if we shift to reproductive modification, we have [...] the reproductive modification of experiencing, the experiencing as it were, the reproducing in which one is conscious of the originary experiencing in the mode of the as it were."¹⁴ That is, the actual experiencing that accompanies presentations is modified into quasi-experiencing (*Erleben im Modus des Gleichsam*), in which one is conscious of the original experiencing as quasi-experiencing. Re-presentational consciousness also reproduces the inner consciousness that accompanied reproduced experience as quasi-experiencing (*gleichsam Erleben*).

We can now say that reproductive acts (re-presentations) are modifications of original acts (presentations) in a threefold sense. (1) While in original experience the object itself is given in flesh and blood, in reproductive experience the same object is given in the mode of the *as if*.¹⁵ (2) While original experience intends the object straightforwardly, reproductive experience intends it in the mode of the *as if*.¹⁶ (3) While original experience is given as a temporal unity that is constituted in original experiencing, reproduced experience is given as a temporal unity that is constituted in a reproduced act of experiencing (i.e., remembered, anticipated, or phantasized experiencing).

¹⁴ "Gehen wir nun zur reproduktiven Modifikation über, so haben wir [...] die reproduktive Modifikation des Erlebens, das gleichsam Erleben, als Reproduzieren, in welchem das originäre *Erleben* im Modus des Gleichsam bewusst ist" (Hua 23, 326).

¹⁵ While in the case of perception, Hua 23 itself appears in front of my eyes, in the case of memory, anticipation, or phantasy, Hua 23 appears in the mode of the *as if*: it is quasi-given, given in the mode of the *as if*.

¹⁶ Thus, when it comes to perceptual experience, I actually see Hua 23 in front of me. By contrast, when it comes to reproductive forms of consciousness, I "see" the object, although in truth I do not see it, i.e., I see it in the mode of the *as if*.

Thus, the three structural components that make up the essential structure of presentational consciousness reappear in re-presentational consciousness in a modified form. To this we still need to add another crucial remark. As Husserl (2005, 281) puts it in Text No. 5 in Hua 23, “but phantasy consciousness, like memorial consciousness, etc., is nevertheless itself a present consciousness, itself a sensation; it can be internally perceived, can be arranged in time, can be characterized as experienced in the now, and so on.”¹⁷ This rich sentence entails a variety of claims. I wish to emphasize only one crucial point: when I have a phantasy, I do not phantasize a phantasy; so also, when I have a recollection, I do not remember a recollection. Rather, I *actually* live through these experiences.¹⁸ Re-presentational consciousness is an actual consciousness (*ein gegenwärtiges Bewusstsein*). More precisely, representational consciousness is a presentational consciousness, which reproduces another consciousness. This does not mean, however, that the represented consciousness is the object of a new presentational consciousness, for as Husserl points out, only through a reflection *in* re-presentations does the past consciousness become a proper thematic object of a present intention. Representational consciousness is pre-reflectively directed towards the same object as the represented consciousness, yet in contrast to represented consciousness only the representational consciousness intentionally includes the represented consciousness in its own intentional directedness.

It thereby becomes understandable why Husserl would write: “I exist in phantasy as *quasi*-Ego, in memory as remembered Ego that *quasi*-perceives, *quasi*-judges, and so on” (ibid., 414).¹⁹ We can take this to mean that when the actual ego lives through

¹⁷ “Aber das Phantasiebewusstsein wie das Erinnerungsbewusstsein etc. ist doch selbst ein gegenwärtiges Bewusstsein, ist doch selbst Empfindung, kann innerlich wahrgenommen, kann zeitlich eingeordnet, als im Jetzt erlebt bezeichnet werden etc.” (Hua 23, 232). Husserl emphasizes this point repeatedly: “Die Reproduktion selbst ist ja auch ein ‘Erlebnis’, ein Jetzt, ein impressiv Bewusstes, und damit ist ‘verschmolzen’ der Strahl der Wirklichkeitscharakterisierung, der hindurchgeht.” (Hua 23, 335) “Reproduktion selbst ist ein wirkliches Erlebnis, in welchem, ein nichtwirkliches, eben ein reproduziertes, reproduziert ist.” (Hua 23, 347) So also: “Die Reproduktion selbst ist ein aktuelles Erlebnis” (Hua 23, 359).

¹⁸ Of course, I can have a phantasy in a phantasy, but this is an altogether different matter, which is interesting in its own right, but is not characteristic of phantasy in general.

¹⁹ “In der Phantasie bin ich als *quasi*-Ich, in der Erinnerung als das erinnerte Ich, das *quasi* wahrnimmt, *quasi* urteilt etc.” (Hua 23, 342).

a phantasy, it projects a phantasy ego as a non-actual subject of experience and to a large degree identifies itself with this phantasy ego: it sees the world “through its eyes,” touches the phantasy objects with its phantasized body, etc. Nonetheless, we face here a one-sided observation. While identifying itself with its own virtual double, the phantasizing ego also and simultaneously remains self-aware, i.e., it actually lives through a phantasy and is self-aware of living through it. It thereby becomes understandable why Husserl would also maintain that “now the phantasizing itself is an actual experience. *I am there too as actual Ego*” (ibid., 412).²⁰

At this point, we can say that in contrast to presentational consciousness, re-presentational consciousness entails four essential components: (1) the inner consciousness, or experiencing, characteristic of the reproductive consciousness (consciousness of a memory, anticipation, or phantasy); (2) the inner consciousness, or experiencing, characteristic of the reproduced (remembered, anticipated, or phantasized) consciousness; (3) the experience that is given as a temporal unity that is simultaneously intended both in the reproductive and the reproduced time-constituting consciousness; and (4) the intentional object that is correlated with this experience.

I earlier argued that all consciousness is characterized by tacit, pre-reflective self-awareness. At this point, I would like to provide this claim with a crucial, albeit also counter-intuitive qualification: while presentational consciousness is self-aware, re-presentational consciousness is characterized by a double self-awareness. I can only remember, anticipate, or phantasize anything whatsoever if my consciousness of recollection, anticipation, or phantasy temporalizes its own experience, i.e., only if this experience is a temporally extended unity whose constitution relies on my present self-consciousness. Yet, at the same time, the remembered, anticipated, or phantasized experience is a temporal unity that is correlated with the remembered, anticipated, or phantasized consciousness. We thus face here an experience that is marked by a double self-awareness: in the case of recollection, I am conscious of the experience in question from the perspective of the present and the past ego; in the case of anticipation, I am conscious of the experience from the perspective of the present and the projected future ego; in the case of phantasy, I am conscious of the experience from the perspective of the actual ego and the phantasy ego.

²⁰ “Das Phantasieren [ist] selbst ein wirkliches Erlebnis, *ich bin mit dabei als aktuelles Ich*” (Hua 23, 339).

One would be right to observe that in all these cases, only the actual ego has actual self-awareness. Nonetheless, the actual ego can reproduce its own experiences only if it is also capable of constituting the past, future, or phantasy ego as a non-actual subject of experience that is self-aware of the reproduced experience. There is no memory without the projection of the past ego that has experienced what one now remembers, just as there is no anticipation without the projection of the future ego that will presumably experience what one now anticipates. So also, there is no phantasy without the projection of a phantasy ego that supposedly has the experience in question. Reproduction necessarily entails both actual and non-actual self-awareness.²¹ To put this yet differently, reproductive consciousness is *multi-layered*: in direct, actual, experience there is entailed a reproduction of a different experience.

At this point I have established and clarified two claims: (1) all presentations are self-aware; (2) all re-presentations are marked by a double self-awareness. The second claim is more controversial than the first one, (a) because only the first claim has been explicitly endorsed by Husserl in his writings, and (b) because only the first claim has been extensively addressed in the literature. These reasons, however, make the second claim not only more polemical but also more important than the first one.

5 Phantasy and Self-Awareness

Having clarified the fundamental structural difference between presentational and re-presentational consciousness, I wish to focus on phantasy exclusively in what follows. Let me begin with three claims that are grounded in my foregoing analysis. First, pure phantasy, alongside recollection and anticipation, is a unique intuitive reproduction, whose essential characteristic concerns its non-positional nature. While recollection posits objects as having existed in the past, and while anticipation posits objects as existing in the future, pure phantasy does not posit objects

²¹ One could say that there are two reasons for this: first, because re-presentational consciousness is a modification of a presentational consciousness, which means that it entails a modified self-consciousness (“phantasy is a modification through and through”), and secondly because re-presentational consciousness is itself a mode of presentational consciousness, which means that it is correlated with my present self-consciousness.

as existing in any temporal modality: it intends objects as quasi-existing.²² Second, reproduction is a two-sided modification of original experience: it modifies the manner in which the intentional object is given (the object is not presented, but re-presented) as well as modifies the way in which an experience is lived through (a new, original, reproductive experience reproduces another experience). In the case of phantasy, this means that the intentional object is phantasized, while another merely possible experience is reproduced. Third, besides such a two-sided modification, reproduction also brings about a doubled self-consciousness, which fundamentally relies on the distinction between *Erleben* and *Erlebnis*. I live through a reproduced experience in a twofold sense: from the perspective of the actual, present consciousness and from the perspective of the non-actual reproduced consciousness.

It thereby becomes understandable why Husserl would maintain that when it comes to reproduction, “we always have something double: the impressional (namely, the sympathetic) and the reproduced turning toward or position taking. Attention, too, is double in this sense: actual [attention] – reproduced [attention]” (ibid., 445).²³ Yet, how exactly are we to understand the difference between these perspectives? We can characterize the perspective of the non-actual ego in terms of active engagement in the phantasy world. The phantasy ego perceives the phantasy objects, it is involved in phantasized activities, it lives through phantasized feelings and thinks phantasized thoughts. Suppose I phantasize that I am a tuk-tuk driver in Siem Reap. In such a phantasy, my phantasy ego ‘sees’ the faces of the privileged tourists, ‘drives’ them to Angkor Wat, ‘feels’ the warmth of the blazing sun, ‘smells’

²² Admittedly, phantasy can intend its own objects within a temporal index that it itself creates. I can thus phantasize a past, present, or future event. This phantasized temporal modality, however, is fundamentally cut off from the temporal horizon within which all objects our positional experiences are situated. To avoid unnecessary ambiguity, we can distinguish between first-order and second-order objects of experience: while first-order objects are given in positional experiences (perception, recollection, anticipation), second-order objects are intended in neutralized experiences (phantasy). One has to admit that second-order objects of experience can also be given in their own temporal modality: they can lie in the quasi-past, quasi-present, or quasi-future. Nonetheless – and this is what I wish to stress in the present context – *pure phantasy cannot intend objects as existing in the first-order temporal horizon*.

²³ “[...] wir [haben] hierbei immer ein Doppeltes: die impressive und die reproduzierte Zuwendung. Auch die Aufmerksamkeit ist in diesem Sinn doppelt, aktuell – reproduziert” (Hua 23, 373).

the sandy roads, etc. In short, the phantasy ego is engaged in phantasy activities. This concerns not only the phantasies in which the ego makes an appearance, appears on the scene, so to speak. I can also phantasize the temples in Angkor Wat without my own presence in the phantasy: it is just the façade of the temple that ‘appears’ to me. Yet, in such a case, too, the phantasy ego is fully involved, for it is not the actual ego, who is sitting in the Husserl Archive but the phantasy ego who ‘sees’ the face of the temple. In all cases, the role of the phantasy ego can be characterized in terms of active engagements in the phantasy world.

What about the other perspective – the perspective of the actual ego? This perspective can take on various forms, and for this reason it is not easy to provide a general characterization of it. Relying on a general distinction between those phantasies that attract our attention and those that leave us indifferent, we can single out two limiting cases. On the one hand, there are those phantasies that only mildly affect the actual ego. With these phantasies in mind, Husserl writes: “As actual Ego, I merely comport myself contemplatively; as phantasy Ego, I perceive, I judge, and so on” (ibid., 424).²⁴ In such instances, the perspective of the actual ego is mainly *contemplative*. Phantasies unfold at an inner distance from the ego: the actual ego does not live through them but only observes them. On the other hand, there are those phantasies that absorb our actual attention and force us to forget all our other concerns. Thus, in Hua 23, Husserl often speaks of “living in phantasy,” or “living in one’s own memories.” These expressions suggest a different kind of involvement of the actual ego in the phantasy world. What Husserl says about memory in the following passage can also be said about phantasy:

Living in memory, I “know” nothing of the actual world and of my actual Ego; that is to say, of the actual world of the present. I am aware only of what is remembered, of what appears to me there, and of its most immediate temporal surroundings. (Ibid.)²⁵

²⁴ “Als wirkliches Ich verhalte ich mich bloss betrachtend, als Phantasie-Ich nehme ich wahr, urteile ich, etc.” (Hua 23, 351).

²⁵ “In der Erinnerung lebend ‘weiss’ ich nichts von der wirklichen Welt und von meinem wirklichen Ich, nämlich von der aktuellen Gegenwartswelt. Ich weiss nur von dem Erinnerten, von dem, was mir da erscheint, und seiner nächsten Zeitumgebung” (Hua 23, 325).

I will come back to this point below. At the moment, I only wish to stress that when the actual ego is absorbed in its own phantasies, its relation to the fantasy ego is marked by deep sympathy. The actual ego does not actually live through the presumed experiences of the fantasy ego, it only observes the fantasy ego's activities. If the fantasy ego is involved in an accident, no real blood runs out of the actual ego's veins. Rather, the phantasized accident is a scene the actual ego observes. Nonetheless, when it comes to living in fantasy (*in der Phantasie lebend ...*), the actual ego does not observe the fantasy scenes with indifference. The joy that the fantasy ego lives through is also pleasing to the actual ego, just as the suffering of the fantasy ego is also distressing to the actual ego. What we face here is neither the identity of the feeling, nor even the identity of the subject that lives through these feelings. Still, when living in its fantasy, as it observes the activities of the fantasy ego, the actual ego sympathizes with the fantasy ego.

In principle, the actual ego's relation to the fantasy ego is not much different from the relation that the actual ego establishes with the protagonist in a novel or a film. In some instances, we can observe the protagonist quite indifferently. In other instances, we can identify ourselves with the protagonist – 'see' the world with his or her eyes, 'engage' in his or her activities. We rediscover the same duplicity in fantasy. In some instances, the fantasy ego is 'the *other* within,' whose activities unfold at a distance from the actual ego; in other instances, the actual ego identifies itself with the fantasy ego, it immerses itself in the scene and forgets the inner distance that separates the two.

In light of these remarks, we can characterize the perspective of the fantasy ego in terms of active engagement and the perspective of the actual ego in terms of observation. In some cases, this observation can take the form of distant and unconcerned contemplation; in other cases, it can take the form of captivated attention. The two forms of self-awareness that are characteristic of fantasy experience can therefore be further qualified as the awareness of distant observation and the awareness of being absorbed in the scene.

6 Judgments and Emotions in Fantasy

In Text No. 15 of Hua 23, this largely operative distinction between the two forms of self-awareness, understood as two perspectives on phantasized objectivities, becomes

significant in Husserl's analysis of different forms of attention (*Aufmerksamkeit*) and position-taking (*Stellungnahme*). Husserl writes:

And what is remarkable here is *that actual attention can go together with phantasied attention* and that an *actual* position taking can be directed in actual attention toward the phantasied objectivity, can coincide with the phantasy position taking or can also disagree with it, and so on. These are fundamental facts. (Ibid., 422)²⁶

The distinctions Husserl draws here between actual and phantasized attention and the actual and phantasized position-taking relies on the more fundamental difference between the two forms of self-awareness discussed above. To illustrate the importance of these distinctions, Husserl introduces a mathematical example. Suppose, as a phantasy ego I express a phantasy judgment: $5 \times 5 = 25$. Taking an actual position towards this phantasy judgment, i.e., directing actual attention towards this phantasized objectivity, I can also pronounce an actual judgment in which I agree with the phantasized one. In such a case, my actual judgment coincides with the phantasized one. Yet suppose that, as a phantasy ego, I judge that $2 \times 2 = 5$; as an actual ego, I can take position against such a judgment. In such a case, as it is directed at the same phantasized objectivity (the content of the pronounced judgment), the actual position-taking contradicts the phantasized one. As Husserl further adds, just as the actual ego can take on a counter-position, it also can suppress it (Hua 23, 351; Husserl 2005, 423).

These distinctions, taken together with the more fundamental distinction between the two forms of self-awareness that are essential to phantasy experience enable us to address the following question:

[...] specialized works on the subject [of phantasy and image consciousness] have neglected one of the problems mentioned by Husserl. This problem concerns an important feature difficult to avoid in our everyday phantasy ex-

²⁶ "Und da ist es das Merkwürdige, dass die wirkliche Aufmerksamkeit zusammengehen kann mit der phantasierten und dass eine wirkliche Stellungnahme sich in wirklicher Aufmerksamkeit richten kann auf das phantasierte Gegenständliche, sich decken kann mit der Phantasiestellungnahme oder auch gegen sie stimmen kann etc. Das sind fundamentale Tatsachen" (Hua 23, 350).

periences, namely, the relation between the fictional object and the emotions of the subject actually experiencing it. For instance, reading about the fate of Anna Karenina we have sympathy for her, despite knowing she is a fictional character. Or watching a horror movie, we are afraid of the dreadful events depicted on the screen. Also, looking at a painted landscape of Caspar David Friedrich, we might feel anguish and despair. What is the nature of such emotional responses to phantasied objects? Are emotions indifferent to the actual existence of that which they relate to? How do these fictional emotions relate to their real counterparts?²⁷

Since in the present context I am mainly concerned with pure phantasy, rather than different forms of image consciousness here listed, let me modify these examples: let us think not of reading about the fate of Anna Karenina but of phantasizing about her fate; let us think not of watching a horror movie but of phantasizing a horrifying scenario; let us think not of seeing Caspar David Friedrich's paintings but of phantasizing landscapes in the morning mists or the night skies, filled with barren trees or Gothic ruins. Such phantasies can provoke an emotional reaction not only on the part of the phantasy ego but also on the part of the actual ego. How do these fictional emotions relate to their real counterparts, that is, to our actual emotional reactions?

Let us recall Husserl's mathematical examples that concern different kinds of judgment "actual" and "phantasized." With these examples in mind, let us draw analogous distinctions between the emotional reactions of the phantasy ego and the emotional reactions of the actual ego. Just as in the case of judgments, so also in the case of emotions, we face a duplicity that allows for various forms of interrelation: in some cases, these reactions can overlap, in other cases they can be different, in yet other cases they can even oppose each other. When phantasizing a horror scene – say, that of being forced to commit suicide – not only my phantasy ego but my actual ego can be in despair. However, it can also happen that while my phantasy ego is in despair, the actual ego observes the phantasy scenario either with mere curiosity

²⁷ This essay was originally presented at the international conference "Husserl's Phenomenology of Phantasy and Emotions," which was organized by Thiemo Breyer, Marco Cavallaro, and Rodrigo Sandoval, and took place on July 18, 2019 at the University of Cologne. The indented passage was written by the organizers of the conference and included in the conference description.

or with detached indifference. Furthermore, the phantasy ego can be emotionally undisturbed, while the actual ego might be filled with fear and desperation. Suppose I phantasize that an airplane I am traveling in is just about to crash: my phantasy ego does not know anything about its own fate. By contrast, the actual ego, as it spins this phantasy tale, finds itself at an inner distance, sees what the phantasy ego does not see and reacts emotionally to the scene. To return to the earlier analogy between engaging in the phantasy on the one hand, and reading a novel or watching a movie on the other hand, one can supplement the foregoing remarks with the following: just as the actual ego can identify itself with the protagonist, it can also take on the expressed position either of the author or of the movie director: it can view the fate of the phantasy ego from a distance, it can know more than the phantasy ego knows.

Yet it is not just that emotional reactions of the actual and phantasy ego can be different; they can also be opposed to each other. When phantasizing a perverse scene, the phantasy ego can be overcome by desire, while the actual ego can be filled with disgust; and *vice versa*, the phantasy ego can experience disgust, while the actual ego can be filled with desire. Thus, we not only need to admit that phantasy scenes can provoke both actual and non-actual emotional responses but we must also distinguish between these responses: in some cases, they can coincide, in other cases they can differ from each other, yet in other circumstances they can run counter each other.

7 Phantasy and Self-Forgetfulness

Let us ask: can the actual ego be emotionally indifferent to its own phantasies? It can, claims Husserl, yet he also adds that such an occurrence would mean that the phantasy in question is not truly carried out, that it remains lifeless. “A phantasy can emerge, but ‘lifelessly,’ without my ‘carrying it out’” (Husserl 2005, 412).²⁸ Husserl contrasts such a lifeless emergence of a phantasy with those occasions in which the ego “lives in phantasy.” He suggests that living in a phantasy brings with it a peculiar self-forgetfulness: “When I phantasy in a living way, when I am completely

²⁸ “Eine Phantasie kann auftauchen, aber ‘unlebendig,’ ohne dass ich sie ‘vollziehe’” (Hua 23, 340).

absorbed in phantasy, I am ‘self-forgetful’” (ibid.).²⁹ Husserl further qualifies this self-forgetfulness in terms of the actual ego’s *becoming* the phantasy ego (*Ich bin dann das Phantasie-Ich*) and he further maintains that under such circumstances, the ego’s life consists of pure reproductions. The more the actual ego identifies itself with the phantasy ego, the deeper it immerses itself in the phantasy world and the nearer it brings what is phantasized. Here, we come across a challenge to the view I have been defending: does such a phenomenological description of the immersion of the actual ego into the phantasy world not draw into question my earlier claim that phantasy experience necessarily entails a twofold self-awareness? If the actual ego can *become* the phantasy ego, what reasons do we have left to speak of such a duplicity? What else could self-forgetfulness mean if not the erasure of actual self-awareness and its replacement with non-actual self-awareness?

Yet the claim that the actual ego *becomes* the phantasy ego should not be understood as a kind of Kafkaesque metamorphosis. Rather, it should be understood as the accomplishment of a peculiar synthesis, which Husserl identifies as *coinciding* (*Deckung*). In Husserl’s own words,

[...] belief and the reproduction of belief, judgment and the reproduction of judgment, wish and the reproduction of the wish coincide in such a way that the phantasied substrate belongs identically to both of the position-taking characteristics, the originary and the reproductive. (Ibid., 415)³⁰

That is, to claim that “the I is the phantasy I” is to suggest that when it is involved in the phantasy world, the actual ego’s beliefs, judgments, wishes, etc. *coincide* with those of the phantasy ego. Yet clearly – and this is the point I wish to emphasize – coincidence as such presupposes a duality and relies on the split between actual and non-actual self-awareness.

²⁹ “Gerade wenn ich lebendig phantasiere, ganz in der Phantasie aufgehe, bin ich ‘selbstvergessen’” (Hua 23, 340).

³⁰ “Glaube und Glaubensreproduktion, Urteil und Urteilsreproduktion, Wunsch und Wunschreproduktion *decken* sich derart, dass das phantasierte Substrat beiden Stellungnahme-Charakteren, der originären und reproduktiven, identisch zugehört” (Hua 23, 343).

8 Concluding Remarks: The Mineness of Experience

I would like to conclude with some remarks on what the foregoing analysis of a split self-awareness means for the phenomenology of mineness. According to a dominant standpoint in contemporary phenomenology pre-reflective self-awareness provides us with the phenomenological evidence to speak not only of the mineness of experience but also of the minimal, or the core self, conceived as the phenomenological basis of personhood. As Dan Zahavi puts it, it is “possible to identify this pre-reflective sense of *mineness* with a minimal, or core, sense of self ... it is this first-personal givenness that constitutes the *mineness* or *ipseity* of experience” (Zahavi 2005, 125). In a similar vein, Shaun Gallagher contends that “even if all of the unessential features of self are stripped away, we still have an intuition that there is a basic, immediate, or primitive ‘something’ that we are willing to call a self” (Gallagher 2000, 15). He further identifies this primitive “something” as the “minimal” self. We face here a complex argument, yet I believe that it can be reconstructed in six major steps. (1) It is not possible to be conscious of an object without also, and simultaneously, being aware of experiencing it. This is the sense in which consciousness is always and necessarily self-aware. (2) Experiences do not float in the air, i.e., they are never given anonymously. They can only be given as mine. What distinguishes my own experiences from those of everyone else is the phenomenological fact that they are given to me as *mine*. (3) However, if experiences are given as mine, they are also necessarily given to some kind of a self, for according to the proponents of the minimal-self doctrine it is meaningless to speak of mineness in the absence of selfhood.³¹ (4) The self of which we speak here need not refer to a human person, since many other beings could also have experiences that are marked by *mineness*. (5) To make sense of this dimension of *mineness*, it becomes important to devise a minimal conception of the self in the absence of which experience as such would not be possible. (6) Yet what is this minimal self? We can identify it as

³¹ Admittedly, not everyone holds this view. For an alternative position, see especially Slors and Jongepier, (2014) and Albahari (2011).

the core self, add that it entails a sense of ownership and a sense of agency,³² and further maintain that any conception of selfhood must include this core dimension. This means: the sense of *mineness* inscribed in each and every experience forms the foundation of personhood.³³

This argument relies exclusively on that conception of self-awareness which we find inscribed in perceptual consciousness. In the copious literature on self-awareness, we do not come across any analysis of the different modes of self-awareness that I addressed. Rather, when one argues that we need to distinguish between different forms of self-awareness, one means thereby that one needs to establish a distinction between reflective and pre-reflective self-awareness (see Gallagher 2002, 239). Are the different forms of pre-reflective self-awareness characteristic of re-presentational consciousness of any importance for the phenomenological reflections on self-awareness and selfhood? I believe they are, and with this in mind, I would like to conclude by emphasizing four points.

(1) If pre-reflective self-awareness is the awareness of the minimal self, we have to admit that our experience provides us with the awareness of a multiplicity of selves. This multiplicity does not only concern the succession of minimal selves in the flow of experience (see Gallagher 2000 and especially Strawson 2009) but also the realization that in some instances we can be *simultaneously* aware of more than one

³² By the sense of agency, we are to understand the sense that I am the one who is generating an action. By contrast, the sense of ownership refers to the sense that I am the one undergoing an experience. See in this regard Gallagher (2000, 15).

³³ Admittedly, the concept of the minimal, or the core, self is puzzling on various counts. Regarding its temporal nature, we can ask: does this concept refer to the centering point of each conscious experience taken in isolation from other experiences? Or is the minimal self an already temporally extended and numerically singular ego, conceived as the same subject of all of its experiences? There is no consensus on this issue in the literature (see Gallagher 2000, Strawson 2009 and Zahavi 2005 for significantly different views). Another puzzling issue concerns the intersubjective status of the minimal self. To what degree, if at all, is the minimal self a social concept? Dan Zahavi (2005), Hans Bernhard Schmid (2014), and Matthew Ratcliffe (2017) present us with significantly different standpoints on this issue. Yet another puzzling issue concerns embodiment. Galen Strawson maintains that the concept of the minimal self is not to be confused with the concept of the human being in that the former is a purely mental concept, while the latter is fundamentally embodied. By contrast, Giovanna Colombetti (2011) defends a Jamesian standpoint, which is based on the view that self-awareness is fundamentally embodied. In the present context, these ongoing controversies that concern the temporal, intersubjective and embodied status of the minimal self cannot be addressed in any further detail.

minimal self. This happens necessarily, when the subject of experience is engaged in memories, anticipations, or phantasies. Being self-aware in more than one sense, the subject of experience is non-intentionally, non-thematically, and pre-reflectively aware of more than one minimal self.

(2) If it is indeed true that the subject of experience can be aware of more than one minimal self, then we have to abandon the view that the minimal self necessarily forms the core of actual selfhood. Not all minimal selves perform such a founding function. In this regard, all forms of re-presentational consciousness are problematic. However, phantasy consciousness is especially troubling. The split self-awareness characteristic of phantasy consciousness entails a sense of mineness that does not refer to the actual self but to the phantasy ego. It does not form the foundation of the actual self; it does not even refer to the actual self in any of its temporal modalities. Paradoxically, here we discover a sense in which we can speak of *mineness that is not mine*. Think of the phantasy that you are a tuk-tuk driver. Such an experience, like all experiences, entails a sense of mineness. However, this mineness does not refer to your actual ego; for better or worse, you are not a tuk-tuk driver.

All representational consciousness includes this dimension, although admittedly, not in the same sense. On the one hand, a minimal self inscribed in a memory or an anticipation is different from the minimal self characteristic of the present experience. On the other hand, a synthesis of coincidence binds these minimal selves to each other and lays the ground for personal identity. The structure of phantasy consciousness is different. Like memory and anticipation, phantasy also entails at least two minimal selves. However, in contrast to memory and anticipation, the synthesis of coincidence need not bind the minimal selves inscribed in phantasy experience to each other. We can thus say that positing and non-positing re-presentations entail a different kind of multiplicity of the minimal selves.

(3) Mineness that is not truly mine can never exist independently. It must be founded in re-presentational consciousness, which in its own turn entails a more rudimentary sense of mineness. This fundamental or rudimentary sense refers to a different kind of minimal self – the core self that forms the phenomenological foundation of actual personhood. All other minimal selves, which are cut off from the actual self, presuppose such a more fundamental minimal self as their basis. Only the minimal self that performs such a founding role can serve as a foundation of other minimal selves. In short, I can have a sense of mineness that is not truly mine if, and only if, this sense is founded in mineness that is truly mine.

(4) Nonetheless, under some circumstances consciousness can suppress the foundational sense of mineness of which we just spoke. In Husserl's words, the ego can be self-forgetful. In general, the greater the vitality (*Lebendigkeit*) of re-presentational consciousness, the deeper the suppression in question. This suppression results in the self-identification of the actual ego with the phantasy ego, i.e., it leads to the ego's absorption in a sense of mineness that is not truly mine. However, *suppression is not elimination*. The mineness that forms the foundation of all re-presentations is still there, it is overpowered, yet not relinquished, it is still experienced in the background and it still establishes the necessary condition of all other forms of mineness that consciousness can live through.

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The Rise and Fall of Image-Consciousness in Light of Husserl's Phenomenology of Phantasy

AZUL TAMINA KATZ

Abstract: Phantasy and imagination are frequently undistinguished in the history of philosophy. The same may be said of the phenomenological tradition, where they are either taken as synonyms or taken separately but as kinds of a more generic and single imaginative consciousness (the main difference would consist in their dependence on or independence of a physical support). But a closer look at Husserl's analysis of these phenomena reveals that he did not only distinguish between them but also that he ended up granting primacy to phantasy, especially over image-consciousness. To see how and why phantasy finally prevailed over image-consciousness, this paper focuses on the context in which both concepts emerged in Husserl's thought, particularly in his position *vis-à-vis* Brentano and Twardowski regarding the problem of objectless representations. The paper studies how the *direct* model of phantasy ended up better solving the problem to which the *mediate* model of image-consciousness initially sought to respond. It also argues that this evolution in the analysis led to the final fall of image-consciousness, which was ultimately reduced to a kind of perceptual phantasy. Acknowledging phantasy's ultimate primacy over image-consciousness might have consequences in the study of those domains, theoretical or practical, in which phantasy – and not necessarily image-consciousness – plays a role (such as the intuition of essences, empathy, the reconstruction of history, among others). It can also offer reasons to reconsider those domains in which image-consciousness is supposed to play a role, such as in aesthetics.

Keywords: Edmund Husserl, Phantasy, Image-Consciousness, Objectless Representations

1 Phantasy and Image-Consciousness as Intentional Objectifying Experiences

How is it possible to be aware of something that is not strictly present and available to the senses, but rather unreal, fictitious, or even non-existent? Since its beginning, the phenomenological tradition has been interested in understanding the possibility of experiencing something absent through acts of phantasy and imagination. This concern belongs to the more general interest in representation and its modalities, and, more precisely, to the inquiry into the mode of representing *in the absence of the represented object*. How can absent objects appear and what are the *criteria* that make it possible to distinguish between kinds of representations, especially when it comes to representations of the *same* object, which is sometimes perceived, sometimes phantasized, sometimes judged, etc.?

In Edmund Husserl's thought, the mystery of representation *in absentia rei* belongs to the fundamental problem of *intentionality* and its modes. Although at first glance the subject of phantasy and image-consciousness may not seem to occupy a central place in his thought, in fact it appears throughout. As Eduard Marbach points out in his introduction to Hua 23 (xxv), Husserl first encountered this problem in the lectures given by Franz Brentano in 1885/86, Carl Stumpf in 1886/87, and Anton Marty in 1889, while the last manuscript he dedicates to phantasy dates from 1936.¹

The analysis of intentional experiences has, then, a long history, in the course of which Husserl progressively classifies and characterizes different kinds of intentionality and their modalities of fulfilment. That history can be divided into different periods, which are not necessarily temporary (since they sometimes appear as moments within the same reflection, lecture, or work), but somewhat arbitrary, as indeed all periodization is. To a large extent, these phases coincide with the periodization of Husserl's phenomenology into psychological phenomenology (the

¹ The first manuscript in which phantasy plays a central role was written in 1898 and published posthumously as the first appendix in Hua 23, "Phantasy and Image Representation. On the Relationship Between Perceptual Representation and Phantasy Representation." The last one, Ms. K III 24, dates from 1936, is unpublished and consists in two parts: "Ursprungssinn der Phantasie. Mathematische Möglichkeit und Phantasiemöglichkeit" and "Zur Methode der Geschichte."

Halle period), transcendental phenomenology (the Göttingen years), and genetic phenomenology (the Freiburg years). However, the inflection points that determine each period of the analysis of intentional experiences are not the same as those determining the phases of phenomenology in general, so to shed light on the evolution of the concepts of phantasy and image-consciousness it is necessary to first point them out.

Husserl's analysis of intentional experiences begins in the 1880s, when he attends the lectures of Brentano, Marty, and Stumpf, among others, and lasts until the end of the century. In this period, Husserl's position on imaginative representations is still very much attached to Brentano's, which basically means that he takes into account only two types of representations: intuitive and conceptual.² This period ends when Husserl introduces the modalities of intuition and claims, against Brentano, that there are intuitive non-perceptual representations (*Gegenwärtigung*; *Präsentation*), that is, that there are intuitive re-presentations (*Vergegenwärtigung*; *Re-Präsentation*).³

² In the 1898 dissertation, Husserl follows Brentano in distinguishing between intuitive and conceptual experiences, but he also takes into account two kinds of intuitive representations, *perceptual* and *imaginative representations*: "If we take as given the distinction between intuitive and conceptual (intuitive and conceptive) representations [(*intuitive und konzeptive*) *Vorstellungen*] then in the case of intuitive presentations two classes become separated from one another: perceptual representations [*Wahrnehmungsvorstellungen*] and imaging representations [*bildliche Vorstellungen*]" (Husserl 2005, 150; Hua 23, 136).

³ References from Husserl's work are cited from the English translation of *Husserliana: Edmund Husserl – Collected Works* and are followed by the corresponding page in the *Husserliana* volume. Own translations are offered when the work cited is not yet published in English, following Dorion Cairns' *Guide for Translating Husserl*. Nevertheless, some specific choices had to be made to standardize translations of different works, including those of Brentano and Twardowski. *Vorstellung* is translated as "representation"; *Präsentation* and *Gegenwärtigung* as "presentation"; *Repräsentation* and *Vergegenwärtigung* as "re-presentation"; and *Erlebnis* as "experience." Although Ricœur's translation of *Repräsentation* and *Vergegenwärtigung* as "presentification" might be less ambiguous than "re-presentation," and although *Erlebnis* could be translated as "mental process" instead of "experience" (which would allow to distinguish it from *Erfahrung*), I opted in both cases to maintain the choices made by Brough when translating Hua 23, because it is the main source of this paper. In the English translation of Twardowski's work *Vorstellung* appears as "presentation" but it will be translated here as "representation" to maintain homogeneity within this paper. Finally, I will translate *Abbild* mostly as "depiction," as

The second phase takes place during Husserl's years in Göttingen, and has two turning points. The first of these is constituted by the lectures of the winter semester 1904/05; the second, by the replacement of the schematic theory with a reproductive explanation for re-presentations around 1908/09. The 1904/05 lectures were conceived as an extension of the *Fifth Logical Investigation* (Husserl 2001; Hua 19/1), where Husserl tackles the issue of determining the essence of consciousness and its basic objectifying acts from the perspective of an introduction to the problem of knowledge. The importance of objectifying acts is that they constitute the most basic stage in the knowing process insofar as they lay the foundation for more complex cognitive acts, such as judgments, which are the subject of the subsequent and final *Sixth Logical Investigation*. In the years following the publication of the *Logical Investigations* (1900/1901), Husserl deepens the analysis of the objectifying acts, especially in the Göttingen lectures from the winter semester 1904/05, which focuses on the study of "perception, phantasy and time."⁴ These lectures, entitled "Principle Parts of Phenomenology and the Theory of Knowledge", are divided into four parts: the first and second parts deal with perception and attention (published in Hua 38); the third part deals with intuitive re-presentations, especially phantasy and image-consciousness (Husserl 2005, 1–205; Hua 23, Text N° 1, 1–169), and the fourth and most famous part was first edited and published by Edith Stein and Martin Heidegger in 1928 as the lectures "On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time," and appeared later, properly ordered, in Hua 10 (Husserl 1991).

The analysis of intuitive re-presentations pursues two goals, both present in the third part of the 1904/05 lectures on phantasy and image-consciousness. First, it seeks to establish the most general division between the original mode of intuition (presentation or perception) and the non-original modes of intuition (re-presentations). Accordingly, phantasy and image-consciousness are analyzed in terms of what they have in common (i.e., not being presentations) and are considered as two modes of a more general type of experience: imagination (*Imagination*). Second, once Husserl has established this first general difference, he goes on to examine

Dorion Cairns suggests for Husserl, but it will also be translated as "image copy," since it makes Twardowski's argument clearer.

⁴ Husserl writes in a letter to Brentano that in the lectures of 1904/05 he has "attempted to sketch the premises of a systematic phenomenology of intuition (of perception and phantasy, of temporal representation, etc.)" (Hua Dok 3/1, 25).

the differences within the sphere of re-presentations. From this second perspective, Husserl abandons the “unitary point of view of the imagination” (Husserl 2005, 30; Hua 23, 29), as he observes that phantasy does not represent mediately, meaning through an image, but directly like memory. Thus, in the end, the “discriminatory treatment” of the imagination (Dubosson 2004, 103), which considers phantasy and image-consciousness as irreducible to one another, prevails.

Following Jean-François Lavigne (2005) and Eduard Marbach (1980, xxv) it can be argued that Husserl’s characterization of intentional experiences stabilized after the *Logical Investigations* and before the transcendental turn (which is usually dated between the 1905 Seefeld manuscript and the 1907 lectures on *Thing and Space*), more precisely, during the 1904/05 Göttingen lectures. Hence, the 1904/05 lectures constitute an unavoidable reference point for the study of intentional experiences. After those lectures, the typology and classification of intentional experiences will remain essentially the same, and further variations will mostly concern the *criteria* for distinguishing between kinds of experiences and the theories that make it possible to account for their constitution in internal time consciousness. Thus, another fundamental turning point during this period is the substitution of the theory with which he explained the constitution of re-presentations, i.e., the apprehension-content of the apprehension (*Auffassung-Auffassungsinhalt*) schema, with a reproductive modification theory, especially developed around 1908/09.

Finally, the mature phase of the analysis of intentional experiences begins with the publication of *Ideas I* and extends throughout the Freiburg years. This period is characterized not so much by some turning point, as by the consolidation of previous research, the application of results, revision of the conclusions drawn from them, and some adjustments in terminology. During these years an inversion of the initial primacy relation between phantasy and image-consciousness prevailed over the “discriminatory treatment.” Phantasy’s final primacy over image-consciousness is the result of various factors, such as the limitations faced by the image-consciousness model, the deepening of the analysis of internal time consciousness and the distinction established between *pure* phantasy and its *tied* modalities. Besides *pure* phantasy, which is the direct, simple and free form of phantasy, Husserl considered its “tied” (*verbunden, gebunden*) modalities, in which phantasy is “intertwined” or “bound up” with some other kind of appearance. For example, in the case of empathy, the operation of phantasy is bound to the appearance of the *alter ego*’s body, while in the case of ideation it is bound to the example taken as starting point of

the eidetic variation. At the end, image-consciousness was considered a kind a “tied phantasy,” i.e., a complex mode of experience, in which two simple experiences, perception and phantasy, are intertwined, and it was hence described as an example of “perceptual phantasy” (*perzeptive Phantasie*) (Husserl 2005, 605; Hua 23, 504).

Among Husserl’s successors, the question concerning objectless representations and, specifically, phantasy and image-consciousness appears in well-known writings by Jean-Paul Sartre, Eugen Fink, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Mikel Dufrenne, Roman Ingarden, and Paul Ricoeur, among others. Few studies, however, have systematically dealt with the question at stake from the point of view of Husserl’s phenomenology. The reference study so far (Saraiva 1970) offers an interpretation of Husserl’s concept of imagination that is too close to that of Sartre, due in part to the fact that it was not until 1980 that Husserl’s manuscripts on the subject were published. Hence, particularly since the translation of Hua 23 into French in 2002 and into English in 2005, there has been a proliferation of works looking to shed light on the Husserlian phenomenology of phantasy and imagination.⁵ However, in most of these works certain misunderstandings, biased readings, or a lack of clarity and distinction can be found with respect to key concepts of Husserl’s phenomenology of intentional experiences. What is mainly lacking is the recognition of the ultimate primacy Husserl grants in his later writings to phantasy over image-consciousness.⁶

⁵ Some of them have dealt with early phenomenology (Dubosson 2004); others, through Sartre and Merleau-Ponty, have offered a broad reflection on the meaning of imaginary life as a counterpart to the realizing consciousness (Dufourcq 2011); some have examined how phantasy operates in general or in relation to a variety of subjects such as knowledge (Volonté 1997; Lohmar 2005; 2008), aesthetics (Casey 1979; Marbach 1980; 1993; Brough 2005; Ferencz-Flatz 2009; Sepp & Embree 2010); psychoanalysis (Bernet 1996); neurosciences and affectivity (Jansen 2005; Brudzińska 2012); and others have taken the Husserlian philosophy of phantasy and imagination as a starting point for their own philosophy (Richir and his school). The major interpretative lines are, on the one hand, the Fink-Bernet line, and, on the other hand, the Sartre-Saraiva line. The first one is considerably closer to the Husserlian spirit.

⁶ Partial interpretations are due to either fragmentary approaches to specific texts or periods, or to the fact that many of the post-Husserlian phenomenologists came to study phantasy and imagination through the lenses of other sources, such as Sartre. However, more profound problems appear in Richir’s work, and in the works that follow his interpretation of Husserl. On the one hand, although Richir (2004; 2010) does distinguish between “imagination” and “phantasy,” he claims that “perceptual phantasy” is a third kind of consciousness introduced by Husserl at a late stage. On the other hand, the main objection concerns the translation of *Phantasie* as *phantasia*. Richir (2010, 419) helped

Accordingly, the difficulties resulting from the (at least partial) lack of acknowledgment among post-Husserlian phenomenologists of this latest twist – which gives priority to *pure free* phantasy – also affect the studies concerning *tied* modalities of phantasy, such as the intuition of essences, the experience of the *alter ego*, the aesthetic experience, the understanding of history, etc.

Despite the fact that the ultimate priority of phantasy over image-consciousness is consolidated in the mature period, it is possible to find the underlying reasons for this inversion in the early stages of the analysis of intentional experiences, when Husserl first approaches the problem of representations *in absentia rei*. Image-consciousness, based in the image-copy or depiction model (*Abbild*) appears early with the objective of solving difficulties involved in explaining the representation of something absent in terms of direct apprehension, but it becomes superfluous once Husserl, guided by the fundamental phenomenological principle of the return to the things themselves, finds a direct model to explain the experience *in absentia rei*, precisely that of pure phantasy. By inquiring into the context in which the question about objectless representations appeared, it is possible to argue that both the rise and the fall of image-consciousness depend on Husserl's early interest in phantasy, thus anticipating the establishment of the final priority of the pure phantasy model over that of image-consciousness.

2 The Intuitive Nature of Re-Presentations

The first turning point in the analysis of intentional experiences distances Husserl from Brentano, since it implies extending intuition beyond perception and considering different modalities of intentionality. Against Brentano, Husserl claims that

consolidate the French translation of the German term by the Latin term under the idea that it “has no satisfactory equivalent.” However, *fantaisie* in French, *fantasia* in Italian, *fantasía* in Spanish, or *phantasy* in English are closer to Husserl's idea of phantasy as a ‘sheer’ or ‘simple’ everyday experience. Even if, as argued in the introduction to the French translation of Hua 23, *phantasia* reflects the ‘technical’ phenomenological meaning more accurately, then should not all technical concepts be used in Latin? For that matter, what justifies taking ‘phantasy’ as being ‘more technical’ than ‘perception’ or ‘intentionality,’ for example? Furthermore, it should be noted that in 1906 Husserl himself opted to translate *Phantasie* as *fantaisie* in Lalande's *Vocabulaire technique et critique de la philosophie*.

objectless representations, i.e., representations of things not necessarily existing or given in person, can have an *intuitive* nature. In fact, it has been pointed out that Husserl's philosophical project began as a motivation to rigorously extend the sphere of intuitive experiences. If Brentano's psychology distinguishes between intuitive representations and conceptual representations, Husserl considers intuition to be the essential way in which experiences are lived, and that includes non-presentative or objectless experiences. Thus, intuition is 'enlarged' to encompass other modalities of intentionality, in which what appears to consciousness is not strictly present but nevertheless given intuitively, as is the case in phantasy, image-consciousness, memory, expectation, dreaming, etc. Those other modalities of intuition are called *intuitive re-presentations* (*anschauliche Vergegenwärtigungen*). Therefore, how can it be argued that Husserl's concept of *intuitive re-presentations* distanced him from Brentano, and what role did phantasy play in that distancing?

In the winter semester of 1885/86, Husserl attended Brentano's lectures "Ausgewählte Fragen aus Psychologie und Ästhetik". Applying a historical method of conceptual definition, Brentano (1988, 68) fundamentally investigates in those lectures the nature of phantasy as well as the criteria for distinguishing between kinds of psychic phenomena or representations. The case of phantasy allows him to inquire into the differences between representations of the same physical phenomenon (how is a perceived tree different from the *same* tree when it is phantasized, and how are they similar?).

To distinguish between perceptual representations (*Wahrnehmungsvorstellungen*) and phantasy representations (*Phantasievorstellungen*), Brentano adopts Hume's criterion of *vivacity*. He postulates that the difference between a perception and a phantasy of the same object or physical phenomenon ought to lie in the intensity (*Lebendigkeit*) of the representation's content.⁷ Thereby, he adopts a gradual crite-

⁷ Brentano (1988, 49) outlines Hume's analysis on this matter as follows: "He differentiates between 'impressions' and 'ideas.' The idea seems to have replaced the old phantasm [*Phantasma*] (the less powerful or lively impressions are called ideas)." And he highlights that, if in Aristotle the difference between phantasms and sensations was genetic, "with Hume what is essential is the difference in intensity. Then there is the secondary requirement that the ideas should be copies of the impressions, but the difference is not strictly maintained" (ibid.).

tion that concerns only the *contents*, but not the *acts* of representation.⁸ Following also Hume's distinction between *impressions* and *ideas*, Brentano argues that, according to their degree of intensity, psychic phenomena can be divided into authentic or proper representations (*eigentliche Vorstellungen*) and inauthentic or improper representations (*uneigentliche Vorstellungen*). Authentic representations would be intuitive, while inauthentic representations would be ideas, abstractions, concepts. Thus, according to Brentano, it may be stated that, if *perceptual representations* are *intuitive*, and if phantasy must be discernible from perception, then *phantasy representations*, insofar as they are intuitively poorer than perceptual ones, can only be *concepts* or *ideas*.

Brentano does not, however, reach a satisfactory and definitive conclusion. He agrees with common sense in recognizing that there is a halo of intuitiveness in phantasies that brings them closer to perception, preventing them from being considered sheer abstract or conceptual representations (*ibid.*, 84). Phantasies thereby have an intermediate character, they belong "partly to the intuitive domain and partly to the conceptual domain" (*ibid.*, 87). The 1885/86 lectures reach an ambiguous conclusion, according to which phantasy representations are "between" intuitions and concepts but are neither intuitions, nor concepts, but rather "concepts with an intuitive core."⁹

Against Brentano's gradual criterion, Husserl introduces an essential one, which means that the difference between representations must lie not only on the side of the *content*, but also on the side of the *act*. If differences between representations were only in the intensity of the contents, then a perceived and a phantasied color would only differ in its brightness, a perceived and a phantasied meal would only differ in the degree to which it causes a burning sensation, and the difference between a perceived and a phantasized judgment would consist in "a phantasized judgment" being a less "lively conviction" (Husserl 2005, 103; Hua 23, 95ff.). Although Husserl acknowledges that Brentano has established the distinction between the act and the content of representation, he refuses to ground differences between acts on the

⁸ Brentano takes it to be absurd to ascribe degrees of intensity to acts (see Tănăsescu 2010 and Rollinger 1993).

⁹ "In fact, most phantasy representations are not intuitions, but concepts with an intuitive core [*Tatsächlich sind die meisten Phantasievorstellungen nicht Anschauungen, sondern Begriffe mit anschaulichem Kern*]" (Brentano 1988, 83).

intensity of their respective contents, arguing instead that each experience is different also by virtue of the inner characteristics of the act, and not just the variations in content (Husserl 2005, 8ff.; Hua 23, 9).

Underpinning this objection are the essential phenomenological principle of the intentional correlation and the theory with which Husserl explains the constitution of all experiences until 1908/09: the apprehension-content of the apprehension (*Auffassung-Auffassungsinhalt*) scheme. The *schematic theory* distinguishes, on the one hand, the acts, apprehensions or apperceptions, and, on the other hand, the *sensuous content* to which these acts give meaning. These differences in the acts correspond to differences between kinds of intuition. This reflects the principle of homogeneous fulfilment, according to which different kinds of intuition correspond to each particular mode of intending (Barbaras 2015, 45). With the schematic theory, Husserl takes distance from Brentano, because it allows him to abandon the two-fold distinction between intuition and ideas or concepts, and embrace a plurality of modes of givenness or modalities of intuition. Thus, against Brentano's ambiguous definition of phantasy as something in between impressions and ideas, according to Husserl, phantasy must differ from perception in both *how* and *what* consciousness apprehends. Otherwise, phantasy and perception would not truly be two different kinds of intuitive representations.

It should be highlighted that the terms 'phantasy' and 'imagination' are used during this early stage – that is, before the deepening of the analysis of intentional experiences in the *Logical Investigations* and particularly in the 1904/05 lectures – in an ambiguous and lax way. This is due to the fact that in the early analysis of intentional experiences, Husserl's aim is to expand the concept of intuition and establish a first general division between its two main modalities: original intuition (presentation or perception) and non-original intuition (re-presentation). Hence, as opposed to perceptual representations, phantasy representations are frequently taken as representatives for the whole field of re-presentative experiences, even memory. Only when Husserl approaches the subsequent stage of analysis – thus seeking differences and specificities within the sphere of re-presentative experiences – does the concept of phantasy become distinct from other forms of non-original intuitive consciousness, such as imagination, image-consciousness, or memory. But until then, 'imagination' and 'phantasy' are mainly used in a wide sense.

Before contrasting different kinds of re-presentations, it should be inquired how intuitive re-presentations are constituted in or by consciousness as opposed to the

way in which presentations are constituted. How is it possible for something *absent* or not strictly present to appear intuitively, i.e., to be *present* to consciousness? According to Husserl's first attempt of explanation, if perception (*Wahrnehmung*) is the *direct intuitive presentation* (*direkte anschauliche Präsentation*) of a *present* object, then re-presentation (*Re-präsentation*, *Vergegenwärtigung*), insofar as it represents an *absent* object, must be *indirect intuitive presentation* (*indirekt anschauliche Präsentation*) (Husserl 2005; Hua 23, 115). In other words, re-presentation must bring to presence an absent object not directly, but *through a representative*. The model for explaining how something absent can be intended through a representative is the image-copy or depiction (*Abbild*) or image-consciousness (*Bildbewusstsein*, *Abbildungsbewusstsein*) model.

3 The Rise of the Image-Copy or Depiction Model as a First Attempt to Explain the Constitution of Re-Presentation

If Husserl inherited from Brentano the issue of objectless representations and the criteria for distinguishing between representations, his first explanation was inspired by the discussion of the representative or image theory (*Bildtheorie*) of his colleague Kasimir Twardowski.

In 1894, Twardowski wrote his habilitation thesis on the problem of the distinction between the content and the object of representations: *Zur Lehre vom Inhalt und Gegenstand der Vorstellungen. Eine psychologische Untersuchung*. The dissertation sought to overcome some difficulties of Brentano's psychology, whose concept of intentionality had been the subject of scrutiny since 1889, mainly in relation to the status of the content of psychic phenomena (see Schuhmann 1993; English 1993; Rollinger 1999). In particular, Twardowski's dissertation sought to overcome a paradox to which Brentano's psychology led: *if consciousness must always be directed towards an object, what is it directed towards if it represents non-existent objects?*

To solve the paradox of objectless representations, Twardowski introduces – beside the distinction that is already present in Brentano, namely between the act (*Akt*) and the content (*Inhalt*) of representation – a distinction between the content and “the object [*Gegenstand*] to which [...] our representation” is addressed

(Twardowski 1977, 2). Accounting for this distinction between the content (*Inhalt*) and the object (*Gegenstand*) of representation, Twardowski offers an illustrative analogy between representation and painting. In turn, the analogy is based on a linguistic distinction between *attributive adjectives* – those that expand the meaning of a term – and *modifying adjectives* – those that transform the meaning of the term, converting the object of which they are predicated into something else.

According to Twardowski, *in painting*, there is the *act* of painting and the “painted” thing. But “painted” has two meanings, since “the painter paints a picture [*Bild*], but also paints a landscape” (ibid., 12). Thus, “painted” is predicated of the landscape in two ways: first, of the landscape that appears *in* the painting, and, second, of the *real* landscape, the thing (*Sache*) that the painter depicts in his painting, which also has an existence exterior to and independent of the canvas. In the second case, “painted” serves as an attributive adjective, since it does not change the meaning of “landscape,” while, in the first case, “painted” serves as a modifying adjective, since it turns the real landscape into a merely depicted landscape *in* the painting. One “painted landscape” would be the image-copy (*Abbild*) of the other “painted landscape,” which would be the original. Twardowski argues that

[...] what we point out about the word “painted” with regard to the painting and the landscape, is worth *mutatis mutandis* for the determination “represented,” as long as it is predicated of the content and of the object of a representation. (ibid.)

In representation, there is the act of representing and the represented thing. ‘Represented,’ as ‘painted,’ is also said in two ways. First, ‘represented’ serves as an attributive adjective with respect to the transcendent, actually existing object (*Gegenstand*). Second, ‘represented’ serves as a modifying adjective with respect to the inner, immanent, spiritual object (*Inhalt*). In the latter, ‘represented’ turns the transcendent real object into an immanent copy, into “the ‘psychic’ image existing ‘in’ us [*in’ uns Bestehendes*]” of the real object “existing by itself [*an sich Bestehendes*]” (ibid., 2).

The value of this analogy between the *painted landscape* and the *represented object*, Twardowski concludes, comes from “our habit of designating representation as a spiritual way of copying into image [*abbilden*]” (ibid., 12). In other words, what is true for the original-copy relationship in painting would be also true for

the relationship between the real object and the immanent object in representation. In sum, “the represented object in this sense [the immanent object] is the content of the representation, the ‘spiritual image copy’ [*geistiges Abbild*] of an object [*Gegenstand*]” (ibid., 14). Hence, Twardowski’s distinction between the object and the content solves the paradox of objectless representations because, strictly speaking, there can only be representations without a transcendent object (*Gegenstand*), but never without an immanent object (*Inhalt*). Thus, representations without an existing real object, such as phantasy, imagination, or memory, have no *transcendent* object, but they are not without an object at all. In such cases, consciousness is directed towards the *intentional* object with inner existence.

Husserl does not only recognize that Twardowski’s distinction between the content and the object of representation makes it possible to avoid the paradox of objectless representations,¹⁰ but he also uses the image-copy or depiction model within his analysis of intentional experiences to account for intuitive re-presentations (*anschauliche Vergegenwärtigungen*). In the above-mentioned manuscript from 1898, which serves as a precedent for the 1904/05 lectures (Husserl 2005, Appendix 1; Hua 23, 108–136), Husserl claims that re-presentation (*Repräsentation*) is a function “analogous to indirect presentation [*indirekte Präsentation*]” (Husserl 2005; Hua 23, 115). This means that Husserl’s first attempt to explain re-presentations (*Repräsentation, Vergegenwärtigung*) appeals to Twardowski’s *Abbild* model, understood as *indirect* presentation, that is, as presentation (*Präsentation, Gegenwärtigung, Wahrnehmung*) by means of a representative (*Repräsentant, Vertreter*) of the absent intended thing. In Husserl’s phenomenology, the model for this indirect presentation is that of image-consciousness (*Bildbewusstsein* or *Abbildbewusstsein*), which is essentially characterized as a *mediate* kind of consciousness, i.e., the kind of experiences of absent objects that do not appear in themselves, but *through* an image-copy (*Abbild*), which functions as an analogue resembling the intended object.

¹⁰ In a letter to Anton Marty he writes: “The main need for this distinction is that every idea relates to an object, while not everyone corresponds to an object in reality. A representation without a represented object is not conceivable, so there are no objectless representations. On the other hand, not all ideas correspond to real objects, so there are objectless representations. The contradiction is, it seems, to be avoided only if one distinguishes between represented and real objects: there are no representations without immanent – there are representations without real objects” (Hua Dok 3/1, 75).

As we can see in the third part of the 1904/05 lectures, in which the schematic theory still prevails, Husserl first differentiates perception and image-consciousness according to the number and characteristics of the apprehensions involved in each. Hence, perception is considered *simple* and *direct*, because the object is immediately apprehended in the original intuition, while image-consciousness is considered a *complex* experience, in which two objectifying apprehensions intertwine: a perceptual apprehension (*perceptive Auffassung*) and an imaginative apprehension (*imaginative Auffassung*). But in image-consciousness, the perceptual apprehension becomes neutralized, so that, instead of the physical support an image may appear. Hence, the image appearance is possible due to a second apprehension, precisely the imaginative one, which apprehends the sensuous material of the physical thing and reinterprets it in terms of an image (Husserl 2005, 48; Hua 23, 44). In a photograph of a child, for instance, we see neither the real child in person, nor the photographic paper but rather an *image* of the child. We then say that the child appears *in* the image. Thus, according to Husserl, image-consciousness has “an altered characteristic, the characteristic of representation by means of resemblance, the characteristic of seeing in an image [*Charakter des Schauens im Bild*]” (Husserl 2005, 28; Hua 23, 26).

Two intentions cannot coexist at the same time, otherwise, as Husserl warns, consciousness would undergo an illusion of the senses (*Sinnentrug*): is it a person or is it a wax mannequin? By contrast, for something to be seen in an image, a “peaceful and clear consciousness of imaging” is needed (Husserl 2005, 44; Hua 23, 41). Hence, by the end of the third part of the 1904/05 lectures devoted to phantasy and image-consciousness, Husserl argues that ultimately there are not two apprehensions but rather a *unique imaginative apprehension*, which is directed towards the only appearance of image-consciousness: the image object (*Bildobjekt*). That is why, for consciousness to be focused only on the image object, the perceptive apprehension has to be neutralized. Clearly, attention can turn to the physical support of, e.g., a picture. But that would constitute another objectifying act, which needs a shift of attention, a change of attitude (*Einstellungsänderung*) that would momentarily shutter the image intention to let perception prevail. This is because these two contending apprehensions (the perceptive and the imaginative) dispute over the interpretation of the same sensuous material, thus only one of them can prevail. The imaginative apprehension wins over the perceptual apprehension by borrowing the sensuous material and interpreting it as a representative or as an analogue of something else. When the imaginative apprehension prevails, consciousness can

no longer be aware of the physical thing but sees only the image. The image that appears over a neutralized perception represents something else, i.e., the real child, which is pointed to by an internal or immanent resemblance between the representative and the represented (Husserl 2005, 26; Hua 23, 24). Consciousness can also turn its attention to the intended subject (*Bildsujet*), which is said to be ‘pictorialized’ or ‘depicted’ (*verbildlicht*) in the image object. Nevertheless, the fulfillment of the image intention can only take place by intuiting the image object, not with the appearance of the depicted subject. If the photographed child suddenly appears in person, then consciousness experiences yet another kind of act, in this case, sheer perception.

Given that the image can only arise on the basis of a physical thing that lends it its sensuous material, Husserl refers to image-consciousness as “physical imagination” (*physische Imagination*) (Husserl 2005, 19; Hua 23, 18), “perceptual imagination” (*perzeptive Imagination*) (Husserl 2005, 85, 89, 507; Hua 23, 79, 82, 431), or “immanent imagination” (*immanenten Bildlichkeit*) (see, e.g., Husserl 2005, 38f.; Hua 23, 35f.).¹¹ Yet, why is the image not taken as perception?

The image object (*Bildobjekt*) relates not only to the depicted subject (*Bildsujet*) and to the physical support (*physisches Bild* or *Bildding*) but also to the entire complex of sensations and surrounding objects with which the physical object that provides the material for an imaginative apprehension is linked. Consequently, the image object stands out from a horizon of perception that does not completely disappear, but rather remains latent during the imaginative act. Due to the continuity between the surrounding reality and the materiality of the image, image-consciousness is considered to be a harmonious and unitary experience (*Übereinstimmungsbewusstsein*). The image appears in the middle of the actual reality but is taken as fiction, as if its frame was “a window” that opens up access to a fictitious world (Husserl 2005, 50; Hua 23, 46; see also Fink 1966, § 34, 77). The imaginative appearance is taken as fiction (*Fiktum*), as something unreal (*unwirklich*), as something disruptive of the reality in the midst of which the image emerges, thanks to the consciousness

¹¹ Representation by means of an image is considered an immanent type of representation (*immanent*), while symbolic or signitive representation is considered a transcendent sort of representation (*transzendent* or *transeunt*), insofar as the relationship between the representative and the represented is external and arbitrary: “Within physical imaging, the distinction between immanent image consciousness and transcendent image consciousness emerged as very important” (Husserl 2005, 54; Hua 23, 50).

of the conflict (*Widerstreit*) that arises between the perceptual apprehension and the imaginative apprehension. The conflict, although limited only to the sphere in which the two apprehensions overlap, is the sign that prevents us from taking the fictitious as real (Husserl 2005, 187; Hua 23, 157).¹²

However, it must be asked what the scope of the *Abbild* model is in order to account for the experiences of consciousness. Do all objects appear by means of an inner copy, an image, or an analogous representative of the real externally existing thing, as Twardowski argues? On the contrary, from his early writings, Husserl accepted this model exclusively for experiences intending by means of a representative, such as image-consciousness (*Bildbewusstsein*). So, why does Husserl restrict the *Abbild* model's validity and what other models does he consider?

4 The Fall of the Image-Copy or Depiction Model

Husserl's first objections to the image-copy or depiction theory appear early on and, as is known, cover more than Twardowski's version of it. From the beginning, Husserl rejects this model for perception in particular, but its validity to account for intuitive re-presentations progressively declines as well. In fact, it is possible to argue that Husserl's reasons to first partially restrict the validity of the image-copy or depiction model ends up annulling the theory itself. The ultimate reason for the complete downfall of the image-copy or depiction theory is related to the emergence of a *direct* model for intuitive re-presentations, developed to account for memory and phantasy.

As Karl Schuhmann (1993) and Jacques English (1993) point out, Husserl's stance on Twardowski is ambiguous. Especially during their student years and until the turn of the century, both Husserl and Twardowski tried to solve "the same fundamental problem," whose solution would determine the understanding "of the whole functioning of intentionality" (*ibid.*, 77). This concerns the problem of "the status to be attributed to intentional objects" (*ibid.*, 9). Indeed, Husserl would have found

¹² Husserl defines image-consciousness as "the *neutrality modification of normal perception*, positing in unmodified certainty [...] the *neutral picture-Object-consciousness* which we find as component in normally considering the perceptually presentive depicted world" (Husserl 1982, 261; Hua 3/1, 226).

the central motivation to develop his own theory of intentionality confronting Twardowski, in response to whom he explicitly claimed he had written his 1894 manuscript on intentional objects.¹³

On the one hand, Husserl accepts that Twardowski's distinction between the content (*Inhalt*) and the object (*Gegenstand*) of representation allows avoiding the paradox of objectless representations, but, on the other hand, he refuses that every experience should be understood as having two objects (an immanent one serving as spiritual representative of the object existing outside the mind). The rejection of the idea that *all* representations have two objects concerns normal perception in particular. According to Husserl, the *perceptum* is neither an image nor a sign of the perceived thing: consciousness rather intends its objects basically in a direct fashion, and the perceived thing appears originally in person (*leibhaftig*).¹⁴ It is considered a contradiction to assume that the perception of a natural object, "the tree there in the garden," is only possible through the perception of "a second immanent tree, or even an 'internal image' [*inneres Bild*] of the actual tree standing out there before me" (Husserl 1982, 219; Hua 3/1, 186). Claiming that every representation requires an internal representative of the external thing would not only produce an unnecessary multiplication of objectivities, a doubling of the world, but would also require "transcendent ontic and ontological guarantees" (English 1993, 10). Twardowski's difference between the 'real' object and the 'representative' of the real object is reduced, in Husserl's phenomenology, to the difference between the intended object and the degrees of its fulfilment.

The image theory (*Bildtheorie*), image-copy or depiction theory (*Abbildstheorie*) is considered to be naïve not only because it attributes existence to intentionality

¹³ Schuhmann (1993, 42) even remarks that the manuscript "Intentionale Gegenstände" is "of crucial relevance" in Husserl's intellectual development, because rejecting Twardowski's doctrine forced him to develop his own intentionality theory that "would remain at the basis of his thought for the rest of his life."

¹⁴ In § 43 of *Ideas I*, "The Clarification of a Fundamental Error," Husserl (1982, 92; Hua 3/1, 79) notes that "[f]requently the image-theory [*Bildtheorie*] is attacked with zeal and a sign theory [*Zeichentheorie*] substituted for it." Nevertheless, they are both representation theories [*Repräsentationstheorien*] and, as such, "not only incorrect but countersensical," by assuming that "[t]he spatial physical thing which we see is, with all its transcendence, still something perceived, given 'in person' in the manner peculiar to consciousness. It is not the case that, in its stead, an image [*Bild*] or a sign [*Zeichen*] is given. An image-consciousness or a sign-consciousness must not be substituted for perception" (*ibid.*).

(by taking it as an activity), but also because it ascribes existence to the terms of the intentional relationship. Hence, the image-copy or depiction theory falls into the “immanence illusion,” since “it conceives of the mental image as an object really inhabiting the mind,” just as if “a physical thing” would be “there in reality,” while in truth “there is no image thing in the mind, or, better, in consciousness” (Husserl 2005, 23; Hua 23, 21). On the contrary, according to Husserl, *intentionality* is neither a relation between *external* things (*real*) nor a relation between *internal* things (*reell*), because it is simply not an active relation but, precisely, a *reference*. The intentional object exists neither inside nor outside consciousness. To avoid this misunderstanding, Husserl suggests abandoning the term “immanent object” and replacing it with that of “intentional object” (Husserl 2001, 97; Hua 19/1, 387). The intentional object does not exist, but “is ‘merely intentional,’” what exists is “the intention, the meaning of an object with these qualities, but not the object” (Husserl 2001, 127; Hua 19/1, 439).

Objectless representations make their appearance in this argument, since Husserl uses two examples of representations lacking an existing external object to reinforce his position on the merely intentional status of represented objects. One of these is the intuition of generalities or idealities, the other is phantasy (Hua Dok 3/1, 83). Husserl argues that if in the case of objectless representations, the reference of the immanent object to a transcendent object is unnecessary, then, such a reference to a corresponding real object becomes superfluous for *all* cases. Consciousness is always directed to a single object: the intentional object. Therefore, the mystery of objectless representations is closely related to the broader discussions on intentionality and the status of intentional objects. For the concept of intentionality should make it possible to account for different modes of intentionality: beyond the mode in which consciousness is directed towards something existing and present, there are also those multiple other modes in which consciousness intends something not present. This is so either when consciousness intends something past or future, or when it imagines possible and impossible worlds, and even when it thinks of a generality, such as ‘red’ or ‘spherical.’ In Husserl’s words, the real problem of intentionality is not how consciousness addresses a “true or real [*wahres oder wirkliches*]” object, but rather how it addresses an object that is not present or does not exist within

nor outside the mind. Thus, the case of representations *in absentia rei* compels the defining of a concept of *intentionality*.¹⁵

On the one hand, phantasy experiences, then, become a relevant example in the argument in favour of the merely intentional status of the correlates of consciousness, because they allow us to clearly see that representations do not need a reference to some exterior or even interior existence. On the other hand, the fact that this example appears at such an early stage of phenomenology can be taken as a sign of Husserl's primordial interest in offering a *direct*, and not a mediated, explanation for representations *in absentia rei*. A *direct* model would not only be more accurate for re-presentations such as memory and phantasy but also for image-consciousness – since it would make it possible to explain it as a complex experience, as the intertwining of simpler acts (a neutralized perception and a phantasy). A direct model for re-presentations would also be more faithful to the idea that each experience is defined by an individual act aiming at an individual object: even if the act is founded on other acts, even if each experience opens up to infinite possibilities of new acts, it is singular in its intention, in its direction. Thus, the development of a direct model for intuitive re-presentations would render any explanation that appeals to immanent representatives of the intended object dispensable, superfluous, or, at least, derived in relation to simpler acts.

If the first restriction of image-consciousness' validity excludes perception, the second restriction of the image theory takes place when Husserl finds a direct model for re-presentations, and hence excludes phantasy, memory, expectation as well as other forms of direct re-presentation. Husserl's first explanation of objectless representations was based on Twardowski's mediate model, assuming that, as opposed to perception, which *presents* its objects *directly*, all re-presentations must *present* their objects *indirectly*: since absent objects do not give themselves in person, they must appear through a present *medium*. However, when Husserl seeks to establish differences between modes of representation *in absentia rei*, this model also proves insufficient to account for the *whole* field of *intuitive re-presentations*.

¹⁵ As Jocelyn Benoist (2001) established, the paradox of objectless representations is a common point of discussion in the origin of the phenomenological and the analytic tradition. The different ways of responding to this problem determine the variety of philosophical positions, since it provokes the definition of a concept of *intentionality* in the phenomenological tradition, and that of *referentiality* in the analytic tradition.

The restriction of the mediate model for re-presentations becomes evident especially when contrasting image-consciousness with phantasy and memory. Indeed, in the 1904/05 lectures, Husserl first attempts to take phantasy as a ‘parallel case’ of image-consciousness but ultimately fails and asserts that there must be essential differences between both of them. When Husserl seeks to establish the more general differences between presentation and re-presentation, he takes the “unitary point of view of the imagination [*Imagination*]” (Husserl 2005, 30; Hua 23, 29) and considers phantasy and image-consciousness as two species of a generic type of imaginative representation. From this ‘unitary point of view,’ the difference between both modes of imagination would lie only in the kind of image that serves as representative of the absent thing. The image of image-consciousness would be *external, physical*, since it requires a physical support, a neutralized perception on which the imaginative act is founded. By contrast, the image of phantasy would be *internal, spiritual*, since the phantasied object appears simply as hovering before us (*vorschweben*) (Husserl 2005, 20; Hua 23, 18), independently of any physical *stimulus*. But progressively, Husserl comes to discard the hypothesis that phantasy would also represent its object through an image, basically because phantasy aims *directly* at the object hovering before consciousness. Indeed, during the third part of the 1904/05 lectures, Husserl asserts that there are not two phantasy objects, one that is a copy of a second one, but a single object that appears *directly*. And since there is no depictive function (*Verbildlichung*), phantasy cannot be a sort of imaginative consciousness. Thus, the fact that phantasy representations do not involve any image-copy or depiction leads Husserl to pursue a “discriminatory treatment” of fictitious or unreal consciousness (Dubosson 2004, 103), according to which image-consciousness and phantasy would be two types of consciousness, each irreducible to the other.¹⁶

Thus, Husserl rejects not only the mediate interpretation of perception but also the idea that all representations *in absentia rei* are “indirect intuitive presentations [*indirekte anschauliche Präsentationen*]” (Husserl 2005, 125; Hua 23, 115). Hence, the scope of the representative theory would be restricted only to the cases in which representation occurs precisely by means of an image (*Bildbewusstsein*). This sharp separation of phantasy and image-consciousness corresponds to Husserl’s goal of distinguishing between different ways that consciousness has of intending and the

¹⁶ Phantasy must be sharply separated “from the genuine image function [*von der eigentlichen Bildfunktion*]” (Husserl 2005, 90; Hua 23, 83).

different ways that the correlative objects are given, i.e., they are different “sorts of mental processes” (Husserl 2001, 91; Hua 19/1, 78):

Between *perception*, on the one hand, and *depictive-symbolic* or *signitive-symbolic objectivation*, on the other hand, there is an unbridgeable essential difference. In the latter kinds of objectivation we intuit something in consciousness as depicting or signitively indicating something else; having the one in our field of intuition we are directed, not to it, but to the other, what is depicted or designated, through the medium of a founded apprehending. Nothing like that is involved either in perception or in simple memory or in simple phantasy. (Husserl 1982, 93; Hua 3/1, 79)

However, the restriction of the mediate model to only one sort of intuitive experience opens up a problem that the image-copy or depiction theory was supposed to avoid. How is it possible to *actually* experience something not-existent? Furthermore, how is it possible to *directly* re-present something *absent*? Phantasy, like memory, demands a new model for intentional experience, which is neither the direct model of presentation nor the indirect model of complex re-presentation but rather a third kind: a *direct* model of re-presentations. Although it cannot be dealt with in detail here, it is necessary to succinctly show the path that led Husserl to develop a *direct* model of re-presentations, since it is in light of these investigations and, in particular, of the contrasting of phantasy and memory, that the image-copy or depiction model reaches its final phenomenological fall.

5 The Primacy of the Model of Pure Phantasy and Its ‘Tied’ Modalities

Husserl’s first attempt to solve the question of objectless representations was to establish the intuitive nature of phantasy representations (taken in a wide sense), against the ambiguous definition Brentano had come to in his 1885/86 lectures. Soon Husserl proposed, following Twardowski, that if presentation is the direct apprehension of a present object, then objectless representations (among which are intuitive re-presentations) must be the indirect apprehension of an absent object

through its representative. However, Twardowski's mediate model turned out to be inadequate not only for perception but also for basic intuitive re-presentations such as phantasy, memory and expectation. The main reason for this inadequacy is that, even though they may be motivated by a current event, as Fink (1966) points out, neither phantasy nor memory require physical *stimuli*. So, how can consciousness apprehend something absent that is not even given through something physically present? What appears in phantasy or memory, Husserl argues, are not signs or images of something else but the intended objects themselves, as is the case in perception: there is no depicting function (*Verbildlichung*) between the appearing object and the intended subject. Thus, on the one hand, the hypothesis of phantasy and memory as kinds of image representation falls. But, on the other hand, if phantasy and memory represent their objects directly and intuitively, then why are they not taken as perception? What prevents us from taking what is phantasied or what is remembered as an actually existing object if there is no conflict between contending apprehensions? What does consciousness apprehend if not the sensuous material of a potential perception? If phantasy does not conflict with the actual present (because the apprehension of phantasy does not dispute the interpretation of the same sensuous material), why do we take its appearance as something unreal or fictitious and not as something real? In other words, where lies the *absence* that characterizes phantasied and remembered things?

To answer these questions, Husserl turns first to his schematic theory and argues – as he had done when objecting to Brentano – that the difference between perception and phantasy must lie in both the act and in the content of representation. Thus, in the lectures of 1904/05, after sharply distinguishing it from image-consciousness, Husserl concludes that phantasy must be analogous to perception, but that it should apprehend a different kind of sensuous material. If sensations are apprehended directly in perception, phantasy must be direct apprehension, but of a peculiar sensuous content: “sensations serve as the basis for perceptions; sensuous *phantasmata* [*Phantasmen*] serve as the basis for phantasies” (Husserl 2005, 11; Hua 23, 11). However, unsolvable difficulties surrounding the status of *phantasmata* undermine the schematic explanation for the constitution of re-presentations. Neither in the case of phantasy, nor in the case of memory, does the schematic theory account for the experience of something absent (unreal or past), for where lies the *past* of what is remembered or the *fictitious* of what is phantasied? On the one hand, if *phantasmata* are *absent*, how can they even be apprehended? On the other hand, if

phantasmata are *present*, then how can they have the trait of being absent? Absence cannot just be an adjective; nor can it be something posited by consciousness because then the difference between absence and presence, between past and present, between real and unreal, would be reduced to a psychological arbitrariness (see Husserl 2005; Hua 23, Text N° 1 §§ 37ff., § 51, and Appendix XII to §§ 37 and 51).

Since the schematic theory only makes it possible to explain the *present* constitution of *present* experiences, Husserl retains it for the presentation, but he seeks another way to explain re-presentations. While studying internal time consciousness, and particularly the constitution of memory, Husserl develops a new model: that of reproductive modification (*reproduktive Modifikation*).¹⁷ This model allows him to abandon the theories that remain locked in the present and to genuinely explain the intuitive apprehension of what is lived as *absent*.¹⁸ Thus, memory is explained as the *reproduction* of a previous experience, and not as a direct apprehension of something past. Reproducing something already lived means reliving what was constituted in that original experience. And the awareness of the distance elapsed between the original experience and the reproductive experience is what gives the remembered the trait of being past. This means that the *past* characteristic of what is remembered is not something apprehended directly but rather a feature of the intentional object reproduced by the act of memory.

After developing the reproductive theory, Husserl takes phantasy to be analogous to memory. Only, in addition to the plain reproductive modification, phantasy also needs another modification to neutralize the *being* and the *positional* characteristics of what is experienced. The “imaginative modification” or, strictly speaking, the “phantasy modification,”¹⁹ takes the phantasized objects as disconnected from the

¹⁷ As Bernet (2004, 78) argues, the “discovery of a reproductive consciousness, would not have been possible without the exploration of the temporal dimension of intentional consciousness and, particularly, of the internal consciousness of the mode of fulfilment of intentional acts.”

¹⁸ Cf. Husserl’s objections to Meinong’s and Brentano’s explanations of memory in the first paragraphs of the lectures *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time* (Husserl 1991; see also Brough’s introduction 1991).

¹⁹ Since Husserl established in the 1904/05 lectures an essential distinction between phantasy and imagination, he refuses the earlier title of ‘imaginative modification’ and replaces it with that of ‘phantasy modification:’ “In the *Logical Investigations* I already sought to distinguish universally between ‘qualitative modification’ [*qualitative Modifikation*] and ‘imaginative modification’ [*imaginative Modifikation*]. The latter title turns

rest of the experiences, which explains why it appears as just hovering before us. Hence, in contrast to memory, phantasy is defined as a “non-positional [*nicht setzende*]” reproduction: “universally *phantasying* is the *neutrality modification* of ‘*positing*’ *re-presentation*, therefore of memory in the widest conceivable sense [*Näher ausgeführt, ist das Phantasieren überhaupt die Neutralitätsmodifikation der ‘setzen’ Vergegenwärtigung, also der Erinnerung im denkbar weitesten Sinne*]” (Husserl 1982, 260; Hua 3/1, 224).

Although the reproductive modification theory allowed Husserl to make great progress with respect to the *Abbild* theory, it must be pointed out that conceiving phantasy as reproductive, even if it is of a non-positional kind, ignores its essential feature, since phantasy ought to be inventive, productive, or at least *quasi*-productive. Otherwise, what would the phantasy of a centaur be reproducing? But despite the objections that can be raised to the reproductive interpretation of phantasy, Husserl’s phenomenology does not go further, which means that it does not develop a productive or *quasi*-productive model for pure phantasy. Nevertheless, phantasy is essentially characterized by its freedom: unlike perception and image-consciousness, it is independent of actual reality; unlike memory, it is disconnected from the rest of the experiences. However, phantasy is not always (if ever) purely free but is usually mixed with other experiences. Hence, Husserl distinguishes between two kinds of phantasy. On the one hand, ‘free’ (*frei*), ‘pure’ (*rein, pure*), ‘disconnected’ phantasies. On the other hand, ‘mixed’ or ‘tied’ phantasies, which are phantasies ‘bound up with’ (*verbunden, gebunden*) other acts or appearances.²⁰ ‘Mere,’ ‘sheer,’ or ‘simple’ phantasy (*bloß, gewöhnlich, schlicht*) would then take the place of the

out to be unsuitable, since I intended to recognize that an essential distinction must be drawn between phantasy apprehension [*Phantasieauffassung*] and image apprehension proper [*eigentliche Bildauffassung*]. In the meantime, I have made considerable progress. I have recognized that *phantasy apprehension is not apprehension proper but simply the modification of the corresponding perceptual apprehension*, that image apprehension [*Bildauffassung*] understood as *illusion* [*Illusion*] is perceptual apprehension annulled by conflict, in which the ‘annulling’ is a matter of qualification and presupposes the ‘competition’ or ‘interpenetrating’ of simple apprehensions; that is to say, of physical-thing apprehensions” (Husserl 2005, 335; Hua 23, 276).

²⁰ “Phantasying reproduction (mixed or pure)” (Husserl 2005, 427; Hua 23, 355). And also: “Let us call every nonactually experiencing act in the sphere of simple intuition pure imagination (hence = pure reproductive imagination + pure perceptual imagination: the first we call phantasy in the sense of mere phantasy)” (Husserl 2005, 468; Hua 23, 396).

proto-mode of phantasy: it would be the *pure case*, unmixed with other experiences, while mixed phantasies would be *modalizations* of the pure case. Phantasy is modalized, for instance, in the intuition of essences where it is limited by the example taken as a starting point of eidetic variation (see Lohmar 2005); or in empathy, where it is bound to the bodily appearance of the other. Phantasies tied to a perceptual appearance are then called ‘perceptual phantasies’ (*perzeptive Phantasien*).

It is in this context of the development of a direct explanation for representations *in absentia rei* that phantasy becomes an ultimate priority over all other forms of fictitious consciousness. Accordingly, the mediate model becomes unnecessary even for image-consciousness, because the latter can be reduced to a form of mixed phantasy. From the point of view of reproductive theory, image-consciousness is considered a mixed or complex sort of experience in which an apprehension of phantasy is intertwined with and modifies a perceptual appearance. Indeed, at least from 1918 on, since it is clear that it is a sort of perceptual phantasy, Husserl no longer refers to it as “image-consciousness” (Husserl 2005, 599; Hua 23, 498):

The image object consciousness, which is the foundation of every mediate intuiting of the kind that we call depictive consciousness, intuiting “in” the image, is an example of a perceptual phantasy [*Beispiel einer perzeptiven Phantasie ist das Bildobjektbewußtsein, das Unterlage eines jeden mittelbaren Anschauens der Art ist, das wir Abbildbewußtsein, Anschauen “in” Bilde nennen*]. (Husserl 2005, 605; Hua 23, 504)²¹

Thus, aesthetic experiences are also taken to be examples of perceptual phantasy (ibid.). Contemplating a play, for instance, entails experiencing “perceptive fictions [*perzeptive Fikta*]” in which the viewer neutralizes the actors to see characters instead.²² But despite the fact that the distinction between pure phantasy and its mo-

²¹ Husserl continues: “In phantasy we are not unqualifiedly conscious of an intuited object as actual, as present, past, and so on; on the contrary, we are conscious of it together with its content ‘as if’ it were present. For us it is actuality ‘as if’ [*Wirklichkeit ‘als ob’*]” (Husserl 2005, 605; Hua 23, 504).

²² “In the case of depiction [*Abbildung*], what is depicted in the How of its being depicted determines the boundary of what appears insofar as it appears. [...] But my phantasy is not free in this further development (obviously it is not free with respect to the style of

dalities appears frequently in Husserl's manuscripts, it is less frequent in the literature on the subject, where there is a widespread lack of recognition of the primacy of pure phantasy over image-consciousness and even of the continuity between the concepts of image-consciousness and perceptual phantasy. Nevertheless, such misunderstandings may be overcome in light of Husserl's early position *vis-à-vis* Brentano and Twardowski on the matter of objectless representations, where the logical priority of pure phantasy over all other forms of consciousness mixed with it is prefigured. Ever since Husserl was faced with the mystery of representations *in absentia rei*, his motivation was aimed at offering a direct and not a mediated answer. Hence, it can be concluded that both the rise and the fall of the image-consciousness model is due to Husserl's interest in phantasy. The image-copy or depiction theory is not only naïve in its understanding of intentionality, but it also remains locked into the present, i.e., it fails to give a genuine explanation for the multiple ways in which something absent – past or future, unreal or fictitious, possible or even contradictory – may become conscious. On the contrary, the direct model of pure phantasy and its modalities – even if it must be developed as productive or *quasi*-productive and not just as reproductive – makes it possible to explain how consciousness can intuit something other than what presently appears.

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agreement with the prefigurings). On the contrary, I am bound [*gebunden*] – the unity of the appearances as presented appearances must always be what is narrated as such and nothing else. Otherwise, I am engaging in further fictional invention and am not living in the fictional work of the artist” (Husserl 2005, 706; Hua 23, 588).

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Thinking and Deciding in Non-Linguistic Modes of Phantasy and Emotion

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Abstract: In my contribution, I start by establishing the concept and a description of the scenic-phantasmatic system of non-linguistic thinking, regarded as a still working system in human thinking today. My thesis is that series of phantasmata (daydreaming) connected with emotions are an old mode of thinking still working in our consciousness. Emotions are an important component of this non-linguistic system and they serve to represent an astonishingly broad variety of the aspects of the meanings thought of in daydreams: relevance, evaluations, social background, the location of an event in time, and also metacognitive aspects like the security of one's knowledge. At the end, there is also a short discussion of the role of emotions in making decisions in non-linguistic modes.

Keywords: Thinking, Deciding, Emotion, Non-linguistic Thinking, Phantasmata

1 Problematization of Our View of Phantasy, Emotions, and Thinking

In this chapter, I interpret phantasy not as a method to intentionally get rid of reality. In my view, a big part of our phantasy is more an activity of thinking that deals with important aspects of reality. Still, we cannot identify phantasy with reality, there is a limitation: the aspects of phantasy I am addressing in this chapter are connected to reality only in the sense of possible consequences, possible actions, or

probable prehistories of events, etc. These ideas help us to understand what is going on and what motives lead others (or ourselves) to actions, etc. Therefore, I will call them 'bound phantasies' (or reality-oriented phantasies). In contrast to these bound phantasies, there are evidently also free phantasies that do not have a more loose relation to reality and real actions. But generally, the topics of most of our phantasies are closely related to others, their actions, and my reactions to the reality I live in. Therefore, bound phantasies will be my main topic.

There is another limitation of my investigations. I am starting with a quite ambitious hypothesis: the biggest part of the thinking activity related to bound phantasies only rarely uses language as a means of representing its objects. Usually, this thinking uses phantasy scenes related to concrete actions and events. We might as well refer to daydreams – indeed, I consider daydreaming to be highly relevant for our orientation in life and as an effective method of thinking about possible options for action. Therefore, I prefer to speak in this case of the 'scenic-phantasmatic system of non-linguistic thinking,' which I regard as a system still working in human thinking today.

The special focus of my present paper are emotions considered as a part of this non-linguistic system (Lohmar 2016b). Happiness and grief, fun and pain, regret, joy and pre-joy, shame and pride, etc. belong to the large repertoire of emotions and each of them has a rich dimension of meanings. I will not try to give an exhaustive overview of the different types of emotions (this is the topic of another project). I am rather interested in the many dimensions of meaning we are able to address while using emotions in our phantasies.

Due to this starting point, my view on phantasy and emotions in human mental life is quite exceptional: I will consider the function of both phantasy and emotions in the framework of non-linguistic thinking. From this perspective, we concentrate on phantasies of situations and the connection of events that are accompanied by emotions. They may occur as a single picture of a person or object, or more commonly as a kind of video clip or daydream. These phantasmatic scenes carry meanings, evaluations, experiences, and sometimes they are even something like a plan and an outlook on the future. Simply put, phantasy and emotions are important parts of a system of thinking that does not use the concepts of language, but lies somehow on a deeper level than language.

This is exceptional because the overwhelming majority of thinkers in modern times and recent philosophy regard language as the only mode of thinking about

objects and (future, present, and past) states of affairs. We find examples for this alleged centrality of language in John's Gospel, Kant, Haman, Hegel, Goethe, Herder, Wilhelm von Humboldt, Heidegger, Wittgenstein, and many more authors. Nevertheless, there were some insightful thinkers that have registered that there are phenomena that are not easy to understand on the basis of this centrality view (for example, regarding mathematical knowledge, B. L. van der Waerden 1954). Today, the scene has changed quite a lot by the growing knowledge about animal intelligence. But the positive prejudice concerning language even now motivates to deny empirical insights into animal cognition, planning, and thinking. This attitude can be found not only in representatives of analytic philosophy of language, such as Davidson (2005), but also in more traditional circles (cf. Brandt 2009). But there are exceptions like José Bermúdez' *Thinking without Words* (for a discussion, cf. Lohmar 2016a, ch. 10). In phenomenology up to now, there are only few contributions about thinking without language – even though in Husserl's genetic phenomenology there are challenging theories, for instance the one about pre-predicative knowledge in *Experience and Judgment* (Husserl 1939).

In my paper, I will not provide in detail the phenomenological reasons justifying this approach, as I have discussed them in a recent monograph on non-linguistic thinking (Lohmar 2016a). I will also not delve into the more general discussion concerning the principal affordances of a non-linguistic system. In what follows, I will rather address concrete forms of this kind of thinking.

2 The Scenic-Phantasmatic System of Representation

The first question we have to solve is the following: how are we able to think of objects, facts (states of affairs), and events without using language? To answer this question, I have to shortly characterize the scenic-phantasmatic system of representing objects, facts, and events.

Consider the experience of vividly imagining an object or fact (it is not yet determined whether it is a present, past, or future fact): for instance, with the help of phantasy, I am able to 'see' a ripe banana. This phantasmatic picture makes the banana appear to me in full colour and perhaps also with the typical smell of ripe

bananas. But there are also feelings present in this phantasy activity: I like ripe bananas and a felt desire to eat the banana comes up in me, raising positive feelings. Then, perhaps, I imagine that another person enters the scene, grabs the banana, and eats it in front of my eyes; while 'seeing' this, I feel great disappointment, perhaps mixed with fury. There are even more feelings connected with this scene, because the other person might be a highly recognized member of my group with high privileges, hence a feeling of respect arises in me. Now, I might feel anxious about my sudden wish to ignore her well-known privileges and run into a conflict with her: I may even imagine grabbing the banana from her. Imagining my possible act of disobedience – this is an action opposing the rules of our community –, a feeling of shame or even fear accompanies my imagination. Imagining the possible sanctions from other members of the group lead me to fear future pains. Thus, we see that there is a whole bundle of emotions connected with the same basic situation and its possible developments: grief, fury, anxiety, etc. Each of these feelings represents different aspects and is related to different future options and resulting events arising in my mind spontaneously.

Apart from these real or imagined facts, we also understand that there is an evaluation in the accompanying feelings of shame, which brings into play the community we live in. We are ashamed in the eyes of our community. Additionally – and quite astonishingly –, there is also something like an emotional indication towards the past, present, and future moment of the imagined events: shame is related to my past actions, fear can only be connected with a future event. We should keep in mind that usually we regard the indication of temporal relations to be one of the most remarkable performances of our language – but now we see that this can be done much more easily with a combination of phantasy and emotions.

With this short story of my vivid imaginative ideas about real or possible states of affairs in a non-linguistic mode,¹ I wanted to show that – also from an evolutionary point of view – we humans are still using the scenic-phantasmatic system of representation. This system is representing objects, states of affairs, past and possible

¹ It may seem that the *modality* of the events is still not determined, but it may be that in this regard feelings do have a say, too, for example the feeling of security about a state of affairs may express its reality, etc. Moreover, it may also turn out that we have to be more precise in describing the connected feelings. For instance, in the case of disappointment about a possible development, we might in fact *feel different* compared to a real disappointment.

future events, etc. by using a combination of phantasy scenes with emotions – and all of this without language. We have also realized that the feelings accompanying these phantasies are adding important elements of sense to the respective evaluation, relevance, and location in time of these real or imagined events. We might even think that we have already detected a full-blown system of representation for the most common, but quite basic events of our everyday life.

It seems to me that in a series of imaginative pictures, as in daydreaming, we are using scenic phantasmata to ‘express’ our knowledge of states of affairs as well as our wishes and fears, including our plans for the future. But with regard to whom do we express these ideas? No one can see my phantasies or feel my feelings except me, so the only person for whom I am expressing my convictions and fears is me, myself. This means that I am thinking about them and pondering possible alternative plans.

If I imagine to visit my grandchild Lea, I immediately feel the pleasant anticipation (in German: *Vorfreude*, pre-joy) of such a future event, and a plan ripens in me: do not longer read the boring student papers, but go over to your daughter’s place and see whether it may be possible to spend some time with her and her daughter. Analogously, the thought of last Sunday and a nice trip to a nearby playground appears in my mind, accompanied by pleasant memories (feelings of past-joy, German: *Nachfreude*). Both kinds of feeling are clearly distinguished, and they indicate different times of the events pondered on.

Thus, we see that daydreams generally function as representations of cognitive contents connected with practical and evaluative components. It is always a state of affairs or event that we wish for or are in fear of. But we do not only express our preferences, our urgent wishes, and our views of the facts by these means. It turns out that the scenic-phantasmatic system can also be a kind of response to a (real or possible) problem. Sometimes we may even find a mental action, a mental manipulation of the problematic situation that might lead to a solution of something which until now was unknown. This is my thesis: scenic phantasmata and daydreaming connected with emotions are an old mode of thinking still working in our consciousness.²

² To work out this hypothesis, I will have to ignore for a while some other theories about the status of phantasy in daydreaming. There might be objections to our interpretation of daydreaming from different points of view: from a *liberal-phantasy point of view*, our phantasy is usually completely free in the formation of daydreaming and therefore it cannot be of any use when it comes to the ‘real’ problems of everyday life. But some

In daydreams, we are trying out possible solutions to a problem, i.e., we are mentally testing our options, their probability and usefulness for a solution, and their respective consequences. This 'life' of scenic phantasmata constitutes a great and important part of our conscious life. Some examples: worries about urgent challenges, the possible unpleasant effects of events, uncertainties concerning possible developments, etc. make us sleepless at night. There are many phantasies of having success. In these scenic episodes of our conscious life, the linguistic expressions fade into the background in favour of pictorial elements. Thus, we realize the meeting of past, present, and possible future events in our scenic phantasmata, but we still have to find out in more detail how this kind of thinking proceeds (Lohmar 2016a).

We might also take a side-view on animals. We know that most highly developed mammals can dream (e.g., dogs). While dreaming, they show first signs of an attempt to act as well as emotions. We interpret these phases of their sleep as dream episodes prolonging wakeful states of action and representing aims. We might therefore claim that a system of representations on the basis of scenic phantasmata, combined with feelings, is also operative in higher cerebralized mammals up to primates in dreams and wakeful states in the same way as in humans. This claim, however, only indicates an important consequence that stems from my investigations into the systems of representation in humans. Nevertheless, this hypothesis about animal thinking is not mere fancy or arbitrary phantasy, because, as the phenomenological analysis reveals, it characterizes an important dimension of our own thinking. Thus, through these analyses we might find out in which way we are still thinking like animals. In the present analysis, I will however not concentrate further on the theme of animal thinking.

In the abovementioned examples, we have also realized that feelings are an important element of the non-linguistic system of representation, functioning in the

sober reflection and self-observation will convince us that we are not completely free in the formation of our daydreams. From a *part-part point of view* (i.e., daydreams are partly free and partly bound), we might suspect that we are free in the formation of our positive and pleasant daydreams, but passive in the formation of our daydreams about lasting fears. This is not the case either: in both cases, I experience myself to be bound. From a *psychoanalytic point of view*, we might suppose that all the contents of our daydreams are closely bound to our individual experiences, just like our dreams are bound to them.

framework of scenic phantasmata.³ Emotions can easily meet the most important request for an element in a system of representation: we can have them in an actual situation and we can also 'produce' them (although not arbitrarily) in the absence of the intuitive situation, i.e., only through imagination (or in thinking about a topic). For example, the feeling of fury might move me violently in a certain situation, and the same feeling can also reappear when merely thinking of the same situation later on. In both cases, the feeling 'tells' me something about the value of this event, it is part of my inner 'expression' that has a certain meaning. In thinking about a cheerful experience, the pleasant feeling 'means' the desirable quality of the event.⁴

But when analysing feelings in non-linguistic thinking, it turns out that the most frequent way in which feelings arise is in the context of an intention towards an object or event. Thus, an object must be present to me in the scenic phantasmatic way of vivid phantasmata before I can combine it with emotions that mirror, for example, my evaluation or the relevance of the event. Emotions cannot stand alone in this respect.

We might come up with another difficulty by considering feelings as part of a symbolic system of representation. It is obvious that in using linguistic symbols for thinking about cognitive contents, we have a certain freedom of choosing alternative wordings to express the same cognitive content. We may speak about a nice or pleasant outcome, or we might speak about a necessary or an unavoidable outcome referring to the same state of affairs. When using feelings in the scenic-phantasmatic system in thinking about an outcome of our actions and its high value, we simply have no choice: a pleasant feeling accompanies the idea of this resulting state. In non-linguistic systems, it seems to me that we cannot use an alternative 'expression' to characterise our valuations.⁵

³ In my view, we cannot interpret emotions as an independent system of representation, because we always have to presuppose another kind of representation in which we intend things, states of affairs, or (real or possible) events that are objects of feelings.

⁴ We might suppose that most animals have feelings as part of their system of representation. There is no use in experiencing objects and their properties if an organism does not have feelings to evaluate these very objects and events, as only in this way one actively makes use of one's experiences with them.

⁵ Moreover, in non-linguistic thinking we are not obliged to use – for example – a more neutral expression of our feelings, as we do in public language to meet the standards of our society. Think about the case where the pleasant outcome is in fact an accident that hits a personal enemy. We feel pleasure about his accident, but it might not be accepted

We see that we should not always expect the same characteristics in a system of non-linguistic representation as in the case of language. The two systems of representation are phylogenetically at a great distance from each other and they are using quite different semantics (Lohmar 2016a, III.3).

3 The Multi-Modality of Feelings in the Non-Linguistic System of Thinking

There are more important facts about the function of feelings in the non-linguistic system of representation and thinking in humans (and perhaps also animals). This concerns in the first place the *multi-modal* function of feelings. What we have already realized is that feelings can help the imagination in many ways to fill in elements of sense that we cannot represent simply in scenic-phantasmatic pictures – for instance, evaluations and meta-cognitive elements of sense such as security or insecurity of our knowledge. We have to be able to represent these elements of sense somehow in our non-linguistic thinking; even if they are more sublime, they cannot be sensed by one of our senses. I will discuss some of these aspects in the following.

The aspect of relevance or meaningfulness for my life is represented in the feelings of liking and disliking, grief, and promise. For example, when I see the banana, I feel a pleasant anticipation concerning the possibility of eating it. We need to notice that pleasant anticipation feels differently than simply being happy now – the same is true of pleasant memories.

Let us consider briefly security or confidence concerning a possible solution to our problems. Both aspects are on the level of metacognition, for they do not concern the content of cognition but rather a meta-quality like the knowledge about the

by the community to speak about it in terms of pleasure. Therefore, I choose another wording somehow hiding my true valuation. But obeying these kinds of rules is specific to systems of representation useful also for communication. Only here the rules of “good manners” are working. In my private, solipsistic non-linguistic thinking, I do not feel the need to obey these rules. Thus, in a certain way, non-linguistic systems are more truthful to what we really think. Therefore, it is surprising that with regard to some central themes of psychoanalysis, they do not have to be truthful at all (Lohmar 2012).

source or the reliability of this knowledge. Think about the problem of not having enough money. Different solutions could pop up in our minds: for example, winning the lottery will easily solve the pressing financial concerns, but it is unlikely to happen and does not give me a feeling of confidence; working hard or suffering hardship for some time will work as well, and this idea gives me much more confidence in its success. This shows clearly one function of feelings in non-linguistic modes of thinking: our feelings are realistically adjusting to the chances or probability of the result of our actions. Therefore, daydreaming should not be interpreted as an evasive regression to a childish mode of handling problems only in phantasy. There is a strong realistic trait in daydreams and – surprisingly enough – it is hidden in feelings.⁶

This opens up a way to understand the meta-cognitive abilities of many animals. Up to now, there are only few insights concerning the meta-cognitive abilities of primates, but this kind of empirical research has only been conducted over the last ten years. With a view of the role of feelings in non-linguistic thinking, we immediately understand why animals can also think about such meta-properties of our intentions relating to states of affairs. The only thing we or other animals need is a representation of the state of affairs itself – this can happen in a scenic phantasma – and additionally a feeling of security that accompanies this idea of a state of affairs.

⁶ In the context of phenomenological analysis, it is sometimes discussed whether evidence is a kind of feeling or not (cf. Heffernan 1999, 83–181). What is quite obvious is that in constituting higher level insights we need a means to somehow ‘retain’ whether an intention has been evident to me and to what degree there was evidence. For example: if we take the advancement of knowledge in science and in our life-world into consideration, we usually have to relate in some way to elementary knowledge and its evidence. In the *Logical Investigations*, Husserl speaks of ‘nominalization’ to denote the condensed intention towards a cognitive content after having reached insight of the intended state of affairs in categorial intuition: we first realize that the breaks of the car are defect and conclude: ‘This is dangerous,’ referring to this state of affairs by using ‘this.’ And in using the word ‘this’ for the state of defectiveness of the breaks, we also need to have a kind of surrogate for the evidence we have had. Therefore, you see that feeling is not only a necessary element in non-linguistic thinking, but it also accompanies our language use (yet without us realizing it). Therefore, concerning the relation between evidence and feeling, we may conclude (1) that evidence is not feeling, but (2) that certain feelings are used to represent evidence we have had before in the context of the next step of cognition, for example in a conclusion: ‘This is surely dangerous.’

The meaning of this feeling is the conviction that the state of affairs we are thinking about is a fact, that it is real – or that the planned outcome is very likely to happen.

There is another aspect of meta-cognition closely connected to the probability that certain events will happen: it concerns our confidence to act effectively in a specific way. I ‘think’ myself to be capable of some action, and this conviction – which is in fact a meta-conviction – is mirrored in my confidence, in my safe feeling concerning this planned activity. On the contrary, when I do not feel confident in my abilities to act – for example to climb a wall –, I feel helpless and depressed when thinking about my planned action.

Feelings are not a simple element of conveying sense in non-linguistic thinking; sometimes their contents are quite complex. We see this especially in the case of social feelings such as pride or shame. When being ashamed, we feel shame about something and we are ashamed in the eyes of a community, a group of people that share a valuation of my person. Therefore, social feelings are usually connected to a complex net of relations concerning valuations from history and personal relations, etc. This mirrors one of the big advantages of feelings: they can represent very complex relations.

We cannot see time, nor taste it, nor sense it in any other way. Therefore, time is difficult to indicate in the scenic-phantasmatic system, apart from being indicated in the form of extended episodes that are structured in time – a kind of narrative story. We might think of time passed when seeing flowers blossom in spring, or snow on the hills may indicate winter, etc., but it is difficult to indicate whether events I am conceiving in my scenic phantasmata are past or future events without the help of additional information. And in this situation, emotions also do their work in the framework of non-linguistic thinking by indicating the past or the future. Recall the examples of pleasant anticipation and pleasant memories. We can notice a difference of feeling in these two cases and we thereby realize that an emotion can also indicate a point in time and temporal relations between events.⁷

It seems difficult to conceive of a scenic image of the character of a person and of his or her probable behaviour towards me, especially within complex constellations with others involved in action. But scenic phantasmata offer a simple solution to this

⁷ It goes without saying that this is an important part of the function of syntax. This is not to imply, however, that non-linguistic systems of representation need a syntax, it just hints at the fact that all systems of representation must perform certain general functions, even if they realize them in different ways.

apparent difficulty. In remembering a brutal former classmate, I see his face looking at me with evil eyes, with clenched fists, ready to beat me up. This scene presents central aspects both of his character and of his future behaviour within a social context. It also includes the felt aversion of him towards me, which is reflected in his facial expression. I feel that he hates me. But careful: co-feeling his hate is not to identify with self-hate, although my feeling is the only way of representing his deep motives.

The scenic presentation of the attitude and behaviour of a person need not be so one-dimensional as in this case, since there are normally multiple facets of the character of other persons that we are able to present. Thus, the question arises: how can I conceive a multitude of (changing) attitudes in a scenic mode? Now, think of a colleague with whom you work together successfully in most cases, but who occasionally appears to have an air of stuck-up arrogance. Both 'faces,' i.e. both aspects of her character, may be represented in a scenic phantasma of her face, one after the other, or even alternately mixed, which results in an uncertain basis for your plan-making. The modal characters of possibility and uncertainty are thus also presented in the changing and merging faces of your colleague. We might even interpret this changing image as a non-linguistic form of the logical 'or.' Additionally, her attitude towards others and her preferences to act in a changing situation may be represented in a short but eloquent side-view of others.

The value and the usefulness of objects are also reflected in feelings. Moreover, as we know that the reliable qualities of objects can change, this, too, may be reflected in feelings. For instance, if I own a car that usually breaks down and thus has to be towed off and repaired, the characteristic scene within which I am positively excited about my car is modified and converted to one that is negative. The emotional aspects of this bad experience are mirrored in feelings: I no longer imagine the car with the joyful expectation of reliable use, but with the cheerless expectation of future harm, expense, and inconvenience.

In the non-linguistic system of thinking in the mode of scenic phantasmata, feelings have another important role that is quite difficult to understand, because it deals with the big problem of non-linguistic thinking about general ideas. In scenic phantasmata we usually imagine individuals. General ideas are what we speak about as 'concepts' in the language system, ideas of not only one object but a group or class of objects, such as horse, man, animal, living creature, fairness, justice, etc. In the non-linguistic system of representation, there is a rather easy method of thinking of low-level general ideas like horse or man by using a vague visual

phantasma of what we think of. Vagueness is one useful method to think about low-level general ideas without the means of language. But this method does not lead up to the peak of the mountain of generalities; already with 'living creature,' we exceed the limits of generalities that we can think of by means of vague phantasies.

Nevertheless, there must be other means to 'think' about high-level general ideas without using linguistic concepts. One of these means is using objects of our experience in an exemplary way. We might therefore call this method 'exemplary semantics,' and we find it, for example, when trying to think about unlimited generosity, benevolence, or moral integrity in a person, suddenly a picture of our grandfather comes into our mind. In this situation, he represents unrestricted benevolence – but in exemplary semantics – and this is a general idea of higher order, i.e. an idea we cannot represent in the pictorial mode of scenic phantasmas, because there is simply no 'visual side' of the high-level general ideas of benevolence, justice, etc.

There is a fine stratification of generality in low-level general ideas which is not easy to represent by means of more or less visual vagueness. This difficulty can be easily exemplified by my remembering an embarrassing situation that also has some witnesses, i.e. there were some people around when the event happened. If we try to think about this event, there is the event itself in the centre of my scenic phantasma, but there are also 'these people in the background,' who come to see the embarrassing event, too. Who are they? These witnesses in the background are presented only vaguely when I remember the situation, but my feeling tells me additional things about them, for I imagine them with a graded feeling of acquaintance. I understand through this feeling that perhaps they were colleagues, neighbours, or even friends of mine. Without fully individualizing them in my scenic phantasma, I only feel that they are not completely unknown to me. If the feeling of acquaintance is weaker, they may have been only loose acquaintances, people I have met only a few times. In this way, emotions also modulate the generality of low-level general ideas in non-linguistic modes. We see that emotions can carry a multitude of meanings and functions in non-linguistic thinking and that it would be difficult to draw up a complete list.

4 On Deciding in 'Emotional Calculation'

Now we may ask: is the fact that there are so many mixed and concurring emotions found in our non-linguistic thinking about former events and future plans a

problem for this kind of thinking, or is it an advantage? It is not so easy to find an answer to this question, because there are in fact possible difficulties concerning the extensive use of emotions in non-linguistic thinking. I will discuss some of them to a certain extent.

Nonetheless, besides some disadvantages, there are also big advantages in the mixture of emotions in non-linguistic thinking. I first sketch a rough idea about the general advantage of deciding to follow the result of an emotional calculation, then I provide a concrete example before discussing some problems arising from this fact.

Emotional calculation has to be used in non-linguistic thinking in situations where there are many different factors that influence our decision. Most decisions of everyday life are of this kind. Think for example of the decision to choose a certain restaurant for lunch. Here we find the factor of food quality, but this is not the only factor because the ratio between quality and expenses usually lead us to a kind of compromise. Additionally, there may be other factors like the experience that my favourite restaurant is usually overcrowded, so there is a substantial probability that no table will be available. Furthermore, if I am short on time, there might be the factor of time consumption in reaching my favourite restaurant. But how are we able to find a solution to this difficult decision? There are factors that influence our decision-making, but these factors cannot really be set against each other in a conceptual way: in what rational relation can we think of quality and price, of probability and time, etc.? In fact, we solve problems like this all the time, but the solution is not based on linguistic concepts and rational calculations. We come to a solution simply by listening to our emotional answer to these kinds of complex problems.

Speaking of emotional calculation should not imply that this method of relating partly paradoxical motives is somehow a calculation with numbers on a methodical basis. 'Calculation' in this context is used only as a metaphor for our ability to reach a decision in the stormy centre of mixed emotional motives. This kind of mixture of motives is to be found in so many situations of our life that it is easy to see that we only gain our capacity to act by using an emotional calculus. Moreover, there is another advantage of this method of decision-making: It can be done in a second's time. I do not claim that such a decision is always the best decision we are able to find. It is often pointed out that there might have been much better solutions. But from the point of view of evolutionary theory, the mere fact that we are able to decide in a situation with very mixed motives must be understood as an incredibly big advantage.

Apart from the advantages of the strong mixture of emotions in the scenic-phantasmatic system of representation, there are also some disadvantages of founding our decisions on the 'offset of different emotions' in an 'emotional calculation.' One of the very obvious problems is that we have to take elements stemming from very different sources into our 'calculation' of the mixture of emotions. Here is an example: here may be our strong aversion against a certain person, say Peter, who usually starts his day by playing a mean joke on me. Think of the situation when you enter the office after having realized that someone has let the air out of your bike's tires, so you are already suspecting that Peter might be the culprit. Then he welcomes you with a broad grin on his face and you immediately know: it was him, i.e. you are sure without any further examination that it was him, even though you heard children laughing in the bushes in the background near your bike. In cases like this, we might speak of 'prejudices,' and this would be true if we were only language-using thinkers, but in fact there are strong emotions stemming from completely different sources, and we do not hesitate to rest our judgment and the further actions on this emotional information. Thus, you see immediately that emotions stemming from our wishes concerning future events, our fears and aversions, and on the other side emotions representing the security of former insights, etc., may be calculated together as if they were the same 'currency' and deserve the same respect – which in fact is a source of possible errors.

Eventually, we see that we can consider phantasy and emotions quite differently from the standard view. There are advantages to look from a completely different angle at emotions as a central multi-modal element of a non-linguistic system of thinking. But as we are now informed about the great variety of information and valuations entailed in the condensed emotional attitudes we experience in our everyday lives, we may easily run into radical questions about the relation of the two systems (language and non-linguistic thinking).

Ultimately, I see the following alternatives: (1) the non-linguistic system is only a non-functional redundant system of our consciousness, while real thinking takes place only in the mode of linguistic concepts (primacy of language); (2) both systems work in parallel in our thinking and they do not influence each other (parallel systems of equal performance); (3) our language-based thinking is only a kind of secondary, symbolic form of the fundamental non-linguistic system of thinking. I should confess that the latter is the thesis that I sympathize with the most (i.e., the primacy of the non-linguistic system of thinking). It implies that our rich life of

highly condensed scenic phantasmata, accompanied with multi-modal emotions, is the basic way of thinking about everyday concerns. Language is only reformulating the problems that are presented in very condensed forms in non-linguistic thinking, but it does not really have a productive impact, but only makes a minor contribution to our thinking. Language only 'translates' what we have been thinking and deciding before in non-linguistic ways, and thus it is only a rather superficial part of the whole process of thinking on everyday topics.

Nevertheless, language has the merit of being a means of communication, so that we might be able to speak about and discuss items of some importance with others. Thereby, we reach a new level of constitution in intersubjective thinking about states of affairs in the objective world. It seems to us that only by communication can we reach this level of shared opinions on common topics and make up our mind about notions like fairness, justice, and other important topics that can only be conceived by high-level general concepts. But it seems difficult to reach a decision on this level of generality without going back to the everyday intuitions that guide our actions.

To conclude, we had quite an interesting journey into the deep subjective core of a non-linguistic creature. And in fact, we realized that we humans are quite like this: a big part of our conscious life proceeds in a non-linguistic mode, and a big part of our everyday decision-making rests on the rather strange form of calculation in emotional currencies. I do not tend to interpret this way of deciding as 'irrational' (only by following the prejudice that emotions are irrational); it is rather a path of getting back to finding the specific rationality of creatures that are also able to think in non-linguistic modes.

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Seeing Ghosts. Apperception, Accordance and the Mode of Living Presence in Perception¹

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Abstract: Based on Husserl's distinction between mode of living presence (*Modus der Leibhaftigkeit*) and mode of certainty (*Glaubensmodus der Gewißheit*), which coincide in normal univocal perception, the paper argues for a distinction between two different types of accordance (*Einstimmigkeit*) in perceptual experience – *local accordance* and *global accordance*. While *local accordance* is characterized by the *unfolding of appearances in agreement with lines of accordance instituted by recent perceptual apprehensions within a certain spatio-temporal domain*, *global accordance* is characterized by the agreement between *appearances unfolding in local accordance* with previous and simultaneous apprehensions *concerning the spatio-temporal surroundings of this domain*. As will be shown, to perceive something in local accordance amounts to perceiving it in the mode of living presence, while to perceive something in global accordance amounts to perceiving it in the belief mode of certainty (relative to a certain surrounding). In light of these considerations, an account of the perception of figments and immersion is put forward which does not invoke make-belief or the idea of an as-if-perception.

Keywords: Accordance, Mode of Living Presence, Mode of Certainty, Immersion, Apperception, Apprehension, Annulment in Perception

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“Der Sinn selbst hat Neigung zu sein.”
(Edmund Husserl, Hua 11, 42)

“Put a philosopher into a cage of small thin set bars of iron, hang him on the top of the high tower of Nôtre Dame at Paris; he will see, by manifest reason, that he cannot possibly fall, and yet he will find (unless he has been used to the plumb-er’s trade) that he cannot help but the sight of the excessive height will fright and astound him.”

(Michel de Montaigne 1849, 304)

1 Introduction

If you watch a horror movie, walk through a haunted house, or play a horror virtual reality (VR) game, you may experience fear, the sheer amount of which can eventually cause you to leave the theatre, close your eyes, or stop playing. Although you know that the ‘fictitious’ events will do you no harm (except perhaps the fear they cause), the feeling of fear you may feel in relation to such events does not seem to be inferior in any way to its ‘normal’ counterparts in relation to ‘real’ events.

Following this basic intuition, I argue against the claim that emotions concerning fictional objects or events are not normal emotions, that they are only quasi-emotions or the like (e.g. Mulligan 2009; Walton 1978). I will thus argue that emotions towards fictional objects do not differ in principle from emotions concerning actual events or objects. However, I will not argue for this claim directly (by providing a theory of emotions in fictional contexts, for example), but rather by arguing for a distinction between *two separate positing modes of ordinary perceptual experience*. With reference to Husserl, these positing modes are referred to in the following as the “mode of living presence” (*Modus der Leibhaftigkeit*) and as the “belief mode” (*Seinsglaube* or *Geltungsmodus*) of perceptual experience. As I will argue, these two modes derive from two different types of what Husserl calls the experience of ‘accordance’ (*Einstimmigkeit*) in perception – ‘local accordance’ and ‘global accordance.’²

² The account bears some resemblance to so-called dual-component-theories of perceptual experience which claim that “perceptual experiences are complexes of nonconceptual sensory states and beliefs” (Quilty-Dunn 2015a, 550f.).

2 Mode of Living Presence vs. Belief Mode of Certainty

Here is how the account is supposed to work: Perceptual experience of something in the broadest possible sense of the term (which comprises things, events, processes, symbols and situations) normally involves the respective entity to be presented as *itself* in perception, it has to be given in the ‘mode of living presence’ (*Modus der Leibhaftigkeit*).³ This givenness of something in the mode of living presence is not to be identified, however, with the “existential belief” or “belief mode of certainty” (what Husserl calls *Seinsglaube* or *Modus der Gewißheit*) which normally accompanies it (EU, 101 [93]).⁴ In the default mode of perception, what appears in the mode of living presence is without hesitation or reflection tacitly posited in the ‘belief mode of certainty’. If two objects are perceptually given as having different lengths in the mode of living presence, they are normally also posited as having different lengths in the belief mode of certainty. However, mode of living presence and existential belief mode may come apart. You might – if, for example, immersed into a VR environment or if you experience some common perceptual illusion (like a rainbow in the sky) – perceive something in the mode of living presence while at the same time experiencing it in the belief mode of ‘nullity’. Thus, in cases of known illusion like the Müller-Lyer illusion (or if you suffer from tinnitus, for example) the two positing modes of perceptual experience come apart: What you see (or hear) is not what you, at the same time, perceptually believe to be the case. You see what you see, you hear what you hear, but you do not take what you see or hear at face value.

I will thus argue that we can perceive a certain state of affairs in the mode of living presence while at the same time holding existential perceptual beliefs that run contrary to what we perceive in the mode of living presence. And I will do so on Husserlian grounds.

But how is the distinction between mode of living presence and belief mode of certainty as distinct positing modes of perceptual experience helpful in showing

³ What the mode of living presence itself amounts to will be elaborated in the following.

⁴ In the following, for quotations of the works of Husserl the German edition is given first including page number, the corresponding page number of the English translation used is in square brackets.

that emotional responses towards fictional objects or events do not differ in general from ordinary emotional responses? When we, for example, experience fear of a ghost in a haunted house, we do not so much *consciously participate in a game of make-believe* in which we *pretend* to believe that the white shape in front of us is a ghost. We do not vividly *imagine* seeing a ghost, either. We rather – at least in some instances – experience the white shape in front of us *as something which might actually harm us*, we really do *see a ghost* (in the mode of living presence), while at the same time holding the existential belief, *that the thing that we see and fear is not really a ghost* (at least as far as we do not believe in the existence of ghosts).⁵ Now, experiencing something in the mode of living presence is arguably much more immediate than the rather reflective belief or endorsement aspect of perceptual experience: it is much more closely linked to our emotional responses.⁶ We thus simultaneously really *do fear what we see* (in the mode of living presence), while we *do not* perceive what we see and fear as ‘real.’

The claim is that the same holds for the experience of ‘fictional’ objects in general: when experiencing ‘fictional’ objects, characters, events, or states of affairs – through a novel, a film, or a theatre performance – they are often perceived in the mode of living presence, inducing ordinary emotional reactions, while at the same time being perceived in the belief mode of nullity. Thus, while perceiving them in the mode of living presence, subjects do not hold the existential belief that these objects really exist as material objects within the spatio-temporal continuum of their everyday lives. You can watch *The Simpsons* and fear for Bart’s life because you experience him and his being threatened by Sideshow Bob in the *mode of living presence*, while at the same time not believing that both of them exist, at least not as beings of flesh and blood like your real-life friends do. You can look at René Magritte’s *La trahison des images* and not get the joke while at the same time perceiving a pipe in the mode of living presence and not perceptually believing that there really is a

⁵ Concerning the critique of views that postulate make-belief or similar mechanisms (in addition to ordinary perception) to explain the perception of fictional objects, a similar account can be found in Quilty-Dunn (2015b). However, Quilty-Dunn conceptualizes what is here called ‘mode of living presence’ as a kind of belief.

⁶ Husserl seems somewhat indecisive whether the belief mode is to be conceptualized as a phenomenological aspect of or rather as a propositional attitude accompanying perceptual experience.

pipe that can be plugged, smoked, or thrown away.⁷ To put this idea somewhat differently, the proposal is that we should not so much use *pretend-play* as a paradigm for understanding fictional objects and events, but rather cases of *known illusions*.

I recognize, however, that the way I am interpreting Husserl concerning the perception of movies, images, or theatre runs contrary to Husserl's own explications concerning the as-if-perception of image objects. However, I will show that the interpretation I offer here is in accordance with Husserl's reflections on the difference between mode of living presence and perceptual belief mode, although it admittedly somewhat runs contrary to Husserl's own account of image-consciousness and the unique 'nullity' of figments.

⁷ An obvious objection to this hypothesis might be seen in the fact that we simply do not, if we take *La trahison des images* as an example, perceive a pipe in the mode of living presence when we look at Magritte's painting. This objection rests, however, on an implicit notion of what experiencing something in the mode of living presence amounts to. It can only seem sound when *mode of living presence* and *belief mode of certainty* are conflated in the first place; and it can thus be rejected on Husserlian grounds. A rather straightforward phenomenological counterargument to this objection is that there are at least cases in which we experience something in the mode of living presence, although our perception is technically mediated by representations (on screens or through loudspeakers, for example). Think of video or telephone conversations in which we normally experience the other person on the call in the mode of living presence, and, as we will see, normally also in the belief mode of certainty. The fact that we perceive something through a 'representation' does thus not, at least not in principle, prevent us from experiencing it in the mode of living presence and can thus be a case of direct perception of an object. However, in order to accept this claim, one has to approve the phenomenological observation that perception which is mediated through representations can, at least in principle, be perception proper, i.e. that the object mediated via representations can nevertheless be given in perception "as itself there [and] in the flesh" (*als leibhaft selbst da*) (Hua 39, 637; my translation), i.e. in the mode of living presence and the belief mode of certainty. Although perception via representational mediation doesn't seem to be a case that Husserl specifically has in mind here, he stresses the fact that there is generally "a certain indirectness [*eine gewisse Mittelbarkeit*] in perception" (ibid.). Mediation via representation has thus to be conceptualized, as I would argue, as concerning the "differences of completeness" (*Unterschiede der Vollkommenheit*) of the perception of "one and the same object" as itself there in the flesh. These differences of completeness, according to Husserl, "do not alter the fact that the object with its qualities is given in all perceptions of the unanimous continuum of perception, which we here call the 'original' or even normal one; only it is given in one [perception] from this side, in others from the other [side], in some with relation to these circumstances, in the others with relation to those; some circumstances are less favourable, like seeing in the dark compared with seeing in bright daylight." (ibid.).

I will argue for this account by showing that the *mode of living presence* and the *belief mode* of perception are linked to two different types of ‘accordance’ (*Einstimmigkeit*) in experience, which Husserl himself does not, at least to my knowledge, explicitly distinguish. On the one hand, there is *local accordance*, which consists in the perceptual experience of a “concordant transition to new appearances” (*einstimmige Überleitung in neue Erscheinungen*) from a certain point of impressional “institution” (*Stiftung*) of “a line of harmony [*Einstimmigkeit*] and disagreement [*Unstimmigkeit*]” (Hua 11, 37 [76]). If you start to see (something as) a dog (be it on the street or on a screen) a line of local accordance is instituted which delineates an “internal horizon” (*Innenhorizont*) of possible unfoldings of appearances which will let you continue to see (what you see as) a dog (EU, 28 [33]). Local accordance can thus be characterized by the *unfolding of appearances in agreement with lines of accordance instituted by recent perceptual apprehensions* within a certain spatio-temporal episode or domain. On the other hand, there is *global accordance*, which is characterized by the agreement between sensations and appearances *unfolding in local accordance within such an internal horizon* with previous and simultaneous apprehensions *concerning the spatio-temporal surroundings* – the ‘external horizon’ (*Außenhorizont*) – *of this domain*. Global accordance thus amounts to the more or less tacit judgement, belief or experience that an apprehended object appearing in perception in local accordance (and thus in the mode of living presence) is also in accordance with its external horizon, the spatio-temporal continuum previously perceived and posited by the subject. If this is the case, the object perceived in the mode of living presence is also posited as ‘real.’

Now, while the perception of something in *local accordance* manifests itself in the fact that the perceived is given in the *mode of living presence*, the perception of something in *global accordance* manifests itself in the fact that the perceived is given in the *belief mode of certainty*. If newly emerging appearances are in local accordance with previously instituted lines of accordance (which are based on certain apprehensions), the perceived is immediately given in the *mode of living presence*. If you see a character on a screen and apprehend them as Homer Simpson (or as a dog) and they continue to behave in a Homer Simpson (or dog) like manner, you will perceive Homer Simpson (or a dog) in the *mode of living presence*. If, on the other hand, a newly emerging appearance is experienced in *global accordance* with what was previously posited by a subject, the perceived is without any further or conscious consideration given (or posited) as real in belief mode. If, again,

something is given in the mode of living presence, but in *global discordance* with its surrounding, it is perceived in the belief mode of nullity.

However, before we can turn to the further clarification of these two types of accordance, I would like to start with some introductory remarks concerning the notions of ‘perceptual apprehension’ and ‘apperception,’ which I consider crucial to understanding Husserl’s thoughts on *accordance*, the *mode of living presence* and the *belief mode* in perceptual experience.

3 Some Remarks on the Notions of ‘Perceptual Apprehension’ and ‘Apperception’

Understanding what Husserl has in mind when he talks about ‘perceptual apprehension’ or ‘apperception’ is crucial for what follows. In order to provide such an understanding, however, I would like to take a short detour on a somewhat forgotten strand of the philosophical history of the notion ‘apperception.’ Husserl himself often uses the notions “apprehension” (*Auffassung*) and “apperception” (*Apperzeption*) interchangeably (see, e.g., EU, 305), he sometimes even combines the two when he talks about “apperceptive apprehension” (*apperzeptive Auffassung*) (Hua 11, 18). In his lecture on *Thing and Space* (1907), he states that he would prefer “to avoid completely the ambiguous word ‘apperception’; the term ‘apprehension’ suffices, as Stumpf advocated long ago” (TS, 42; Hua 16, 49), although he kept on using both of these notions synonymously in later works. Nevertheless, his use of both notions bears a striking resemblance to the concept of “apperception” as it was first used by Herbart and later taken up and expanded by the psychologists Steinthal and Lazarus (see also Hölenstein 1972, 140f.).⁸

“Apperception” (which stems from the Latin word *ad-percipere*), as these authors as well as Husserl use this notion, points to the fact that “there is literally something *added* to the mere sensual *perception*, in order to intend an object *as something*” (Breyer & Gutland 2016, 7). All three authors discussed in the following take apperception to mean different variants of the way in which, within perception, there

⁸ There is another strand of the philosophical history of the notion “apperception,” which traces back to Leibniz and Kant.

is something added or appresented (e.g. the hidden parts of an object or unseen parts of the building one is in) to that which is ‘properly’ perceived (e.g. the facing side of an object). This is why Husserl occasionally speaks of “improper perception” (*uneigentlicher Wahrnehmung*) (Hua 10, 55) or “co-perception” (*Mitwahrnehmung*) (Hua 1, 150) when it comes to apperception. As we will see, however, Herbart and Lazarus take apperception to describe a process on a subpersonal, unconscious level underlying perception, while Husserl’s conception of apperception focusses on a phenomenologically descriptive aspect of perceptual experience itself.

Herbart illustrates his conception of apperception in the second volume of his *Psychologie als Wissenschaft* (1825) with a simple example: when we ordinarily think about “different places and occupations,” we associatively represent further thoughts and ideas that seem to belong to these places or occupations: “[f]or example, the church, the theatre, the office, the garden, the chessboard, the card game, etc. One will immediately notice that each of these entities corresponds to its own complex of ideas” (Herbart 1825, 213).⁹ According to Herbart, ideas form associative complexes in consciousness that seem to belong together due to past experiences of their spatial or temporal contiguity. In Herbart’s case, *apperception* refers to the fact that the ideas (*Vorstellungen*) of external perception, of the “external sense,” are grasped or understood by means of such “complexes of ideas” (*Vorstellungsmassen*) already sedimented in the subject:

The percepts [*Auffassungen*] of the external sense are apperceived or appropriated by awakening older similar ideas, merging with them, and introducing them into their connections [*sie in ihre Verbindungen einführen*]. Stimulated expectation promotes apperception; thus we observe a play in which the very beginning of the play sets in motion a number of ideas as to how the play *might* proceed, and with which the *actual* course of the play then enters into all kinds of relations of inhibition and fusion. (Ibid., 214)

Herbart describes the process of apperception as a process taking place on a subpersonal level within the subject, in which *complexes of ideas* are conceived by other *complexes of ideas*. He therefore distinguishes between “apperceiving” (*appercipirender*) and “apperceived” (*appercipirter*) complexes of ideas (ibid., 215). Apperception thus

⁹ The following translations of Herbart, Lazarus and Holenstein are mine.

refers to the way in which present perceptual ideas (*Wahrnehmungsvorstellungen*) are understood and processed through the background of sedimented experiences of the subject. In this sense, apperception denotes a “sensualistic-associationist process of assimilation” of the present to the past (Holenstein 1972, 135). Perceptual ideas are directly conceived against the background of similar past ideas, provided that the current sensations and ideas show sufficient similarity to older complexes of ideas.¹⁰ Apperception thus fulfils an “interpretive function” (*Deutungsfunktion*) (ibid., 140). Herbart (1825, 216) therefore distinguishes between *perception* and *apperception*, whereby the former “always precedes apperception,” while “the latter is what remains” in consciousness.

For Herbart, expectation and anticipation, which will prove central to the view advocated here, are connected with apperception in that perceptual sensations and ideas awaken or highlight probable courses of further perceptual sensations and ideas that could follow and continue current sensations, based on usual sequences of ideas throughout previous experiences (see also Poljanšek 2015). According to Herbart (1825, 215), every “new perception [*Wahrnehmung*], even with the greatest strength of the current percept [*Auffassung*],” must “accept being drawn into the already existing connections and movements of the older ideas.” (Ap)perception thus always takes place against the background of previous experiences sedimented in complexes of ideas, through which current perceptual ideas are then apperceived.

Lazarus (1878, 41), who takes up Herbart’s thoughts on apperception, likewise distinguishes between *perception* and *apperception* with regard to the “psychic” process of the “perception of the outside world” (*Auffassung der Außenwelt*). In a letter to his friend Paul Heye, Lazarus illustrates his conception of apperception with regard to a picture of himself that he attached to the letter:

And now, my beloved friend! A word about my picture. I have so long enjoyed the pleasure of a pictorial representation of you and have learned to appreciate it so much that I believe my picture will also please you. Even if mother nature has failed to make an aesthetic ornament out of it, [...] so will – my wife certainly wants to dictate the addendum: so will your dear and beautiful eye make it beautiful enough by looking at it. [...] For my person,

¹⁰ Prinz (2002) argues for a neo-empiricist theory of perception which bears a striking resemblance to the theories of apperception put forward by Herbart and Lazarus.

I would have simply said that the mind enters the eyes and helps to see, or to speak scientifically, that apperception is stronger than perception and a friend's eye therefore only sees the friend – if it belongs to a faithful heart as old as yours. (Quoted after Belke 1986, 585f.).

For Lazarus also, both perception and apperception are separate processes ‘in the whole of a sensory perception.’ However, “for the ordinary consciousness of experience [*das einfache Bewußtsein der Erfahrung*]” they prove to be “completely indistinguishable” (Lazarus 1878, 41): in “the real world of psychic phenomena, every perception [...] is at the same time an apperception” (ibid., 42).

Every reaction is determined, on the one hand, by the nature of the action against which it reacts and, on the other hand, by the nature, i.e., by the original or acquired nature, of the reacting being. Thus, every sensation [*Empfindung*] will also depend, on the one hand, on the nature of the stimulating object and, on the other hand, on the nature of the soul as a sentient being [*der Natur der Seele als eines empfindenden Wesens*]. [...] Apperception, however, is the reaction of the soul already *filled* with content and more or less *educated* [*ausgebildet*] by earlier processes. (Ibid.)

Thus, with regard to external experience, the “previously acquired content” turns out to be “a participating *organ* of the soul,” while the “pure perception by the soul that is not filled with any content” proves to be “a mere abstraction that hardly has any reality in the newborn child” (ibid.). There is never, according to Lazarus, something like pure uninterpreted sensory content in perceptual experience. Common perception of a concrete object thus culminates in the fact that we “recognize” (*erkennen*) the perceived object,

[...] i.e. that we re-cognize [*wiedererkennen*] it. We see, here is a house, a tree, this or that person. From the sensory stimuli [*Sinnesreizen*] and their sensations [*Empfindungen*], we not only form this particular intuition [*Anschaung*], but at the same time it is linked to the earlier same or similar intuition and with it is declared to be the same or similar. (Ibid., 43f.)

Apperception here thus refers to the immediate perception or understanding of an object through a general *type* or *idea*, which manifests itself in the perceptual structure of something-as-something. It is “hardly necessary first to remind” the reader, Lazarus adds, that “this inner process takes place unconsciously and involuntarily,” whereby the “emergence of the present image [*Bild*] itself (perception), according to the whole type and form [*Art und Gestalt*] given to it, is dependent on the earlier image coming from within, which we have already possessed” (ibid.). Apperception thus informs the very structure of what is given as phenomenal content in perception, it does not name some additional predicative judgement that is added or applied to some pure or uninterpreted sensory content.

One of the most important ways in which apperception or apprehension informs the phenomenal and sensory content of perception is by *highlighting and appresenting specific horizons of typical anticipations and expectations*, which determine what the perceived is perceived *as* (see also Poljanšek 2015). Apperception of something as a thing of a certain type goes along with the institution of “a line of harmony [*Einstimmigkeit*] and disagreement [*Unstimmigkeit*]” concerning further perception (Hua 23, 565 [681]). If I see something as *a dog*, not only do I, without any conscious consideration, appresent in perception visually hidden parts of the dog, I also appresent typical ways a dog is likely to behave.¹¹ The same goes for event types (like greetings or conversations) or types of situations (like birthdays or funerals). If this analysis turns out to be true, to *see something as a thing of a certain type* means in the first place to appresent such type-specific horizons of expectations, without necessarily involving any perceptual judgement or propositional content in perceptual experience.

Now, for Lazarus, the ‘best known and most striking example’ of the necessary influence of apperception on the constitution of the objects of immediate perception is reading.

Experienced novel or newspaper readers would hardly come out of the passage so quickly if they had to see all the letters of a word – and every single one of them perfectly clearly – in order to perceive the word inwardly [*um das Wort innerlich wahrzunehmen*]. (Ibid., 46)

¹¹ On a rather abstract level, expectations are appresented future parts of things or processes.

Among other examples concerning the way in which unclearly uttered words are apperceptively supplemented or “intensified” into familiar ones, Lazarus emphasizes that apperception is closely related to expectation in that the latter represents a “readiness for apperception” (ibid., 51). If a corresponding expectation triggered or instituted by a certain previous apperception is disappointed, “then obviously a negation of the subjective (apperceiving) idea [*Vorstellung*] becomes necessary”; a new apperception has to take place on the basis of the experience that contradicted previous expectations (ibid., 51f.).

The assumption of such a connection between expectation and apperception now offers us the opportunity to turn to Husserl’s conception of apperception or apprehension.¹² For Husserl, apprehension is a characteristic feature that describes “at bottom absolutely every perception, indeed every evidence, [...] in respect of a most general feature” (Hua 1, 151 [122]). Apprehension presupposes a “core of presentation,” it is a “making present combined by associations with presentation, with perception proper, but a making present that is fused with the latter in the particular function of ‘co-perception’ [*Mitwahrnehmung*]” (ibid., 150 [122]). In every perceptual apprehension of something we can thus phenomenally distinguish a *perceptual core that is presented as actual* (e.g. the facing side of an object) from an internal *horizon of co-perceived or appresented spatial and temporal parts of what is perceived that is presented as virtual or ‘empty’* (e.g. hidden spatial parts of the object or horizons of likely or probable possibilities). Now, both of these, the core that is presented as actual and the horizon that is presented as empty, are “so fused that they stand in the *functional community of one perception*” (ibid.). Therefore, in every perception of an object “making its appearance in the mode, itself-there,” (what Husserl on other occasions calls the *mode of living presence*), the “genuinely perceived” can phenomenally be distinguished from the “rest [*Überschuss*], which is not strictly perceived and yet is indeed there too” (ibid., 151). However, co-perception does not end with the appresentation of spatial and temporal parts of the object perceived (its ‘internal

¹² The idea that the content of ordinary perception is significantly shaped by unconscious anticipations can be traced back to Helmholtz (1867) – or even further to Maimonides (1924 [originally published towards the end of the 12th century]) and Maimon (1791) – and is nowadays revitalized in Bayesian accounts of perception like, e.g., Clark’s (2016).

horizon'), it also includes the appresentation of its surroundings (its 'external horizon').

There is thus a close connection between this general structure of perceptual apprehension (or apperception) and what the perceived is perceived *as*. Husserl's crucial idea, the roots of which can be traced back to Herbart's and Lazarus' conception of apperception, is that, on the one hand, the apprehension or apperception of some sensory content interprets this content as the *genuinely perceived core of what is perceived* (the facing side of a living being, a flower, etc.), and that, on the other hand, apperception thus essentially informs the appresented, co-perceived spatial and temporal parts of the perceived entity itself. Apperception adds, so to say, the specific internal horizon that surrounds and supplements the genuinely perceived core of the perceived.

What can be a real physical thing intuition [*reale Dinganschauung*] (better: what, as a thing, is supposed to be able to stand before me in perception as real) can be a human being, but not a human being who is white like plaster, and so on. Human beings can look very different from one another, *but the idea "human being" prescribes certain possibilities for perception* [*die Idee Mensch schreibt der Wahrnehmung gewisse Möglichkeiten vor*]: a human being is something that has a certain look in perception. This signifies a certain *type*, which possesses as a possibility its positing characteristic. We can thus say: it is a perceptual appearance; specifically, an appearance of a human being. What belongs to it and is apprehended or co-apprehended – human interiority, the human form, and so on – requires, presentationally, certain further moments (Hua 23, 490 [585]).

The main difference between Husserl's conception of apprehension and Herbart's and Lazarus's conception of apperception is, then, that Husserl does not take apperception to name some "obscure, hypothetical events in the soul's unconscious depths, or in the sphere of physiological happenings" (Hua 19/1, 399 [105]). For him, apperception is rather a phenomenologically descriptive aspect of perceptual experience itself.

Apperception is our surplus [Überschuss], which is found in experience itself, in its descriptive content as opposed to the raw existence of sense: it is

the act-character which as it were ensouls sense, and is in essence such as to make us perceive this or that object, see this tree, e.g., hear this ringing, smell this scent of flowers, etc., etc. (ibid.).

For the following, however, the most important aspect of apperception in Husserl's sense lies in its close connectedness to the formation of specific horizons of expectations, anticipations and co-presentation according to the specific 'type' through which it is mediated.¹³

Apperceptions transcend their immanent content, and belonging essentially to this transcending is the fact that within the same stream of consciousness whose segments are being continually connected, a fulfilling lived-experience is possible [*ein erfüllendes Erlebnis möglich ist*] that, in the synthesis of fulfillment, supplies its self-given matter as the same, and in that other lived-experience supplies what is not-self-given and the same [self-given matter]. Insofar as this is the case, there is a law here regulating the future, but a law merely for future possibilities, concerning a possible continuation of the stream of consciousness, one that is ideally possible. (Hua 11, 336f. [624f.])

The apperception of some sensory content through a specific type thus indicates (and institutes) possible routes of continually experiencing the same something (the same melody, the same dog, the same person) in *local accordance* and thus, as I will argue in the next section, in the *mode of living presence*.

However, apperception does not only add the internal horizon of the perceived, it also adds external horizons concerning its surroundings in different degrees of clarity and distinctness. Apperception thus not only concerns the appresentation of parts of the perceived itself (which belong to its internal horizon), it further extends to the

¹³ For an explication of the functioning of types in Husserl's theory of apperception see especially Lohmar (1998, 236ff.) as well as Balle (2008). Millikan has proposed an idea that is very similar to Husserl's conception of types under the names "substance concepts" (2004) and "unicepts" (2017).

[...] unseen parts of the room which are behind my back, to the veranda, into the garden, to the children in the arbor, etc., to all the Objects [sic!] I directly “know of” as being there and here in the surroundings of which there is also consciousness [*meiner unmittelbar mitbewußten Umgebung*] – a “knowing of them” which involves no conceptual thinking and which changes into a clear intuiting only with the advertence of attention, and even then only partially and for the most part very imperfectly. (Hua 3/1, 57 [52])

Thus, what is given in perception in the mode of living presence is always supplemented with a “domain of this intuitionally clear or obscure, distinct or indistinct, *co-present* [*Mitgegenwärtigen*] – which makes up a constant halo around the field of actual perception [*einen beständigen Umring des aktuellen Wahrnehmungsfeldes ausmacht*]” (ibid.). And it doesn’t stop there: this appresented co-present itself is, again, “penetrated and surrounded by an *obscurely intended to horizon of indeterminate actuality*” into which “rays of the illuminative regard of attention [*Strahlen des aufhellenden Blickes der Aufmerksamkeit*]” can be sent by the perceiving subject (ibid.). We can thus discriminate between three phenomenological layers of perception (1) the *field of actual perception* (which comprises the genuinely perceived core as well as the co-perceived internal horizon of the perceived) (2) the *domain of the intuitionally given co-present surrounding this field* and (3) the *obscurely intended horizon of indeterminate actuality*. Phenomenologically speaking, we find the field of current perception enveloped by co-perceived layers of apprehensions, which are again enveloped by an obscurely intended horizon of indeterminate actuality.

If we apply this distinction to the concept of global accordance in perception, we can see that global accordance (or discordance) concerning the field of actual perception and its relation to a certain layer of the intuitionally given co-present can be *immediately experienced* (as far as they both are intuitionally given). While, on the other hand, the question whether the field of actual perception is in global accordance with the obscurely intended horizon of indeterminate actuality seems to involve a rather reflective or cognitive judgement (insofar as this horizon is not intuitionally, but only obscurely intended).

4 From Certainty to Doubt and Back to Certainty Again: Mode of Living Presence and Local Accordance in Perceptual Apprehension

In a short note from 1909, Husserl grapples with the different “modifications of believing” that are involved in the phenomena of (perceptual) “belief (certainty),” inclination, and doubt. In a first step, he distinguishes between uncontested “normal perception,” where “[t]he mode is that of certainty” and “[d]oubting apprehension,” which he exemplifies in the following passage:

Is that my friend Hans or someone else? Is that a hound or a fox? Two perceptual apprehensions: but not normal perceptions. In comparison with normal perception both have a certain modification: namely, with regard to the *belief* mode. The doubt presupposes a “conflict of interpenetrating apprehensions,” though in the conflict it presupposes common perceptual moments, a common stock of sensations, and a certain common perceptual stock in the apprehensions. (Hua 23, 227 [336])

While in “normal, univocal perception, i.e., in perception running its course concordantly” the intentional object is presented “as being there in a straightforward manner” (*[sofern das] leibhaftig Erscheinende [...] in der normalen, einsinnig, also einstimmig verlaufenden Wahrnehmung, eben als schlechthin-da bewußt ist*), in doubting apprehension the object “is now given to us as questionable, as dubious, as contentious” (Hua 11, 35f. [74]). Normal perception “has the primordial mode [...] of] naïve certainty. The appearing object is there in uncontested and unbroken certainty” (ibid., 36 [75]). Thus, normal perception has the “entirely original, entirely unmodified mode of certain validity; the straightforward constitution of the perceptual object is carried out univocally [*einstimmig*] in this mode, and without struggle” (ibid., 37 [76]). This is why Husserl can say that “[b]elief is not something appended to presentations, not a *feeling* associating itself with them, not a way of being affected, now present, now absent [...], it is the *unmodified consciousness itself*” (Hua 23, 558 [670]). In ordinary concordantly unfolding perception, there is thus no doubt for the perceiving subject to “carry out the unbroken thesis: ‘It is so’” (Hua 11, 44 [84]). *Doubting apprehension*, on the other hand, is characterized by two or

more contending apprehensions concerning “a common stock of sensations, and a certain common perceptual stock” (Hua 23, 227 [336]).

Husserl often exemplifies the specific belief mode of doubting apprehension with an example he first uses in his *Logical Investigations*:

Wandering about in the Panopticum Waxworks we meet on the stairs a charming lady whom we do not know and who seems to know us, and who is in fact the well-known joke of the place: we have for a moment been tricked by a waxwork figure. As long as we *are* tricked, we experience a perfectly good percept [*haben wir eine Wahrnehmung, so gut wie irgendeine andere*]: we see a lady and not a waxwork figure. When the illusion vanishes, we see exactly the opposite, a waxwork figure that only *represents* [*vorstellt*] a lady. (Hua 19/1, 458 [137f.])

After we have realized that we have been tricked, we “experience a perfectly good percept” again, we see a waxwork figure. Nevertheless, between these two states of perception in the mode of certainty, we often experience an episode of *doubting apprehension* (EU, 99 [92]). Two different “perceptual interpretations” – the perception of a lady and that of a waxwork figure – “interpenetrate in conflicting fashion, so that our observation wanders from one to another of the apparent objects each barring the other from *existence*” (Hua 19/1, 458 [138, my emphasis]). In cases of doubting apprehension, we experience, as Husserl puts it, two diverging “inclinations of belief” (*Glaubensneigungen*) (EU, 103 [95]) at once. What occurs when we begin to see the waxwork figure or mannequin in addition to seeing a human being is thus “not a radical break in the form of a decisive disappointment,” “not a conflict of an anticipatory intention with a newly emerging perceptual appearance, resulting in the cancellation of the first [the perception of a human being]” (EU, 99f. [92]). That is to say, the two instituted lines of local accordance (seeing a charming lady and seeing a waxwork figure) both remain intact as far as they are not contested by newly emerging appearances. What rather happens is that the “full concrete content in the actual appearance now obtains all at once a second content, which slips over it” (EU, 100 [92]):

[...] the visual appearance, the spatial form imbued with color, was until now provided with a halo of anticipatory intentions [*Hof von Auffassungs-*

intentionen] which gave the sense “human body” and, in general, “man;” now there is superposed on it the sense “clothed mannequin.” Nothing has changed regarding what is really seen; indeed, there is even more in common: commonly perceived [*gemeinsam apperzipiert*] on both sides are clothing, hair, and the like, but, on the one hand, flesh and blood and, on the other, probably painted wood. One and the same complex of sense data is the common foundation of two apprehensions superimposed on each other. Neither of the two is canceled out during the period of the doubt. They stand in mutual conflict; each one has in a certain way its own force, each is motivated, almost summoned [*gleichsam gefordert*], by the preceding perceptual situation and its intentional content.

Now, Husserl seems somewhat indecisive concerning the question of whether this kind of doubting perception is to be adequately construed as a “*double perception*” (EU, 100 [93]), meaning that we would experience two perceptual apprehensions (or interpretations) *at the same time*. The description cited above seems to imply that, at least in a certain sense, this is indeed the case as far as the two apprehensions are ‘superimposed on each other’ and neither of the two ‘is canceled out.’ And yet not really two [perceptions], for their conflict [*Widerstreit*] also implies a certain reciprocal displacement [*gewisse wechselseitige Verdrängung*]” (EU, 100 [93]).

How is this supposed conflict to be resolved? In order to understand the nature of doubting apprehension we have to take into account Husserl’s distinction between “mode of living presence” (*Modus der Leibhaftigkeit*) and “mode of being” or “belief mode” (*Seins- oder Geltungsmodus*) of perceptual experience (EU, 101 [93]).¹⁴ As we have seen before, in ordinary, univocal perception, “what appears stands there as being [*als Seiendes*]; it counts as actual [*es gilt als wirklich*]” (Hua 16, 151 [126]). Yet, the “essential core of the phenomenon, which we call appearance, can be preserved even though this character of belief is lacking” (Hua 16, 151 [126]). But what remains of a perceptual apprehension when the character of belief is lacking? What is appearance without (existential) belief? Let’s focus once again on the moment when “the apperception of human being suddenly changes into the apperception

¹⁴ Husserl himself repeatedly struggles with the question whether belief is to be conceptualized as a “distinct, separable moment” or rather “as a mode” of perception (Hua 23, 220; see especially Ni 1999, 29ff.).

of wax figure”: first, “the human being will stand there [...] in its presentation in the flesh, and then a wax figure [zuerst *steht*] *der Mensch in Leibhaftigkeit da, und das andere Mal eine Puppe*” (Hua 11, 35 [74]).¹⁵ Once such a shift of apperceptions has occurred, the “mode of consciousness has altered, although the objective sense and its modes of appearance, now as before, has the mode of being presented in the flesh [*Modus der Leibhaftigkeit*]” (Hua 11, 35 [74]). That means that appearances of an objective sense can retain the mode of living presence while the belief mode is altered to that of doubt.

We can now see that in univocal perception of an object, the mode of living presence and the belief mode are indistinguishably interwoven, “one is conscious of it in the originary mode [...] of actuality ‘in person,’ [*in dem Ursprungsmodus [...] der leibhaftigen Wirklichkeit*] or, more precisely, of primal actuality ‘in person,’ [*der leibhaftigen Urwirklichkeit*] which is called the present” (Hua 23, 500 [601]).¹⁶ However, according to Husserl, consciousness “which presents its object originally [*sic*] [*originär*] and in person [*leibhaft*] not only has the *mode of living presence* [...]; it also has a variable *mode of being or validity*” (EU, 101 [93]). Thus, although the perceiving subject does not consciously distinguish between *mode of living presence* and *belief mode of certainty* in the *mode of primal actuality* ‘in person,’ we can nevertheless – as far as they both may come apart – distinguish these two aspects: the *mode of living presence*, through which the object in question is given *as appearance* ‘in person,’ and the *belief mode*, through which the object is *posited as being real or actual*. To perceive something in the mode of living presence then amounts to apprehensively experiencing it as *being there* ‘in person,’ which, according to Husserl, further implies a certain *inclination to believe* in the existence of this something. In other words, to perceptually perceive something in the mode of living presence implies having a certain apprehension concerning a current complex of sense data

¹⁵ Husserl distinguishes the *mode of living presence* from “both presentifying [*vergegenwärtigenden*] and empty consciousness, each of which gives the same objective sense [*denselben gegenständlichen Sinn*], although not in a living presence” (EU, 101 [93]).

¹⁶ Tugendhat (1970, 67) thinks that Husserl uses the notions “originary” (*originär*) and “in person” (*leibhaftig*) synonymously. However, as I try to show, although Husserl thinks that in normal perception belief mode and mode of living presence are not consciously distinguished by the perceiving subject, they are nevertheless to be distinguished in the course of a phenomenological analysis.

as its foundation, while the further unfolding of sense data doesn't contest the line of accordance instituted by the apprehension in question.

Now it also becomes clear how the experience of something (some "objective sense" or appearance) in the mode of living presence is linked with the phenomenon of *local accordance*. If a perceptual "impression" is apperceived through a certain type (e.g. as a human being) – or, as Husserl sometimes puts it, with "the institution [*Stiftung*] of an objective sense" – "a line of harmony [*Einstimmigkeit*] and disagreement [*Unstimmigkeit*] is instituted" (Hua 23, 565 [681]). That is to say, when perceptual experience unfolds along the line of accordance instituted by a specific perceptual apprehension, the objective sense (e.g. a human being) will be given in the mode of living presence, regardless of the belief mode in which it is given. *Local accordance* thus amounts to the unfolding of perception along the line of accordance instituted by a certain apprehension.

Now, according to Husserl, "normal perception" is characterized by the fact that within it "only *one* sense" is constituted "in unanimity [*in Einstimmigkeit*]" (EU, 101 [93]). In normal perception we thus simply believe in what is perceptually given to us (in the mode of living presence). What is perceived in the mode of living presence is without hesitation posited as real in belief mode, because no simultaneously contesting apprehension and thus *inclination of belief* is perceptually given. If a bifurcation of contesting apprehensions emerges in perception, however, like in Husserl's examples of the waxwork figure or mannequin, we experience *interpenetrating apprehensions* in the mode of living presence with conflicting *inclinations of belief*, which thus leads to perception in the *belief mode of doubt*. In doubting apprehension, we experience two (or more) apprehensions in the *mode of living presence* at the same time (or, at least, one after the other), while the *belief mode* of our perception is that of *doubt*, because the diverging *inclinations of belief* going hand in hand with these two apprehensions (experienced in the *mode of living presence*) cannot, supposedly, be underwritten by the subject at the same time.

A perceptual apprehension can also conflict with an image apprehension (a depicting apprehension): as in the conflict 'mannequin or human being,' [in which] the mannequin is the image of a human being. Here, therefore, we have the 'interpenetrating' of apprehensions. As for the modes of belief, there is a 'belief tendency' [*Glaubensneigung*], a deeming possible [*Anmutung*], for each side. Different strengths of deeming possible. Perhaps a decision in fa-

vor of certainty for one side, even though a deeming possible continues for the other side. (Hua 23, 277f. [336])

Thus, the supposed conflict concerning the question of double perception seems to be resolved by the distinction of *mode of living presence* and *belief mode*. Husserl seems to admit that we can experience two diverging apprehensions in the mode of living presence at the same time (and without conflict) while these two apprehensions cannot be given in perception in the belief mode of certainty without conflict at the same time. Why is that so? Concerning the question of *local accordance* in experience, there is *prima facie* no reason why a subject should not have two (or more) apprehensions concerning ‘a common stock of sensations’ in the mode of living presence at the same time, as far as the further succession of perceptions allows for them to be experienced in local accordance. An everyday example of this phenomenon is ambiguous verbal allusion, in which two different senses are expressed and grasped simultaneously without any conflict.¹⁷

This interpretation of the mode of living presence is further supported by the following passage, in which Husserl describes a situation in which the subject has already convinced herself that she has been tricked by a waxwork figure (which she now perceives in the belief mode of certainty), but still somehow sees the lady she perceived before in (or through) the waxwork figure. However, the lady is now perceptually given both in the *mode of living presence* and in the *belief mode of invalidity* (*nullity or unbelief*).

It is the same lady who appears on both occasions, and who appears endowed with the same set of phenomenal properties. But in the one case she stands before us as real [*als Wirklichkeit*], in the other case as a fiction, with a full-blooded appearance which yet amounts to nothing [*leibhaft erscheinend und doch als ein Nichtiges*]. (Hua 19/1, 460 [138])

¹⁷ However, while it is perfectly coherent to experience two conflicting apprehensions in the mode of living presence at the same time, insofar as they are both unfolding in local accordance, it is not possible to coherently posit in belief mode that a thing that one perceives has contradictory properties – that it is, e.g., animate and inanimate – at the same time.

We indeed 'know' that it is a semblance, but we cannot help ourselves – we see a human being. The accompanying conceptual judgment that what is at stake is a mere image becomes ineffective against the perceptual semblance, and the inclination to take it as real is so great that [we] might even believe for a moment [*für Momente sogar glauben möchten*] that it is real. (Hua 23, 40f. [43f.])

It thus seems as if experiencing something in the mode of living presence is in itself somehow positional, i.e. suggesting the positing of the experienced object or state of affairs as existing or holding, without the subject necessarily subscribing (in belief mode) to this existential suggestion. “The sense itself has the propensity to be” (Hua 11, 42 [82]). That explains why Husserl often talks about the subject having to make some kind of “decision” concerning diverging inclinations of belief in perception (see, e.g., EU, 103 [95]), while in normal uncontested perception, the existential suggestion implied by the perception of something in the mode of living presence is immediately and without any hesitation underwritten by the subject (Hua 11, 36 [75]).

A question that remains concerns the relation between *belief mode of certainty* (or ‘mode of being’) and the *experience of global accordance* in perception. As already indicated at the beginning, Husserl does not explicitly distinguish between local accordance and global accordance. He sometimes even seems to define belief simply as “consciousness of harmony [*Einstimmigkeit*]; unbelief as consciousness of what conflicts with the harmony and is annulled by it” (Hua 23, 565 [681]). But what exactly does the belief mode of certainty have to do with the experience of global accordance?

Why is what is perceived accepted as reality [...]? [...] What is coherence [*Zusammenhang*] (naturally, objective coherence among affairs [*sachlicher Zusammenhang*], but what is that?), and what is incoherence [*Zusammenhanglosigkeit*]? This will have to be our question. (Hua 23, 150f. [179])

5 Belief Mode of Certainty and Global Accordance in Perceptual Apprehension

Throughout his intellectual life, Husserl hovered between the idea that “existential belief” (*Seinsglaube*) should be conceptualized as a “specific, separable moment” of perception and the idea that it is rather to be conceptualized as an (inseparable) “mode” of perception (Hua 23, 220 [269]; see also Ni 1999, 29). As was already stated above, Husserl held the idea that “naïve perception [...] is simply a consciousness of the perceptual object” (Hua 11, 228 [361]). In normal, uncontested perception, the subject “will grasp the object *simpliciter*,” so that “objective sense” (*gegenständlicher Sinn*) and “mode of being [*Seinsmodus*] are not distinguished at all for consciousness” (Hua 11, 228 [361]).

As I hope has become clear from the previous discussion, the experience of *accordance* or *discordance* plays a crucial role when it comes to both – the mode of living presence as well as the belief mode of perceptual experience. As we have seen, whether some objective sense is experienced in the mode of living presence is determined by whether the unfolding course of perception lies within the apperceived horizons of expectations and anticipations instituted by a certain apprehension (i.e. whether perceptual experience continues in *local accordance* with a certain apprehension of what the perceived is perceived *as*). *Local accordance* thus names a rather internal relation between a recent apprehension and the further course of perceptual experience. It concerns the internal horizon of an object.¹⁸

The remaining question is what kind of accordance relation is responsible for the belief mode of perceptual experience. According to Husserl, the “*positing of certainty* [*Gewissheitssetzung*] that is inherent in perception” is “related to a nexus [*Zusammenhang*], and accordingly to an *apprehension that posits what appears in a wider context* [*Zusammenhang*]” (Hua 23, 215 [264], my emphasis). The *positing of certainty* that Husserl has in mind here clearly refers to the “general positing

¹⁸ ‘Frame’ is used as a technical term here which applies to any form of perceptual delineation of elements which belong to a certain entity or appearance and elements which don’t. Such a delineation can be spatial (like a real frame for a picture) as well as temporal (like in the case of a song) or both (like in the case of a play).

which belongs to the essence of the natural attitude” (*Generalthesis der natürlichen Einstellung*), which is “put out of action” in what Husserl calls *epoché* (Hua 3/1, 65 [61]).¹⁹ It thus concerns the relation of the perceptual apprehension of a certain stock of sensations unfolding (in local accordance) within a certain frame and the previous and simultaneous apprehensions concerning the surroundings of this frame. Husserl thinks that a second apprehension, which goes beyond the perceptual apprehension of a certain stock of sensations unfolding in local accordance, comes into play with regard to this positing or mode of certainty. This further apprehension ‘posits what appears,’ i.e. the objective sense given in processual accordance, ‘in a wider context.’

As we have already seen above, Husserl sometimes tends to conceptualize the thesis or positing of the ‘It is so’ that belongs to the belief mode of certainty as a separate step, which succeeds the experience of an appearance (or objective sense) in the mode of living presence, but is nevertheless performed without hesitation in univocal perception. The important question remains, however: what is “coherence [*Zusammenhang*] (naturally, objective coherence among affairs [*sachlicher Zusammenhang*], but what is that?), and what is incoherence [*Zusammenhanglosigkeit*]?” (Hua 23, 150f. [179]). Here is Husserl’s answer:

Perception has its fulfilment in transitions from new perceptions to new perceptions, and in this process *not merely from presentations of the same object* but also from perceptions of its surroundings. The physical thing belongs to the spatial world, which is a spatial unity and, with regard to time, a unity that endures in spite of all the changes in its content. (Hua 23, 215 [264], my emphasis)

We can now see more clearly why we have to distinguish between *local accordance*, which is a relation between appearances of the same apperceived object, and *global accordance*, which is a relation between an object given in the mode of living presence and its spatio-temporal surroundings. While local accordance only concerns

¹⁹ Perception after the *epoché* is thus perception in the mode of living presence with bracketed belief mode.

what's happening inside a certain perceptual frame or domain, global accordance concerns the relation between what is happening inside a certain frame and its surroundings. Now, the previous distinction of three layers of what is intentionally given in perception (the field of actual perception, the apperceived co-present and the obscurely intended horizon of indefinite actuality) allows for an even more fine-grained clarification of the concept of global accordance. There is, first, an *experiential part* of global accordance, which concerns the relation between the field of actual perception and layers of the intuitionally given co-present. Secondly, there is also a rather *cognitive part* of global accordance, which involves a kind of judgement concerning the question whether what is intuitionally given in perception fits into the world as the subject already knows it.

The proposal is thus that, in contrast to *local accordance* which is determined by the 'internal' unfolding of perceptual experience from a starting point of impressional institution along the instituted line of accordance, *global accordance* is determined by the (somewhat 'external') relation between the perceptual apprehension in question, on the one hand, and layers of simultaneous as well as previous perceptual apprehensions concerning its surrounding, on the other. Global accordance thus concerns the relation between the internal and external horizon of the perceived; it addresses the question whether a given perceptual apprehension – and especially the *inclination of belief* that goes along with it – fits into the web of previous and simultaneous perceptual apprehensions that manifests itself in the tacit positing and co-perception of a spatio-temporal system of a uniform 'world' or 'reality.'

If this interpretation is correct, the possible modifications of the belief mode in perception are to be explained in terms of the relation between a current perceptual apprehension and further perceptual apprehensions which were either previously experienced – and therefore have been "posited with a *legitimacy derived from experience*" (Hua 3/1, 97 [102]) – by the subject, or apprehensions which the subject apperceives simultaneously. If a subject perceives something in the mode of living presence that is fundamentally discordant with previous and/or simultaneous perceptual apprehensions, this something is 'annulled,' that is to say, given to the subject in the *belief mode of invalidity, nullity, or unbelief* (relative to the co-perceived layer or frame in question).

To use a common example: a major phenomenological difference between a video call with a close friend living on the other side of the world and the

depiction of a video call within a movie lies in the fact that the former is experienced in the *mode of living presence* and in the *belief mode of certainty*, while the latter is experienced in the *mode of living presence* and in the *belief mode of nullity*.²⁰ In both cases perception unfolds in local accordance (i.e. along the lines of accordance instituted by certain apprehensions), while only in the first case the person seen through the screen is posited within the spatio-temporal continuum the subject takes (or co-perceives) herself to live in. In the second case, however, the person seen through the screen is experienced as being barred from this continuum through an (imaginary) frame or wall.²¹ In other words, if you are on a video call with a friend (the same applies to normal telephone conversations), you will usually experience them in the mode of living presence and in the belief mode of certainty, although your experience is mediated by a screen (or a speaker). If, however, what you experience in local accordance is not in global accordance with your previous and simultaneous apprehensions of the world you live in, you will experience it in the belief mode of nullity. Another example can exemplify this difference: if you watch a scene from a movie which was originally filmed underneath the Eiffel Tower in Paris, you can either perceive it in the belief mode of certainty, when you take it to depict events that really happened there (a film scene was shot underneath the Eiffel Tower, etc.), or you can perceive it in the belief mode of nullity, if you take it to depict events happening in the world of the film. In both cases, however, the events are perceived in the mode of living presence.

²⁰ One could argue that the experience of something in the mode of living presence is further enhanced if interaction with what is going on is possible (and one could discriminate different levels or types of interaction here like *simple physical manipulability*, *tacit interlocking* (like in reciprocal eye contact), *dialogue* and so on). However, this would mean to discriminate further types of 'accordance'-like relations within experience which would correspond to respective modes of phenomenological givenness (like *mode of aliveness*, *mode of being consciousness-gifted* and so on).

²¹ The 'wall' experienced in such circumstances is often called the '4th wall' in the context of theatre or cinema.

6 Husserl's Distinction of Three Types of Annulment in Perception

Husserl distinguishes three main possibilities of how such an annulment can take place in perception – *immediate annulment*, *ex post annulment*, and *fictional annulment* in the case of ‘perceptual figments.’ The first possibility is defined by situations where a “perceptual apprehension conflicts with the perceptual apprehensions of the ‘surroundings.’ The latter hold their own as impressional perceptions, and the former perceptual apprehension is ‘annulled’ [*aufgehoben*]” (Hua 23, 222 [271]). Think of the example where someone continues to see a lady in a wax figure “as a fiction, with a full-blooded appearance which yet amounts to nothing” (Hua 19/1, 460 [138]). Other examples Husserl uses to illustrate this case are stereoscopic images, mirror images, rainbows, or the blue sky (see Hua 23, 590). These are all examples of local accordance with global discordance, as far as the perceptual apprehensions themselves are in local accordance, while their positing as real would conflict with their surroundings (we see the rainbow in the mode of living presence, however, we know that it does not really exist as a physical thing within the spatio-temporal continuum we inhabit).

The second possibility is that of *ex post annulment* of previous apprehensions like in the two cases of the perception of a waxwork figure or a mannequin that were already discussed above:

It can always be that the further course of experience necessitates giving up what has already been posited with a *legitimacy derived from experience* [*mit erfahrungsmäßigem Recht Gesetzte*]. Afterwards one says it was mere illusion, a hallucination, merely a coherent dream, or the like. (Hua 3/1, 97 [102])

During the process of verification [*Bewährung*], verification can turn into its negative; instead of the meant itself, a “different” [*ein anderes*] can come to the fore, and do so in the mode “it itself” – a different that wrecks the positing of what was meant [*an dem die Position des Gemeinten scheitert*], so that the previously meant, for its part, assumes the character: nullity. (Hua 1, 93 [58])

In this sense, “whatever is there for me in the world of physical things [*Dingwelt*] is necessarily only a *presumptive actuality* [*nur präsumptive Wirklichkeit*],” awaiting possible annulment (Hua 1, 93 [58]).

Finally, the third possibility concerns the specific annulment that is linked to the experience of fictional objects, like in the case of image perception. To understand this case, we have to turn to Husserl’s distinction between “physical image thing, the image object, and the image subject” (Hua 23, 489 [584]). The physical image thing is simply the spatio-temporal object, experienced in the mode of living presence and in the belief mode of certainty, on which an image is depicted. Now, the image object or ‘image appearance’ is the perceptual apprehension (mediated by types) which we experience when looking at an image. We might, for example, experience the perceptual apprehension of a tiny, grey human being or a horse when we look at a black and white photograph or a coin. The image subject, finally, is the scene represented through the image object. It “need not appear; and if it does appear, we have a phantasy or memory” (Hua 23, 489 [584]). The image subject appears when we “live in the image consciousness;” we then “see the subject in the image object; the latter is what directly and genuinely appears” (Hua 23, 44 [48]). Now, Husserl thinks of these three as a constitutional or foundational cascade: “below everything else, the sensuous sensations undergo a perceptual apprehension by means of which the physical image becomes constituted [...], in a second step, a new perceptual apprehension is grounded on the first apprehension [and] the image object” is constituted, and the image subject, finally, is founded in this image object (Hua 23, 44 [48]).

Now, according to Husserl, the annulment of the image object takes place on two separate levels. On the first level, there is a conflict between the apprehension of the image object and the apprehension of the image thing:

The image object and the physical image surely do not have separate and different apprehension contents; on the contrary, their contents are identically the same. The same visual sensations are interpreted as points and lines on paper and as appearing plastic form. The same sensations are interpreted as a *physical thing made from plaster* and as a *white human form*. (Hua 23, 44f. [48])

These two apprehensions “certainly cannot exist at once: they cannot make two appearances stand out simultaneously” (ibid.); like in the cases of doubting apprehension discussed above, two appearances and thus two inclinations of belief seem to

stand against each other. However, the image object lacks the belief mode of certainty, because the apprehension of the image thing stands in a relation of global accordance to its apperceived surroundings while the apprehension of the image object does not. Like the appearance in a known illusion, the image object thus “lacks ‘belief’ [*Es fehlt der ‘Glaube’*]; it lacks the characteristic of reality” (Hua 23, 490 [584]).

However, image objects are also, as Husserl claims, “anomalous appearances” (Hua 23, 488 [582]). What makes image objects anomalous? Husserl argues that besides the global discordance between image object and its surroundings there is also inner (local?) discordance, another “conflict” involved in the constitution of the image object which characterizes it as a “figment” [*Fiktum*]; He even claims that the image object “is of a type that cannot support the positing of reality [*Wirklichkeitssetzung nicht verträgt*];”

[...] this signifies, in the case of things, that insertion into nature, or into a nature whose possibility is measured according to the knowledge of nature [*in eine Natur, wie sie nach Massgabe der Naturerkenntnis möglich ist*] (according to the style of the intuition of nature), would conflict with the latter. What can be a real physical thing intuition (better: what, as a thing, is supposed to be able to stand before me in perception as real) can be a human being, but not a human being who is white like plaster, and so on. Human beings can look very different from one another, but the idea “human being” prescribes certain possibilities for perception: a human being is something that has a certain look in perception. (Hua 23, 490 [584f.])

The claim is thus that image objects are not only annulled with respect to their discordance with their surroundings, they are also annulled *in themselves* because they instantiate certain features that are in conflict with the type or idea that guides their apprehension. Human beings, for instance, are normally not white like plaster or only 7 inches tall. (But what if a real human being standing in front of us were white like plaster or only 7 inches tall? Would we really experience it as annulled? Wouldn't we perceive it in the *mode of living presence* and in the *belief mode of certainty*? And wouldn't we even perceive it as an (anomalous) *human being*?) The same holds, as Husserl claims, for the case of a play, although “it certainly seems to be otherwise:”

Here, indeed, the individual image objects — “king,” “villain,” “hero,” and so on — exist harmoniously in themselves. They are, however, members of an enveloping pictoriality, of a total image object from an image world that runs its course on the stage, in artificial sets, etc. What was said, then, applies to this whole. It is annulled intrinsically and not only by being in conflict with the space of the theatre, etc. It is not a panorama picture. Stage, sets, prompter, and so on, *serve to realize the intrinsic annulment*. They are necessary in order to bring a conflict into the image object itself, which makes it appear in itself as a figment. (Ibid. [my emphasis])

This is what, at least according to Husserl, distinguishes image objects from cases of known illusion, as far as the latter is “something harmonious in itself that is annulled by the surrounding reality,” while image objects are “annulled in themselves” (Hua 23, 490 [585]). Husserl therefore speaks of the “image figment” as “a nullity of a unique type. It is [not] an appearance with the characteristic of annulled positing, but an appearance annulled in itself” (Hua 23, 491 [586]).

Now, the main reason why Husserl insists that there is a unique kind of nullity or annulment involved in the perception of figments which goes beyond the annulment by global discordance, his insistence on the idea that “the image must be *clearly* set apart from reality; that is, set apart in a purely intuitive way, without any assistance from indirect thoughts” seems to lie in his belief that image consciousness is “the essential foundation for the possibility of aesthetic feeling in fine art” and that “[a]esthetic effects are not the effects of annual fairs [*nicht Jahrmarktseffekte*]” (Hua 23, 41 [44]).

However, I do not believe that Husserl’s conception of an aesthetic ‘nullity of a unique type’ which is based on an *annulment in itself* is sound as it stands; I would rather argue that annulment by global discordance between what is apprehended in local accordance and its surrounding is sufficient to explain the case of image perception, too. Think of the video call example again: if one accepts the phenomenological description that it is possible to experience another person in the mode of living presence and the belief mode of certainty through the mediation of a screen (or a loudspeaker) – which is a question of phenomenological observation that should not be tainted by theoretical considerations or convictions –, there seems to be no possibility left for a specific *annulment in itself* which distinguishes the case

of a depiction of a video call within a movie from the case of a 'real' video call.²² What rather marks the distinction between these two cases is simply the fact that, while local accordance is still intact, the latter normally lacks global accordance and thus the belief mode of certainty in experience. The 'world' in which the video call depicted in the movie takes place (like the 'world' in which Homer Simpson exists) is not, at least *prima facie*, in global accordance with the spatio-temporal realm we inhabit as beings of flesh and blood; and it is thus annulled in relation to this realm.

Now, this last thought allows for an important clarification concerning the experiential part of the belief mode of certainty; and I want to introduce this clarification with the following passage in which Husserl seems to imagine some kind of VR experience *avant la lettre*:

If we suppose that sensuous phantasy data (phantasms) run off in clear determinacy like kinesthetic data running off in a firmly ordered manner and data of sensation running off along with them in fixed co-ordination, and if we suppose that everything is just as it is "in reality," [*in der Wirklichkeit*] would not a phantasy world of things thereby become newly constituted, and would it then be a phantasy world at all? Would it not be a real world and a world that presents itself as real? (Hua 23, 560f. [673])

Based on our previous considerations, the questions Husserl asks in this paragraph can be answered as follows: The phantasy world he describes would be perceived in the mode of living presence insofar as it unfolds in local accordance. Thus, if we would watch a movie in this phantasy world, the movie would also be perceived in the mode of living presence, however, in the belief mode of nullity with regard to the phantasy world which surrounds it, insofar as the relation of the movie and the phantasy world surrounding it is that of global discordance. And the phantasy world itself? If we were – in a Matrix like scenario – able to 'enter' and 'leave' this phantasy world through some kind of portal or gate, we would experience it in the belief mode of nullity with regard to the spatio-temporal continuum we otherwise inhabit. However, if these considerations are sound, wouldn't we also experience the

²² One could, however, claim that what Husserl has in mind when he talks about this unique kind of annulment is that in the case of figments the frame delimiting fiction from reality has to be marked somehow (see also Poljanšek 2016).

spatio-temporal continuum we otherwise inhabit in the belief mode of nullity with regard to the phantasy world? I think this would indeed be the case, insofar as the belief mode of certainty or nullity is always *relative* to a certain world (understood as a coherent frame or layer of simultaneous and previous apprehensions).

7 Seeing Ghosts: Closing Remarks

Now, instead of further discussing Husserl's considerations concerning the unique type of nullity which he claims to be involved in image perception, how this type of nullity is linked to what he calls 'neutrality modification' (*Neutralitätsmodifikation*) and the phenomenon of phantasy and as-if-perception (for these topics see especially Ferencz-Flatz 2009 and Wiesing 2011), I would like to conclude the paper by proposing a rather straightforward explanation of the perception of fictional objects and events. An explanation, however, which – although it was rejected by Husserl himself – is nevertheless based on Husserlian ideas as far as it derives from his own distinction between mode of living presence and belief mode and their connection to local and global accordance concerning perceptual apprehension.

The idea is simple: when we perceive fictional objects or events, what happens on a rather basic level of perception is that we immediately apprehend certain stocks of impressional sensations through certain types (which stem from previously sedimented experience).²³ These apprehensions go along with the institution of lines of local accordance, which – if no discordant sensations occur – lead us to experience the perceived in the mode of living presence. If we watch a video on the internet, for example, we can focus on the scene depicted within the frame and immediately apprehend the objects and events taking place in the mode of living presence without having to pay attention to the screen as a physical image thing and our actual spatio-temporal surrounding co-presented in perception (e.g. the room we are watching the video in). Now, as we have seen, the belief mode of perceptual experience derives from global accordance between a given perceptual apprehension and other previous as well as simultaneous perceptual apprehensions of a spatio-temporal

²³ There is thus no complication involved in the direct perception of objects through representations in comparison to 'normal' direct perception; as far as the same types of apprehension apply in both cases.

continuum. So if we take or experience what is depicted on the screen to be in global accordance with the spatio-temporal world we know from past experience, it will be perceived in the belief mode of certainty (like in the case of watching a live video of a protest nearby on the smartphone).

Concerning their belief mode, fictional objects are given in the mode of unbelief or nullity, at least as far as the previous and simultaneous perceptual apprehensions of the spatio-temporal continuum outside the frame are discordant with what is going on inside the frame. This, however, seems to be the main reason why in most cases where people consciously experience fictional objects or events, the surroundings (and the apprehensions that go along with them) are occluded or faded out as much as possible. The aim of such occlusions is to draw the attention away from the concurrent apprehensions and co-perceptions of the 'world outside' (and the global discordance which comes along with them) in order to allow for an immersive experience in the mode of living presence deriving from the local accordance of what is depicted within the frame.²⁴ "I can *contemplate* a semblance object without paying attention to my unbelief. For example, I follow the actions, and so forth, of a character on the stage. Or the movements of the ghost, its meaningful gestures, and so on" (Hua 23, 279 [338]).²⁵ However, the more the apprehensions concerning the 'world outside' (the movie theatre, etc.) fade and recede into the background of our attention and the stronger the apprehensions and co-perceptions of the surroundings of the 'fictional world' itself become, the more the events depicted might not only be experienced in the mode of living presence, but also in the belief mode of certainty (relative to the co-presented world of fiction; however, not relative to the co-presented 'real' surrounding).

²⁴ It follows from this that immersion comes in degrees. You can watch a movie and – rather than appresenting the movie theatre surrounding you – co-perceive the occluded surrounding of the depicted scenes. However, you can also watch the same movie and – instead of appresenting the occluded surrounding of the depicted scenes – rather co-perceive the movie theatre surrounding you. What Ryan (2001, 203) describes as the "recentering" of consciousness in immersion would thus have to be explicated phenomenologically in terms of co-perception.

²⁵ It is also possible to experience the 'real world' in the belief mode of nullity like in the first moments after you awake from a dark, strange dream and the apprehensions of the events and surroundings you experienced just moments ago are still active and co-presented. The dreamworld is still 'alive,' while the 'real situation' around you, although you experience it in the mode of living presence, is given to you, at least to a certain degree, in the belief mode of nullity.

By focusing on the impressionally instituted lines of local accordance as well as their co-perceived fictional surroundings, and by occluding the simultaneous perceptual apprehensions of the real situation surrounding the subject, the objects and events within a frame come to life. Yet, the subject never totally loses sight of the distinction between reality and fiction concerning the cognitive aspect of the belief mode of experience, at least under normal circumstances and as long as it, and even if only obscurely, somehow appresents the spatio-temporal continuum of the ‘real’ world. While we consciously experience fictional objects and events in the mode of living presence, we nevertheless immediately know that what we are experiencing is “not really” happening, at least not within the spatio-temporal realm which we otherwise inhabit. However, with the occlusion of the surroundings, this distinction itself fades into the background of that which is perceived and co-perceived in the mode of living presence. We can immediately – and without any pretence or as-if-perception being involved – see and fear the ghost in the haunted house in the mode of living presence while knowing at the same time that what we see and fear is not really a ghost.²⁶

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²⁶ I have not, however, proven the claim that perception of something in the mode of living presence is closer connected to our emotional responses than the perception of something in the belief mode of certainty.

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Am I Truly Feeling This? Quasi-Emotions and Quasi-Values in Cinematic Experience¹

CLAUDIO ROZZONI

Abstract: This article aims to show how Husserl's work on *Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory* can offer insights towards (i) a philosophical account of the relation between images and reality; (ii) a phenomenological clarification of concepts such as 'quasi-emotions.' I will primarily be discussing this issue with reference to cinematic images. In the first section, I endeavour to give a phenomenological account of how belief can intervene in our experience of images. In the second section, also taking into account the well-known 'Paradox of Fiction,' I will address the issue concerning the relationship between emotions aroused by images we believe to be presenting real subjects and those elicited by fictional images. In the third and last section, I will attempt to take the analysis one step further by calling attention to the relationship between fictional emotions and values, bringing out the issue concerning the legitimacy of distinguishing between 'genuine values' experienced in reality and 'quasi-values' experienced through fiction.

Keywords: Image, Phantasy, Quasi-Emotions, Quasi-Values, Narrative

The volume collecting Husserl's unpublished work on *Phantasy, Image Consciousness and Memory* (Hua 23; Husserl 2005) can offer insights with regard to two lines of research decisive for the contemporary debates concerning our relationship with images: for one, towards a philosophical account of the relation between images

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and reality; for another, towards a phenomenological clarification of concepts such as ‘quasi-emotions’ and, as I will propose, the possibility of analogously discussing ‘quasi-values.’ In this paper, I will primarily be discussing aspects of these two lines of inquiry with reference to cinematic images.

Among filmic images, the classical distinction between documentary and fiction² might prompt one to distinguish between corresponding emotional reactions, i.e., thereby creating a divide between emotions aroused by real and fictive occurrences. Such a demarcation between emotions has become a major focus in multiple fields, particularly in analytic philosophy, over the past forty years (Currie 1990; Gendler & Kovakovich 2005; Walton 1978; 1990). In this context, several influential authors came to distinguish between ‘genuine emotions,’ elicited by real situations, and ‘quasi-emotions,’ elicited by fictional contexts (Konrad et al. 2018). However, it is beneficial to stress that, as we shall see, Husserl already used ‘quasi-emotions’ as a term for emotions elicited through phantasy, thereby distinguishing them from those we experience in real contexts.³

Here, I shall particularly focus on such an Husserlian side, attempting to show how the current debate on quasi-emotions could find, in its unnoticed phenomenological precursor, a philosophical account that can help disentangle some of the most challenging puzzles raised within it. Specifically, as far as cinema is concerned, I will shed light on several phenomenological points that may prove highly beneficial when questioning the nature of the relationship between filmic images and reality, and I will consider whether and how the emotions experienced in fictional

² Although such a distinction can certainly be put into question, it is fully justified both from a methodological and historical point of view. Indeed, it is undeniable that in the last century the distinction between documentary and fiction was largely acknowledged and discussed by various influential scholars (Barthes, Metz, Sobchack, to name only a few). Also, such a distinction is defined as ‘classical’ by many important contemporary artists (such as photographer Jeff Wall, who expressly questions the boundaries of such distinctions). *Nota bene*: this is not to state that such a distinction has always been discussed uniquely, nor that, as I mentioned, its being “classical” implies that the boundaries defining it were always fixed and unquestioned.

³ It is also appropriate to recall that the notion of ‘quasi-emotions’ was also studied thoroughly and developed by other Brentano students, such as Meinong and his student Witasek. Vendrell Ferran (2010) offers a detailed account of the debate on fictional emotions developed in the Graz School, and also proposes insights for a dialogue between such a debate and the one emerging in the analytic field.

films are qualitatively different from those we experience in documentary film, and, ultimately, in reality.

This paper is divided into three sections. In the first section, I endeavour to give a phenomenological account of the ways in which belief can intervene in our experience of images. This issue proves particularly relevant with regard to the questions of whether and what differences are evident between the emotions aroused by images we believe to be presenting real subjects and those elicited by fictional images; I address this question in the second section, taking the well-known ‘Paradox of Fiction’ into account and underlining the role played by narrative involvement in our emotional processes. Finally, in the third section, I attempt to take this analysis one step further by calling attention to the relationship between fictional emotions and values, thereby touching upon the issue concerning the legitimacy of distinguishing between ‘genuine values’ experienced in reality and ‘quasi-values’ experienced through fiction, analogously to what has been discussed with regard to emotions.

1 Images and Belief

According to Husserl (1997, § 5), the notion of belief plays a primary role in the constitution of perception in “flesh and blood,” where the concrete object is perceived in the sense that it is “*wahr-genommen*,” that is, “taken-as-true, as real.” Conversely, as we shall see, an image is never “perceived” (*wahr-genommen*) in itself, properly speaking: it is merely a “*figment*, an *illusory object*” (Husserl 2005, 52). Notwithstanding this point, I aim to shed light on the pivotal role belief assumes in the experience of *filmic images* claiming to represent reality.

In the third part of the 1904/05 Göttingen course on “Principal Parts of the Phenomenology and Theory of Knowledge” (ibid., 1–108), Husserl introduces his famous tripartition concerning the structure of image consciousness, which distinguishes between: (1) the “image-thing” (*Bildding*), that is, “the physical image, the physical thing made from canvas, marble, and so on”; (2) “the ‘representing image’ or ‘image object’” (*Bildobjekt*), that is, “the representing or depicting object”; and (3) the “*image subject*” (*Bildsujet*), that is, “the represented or depicted object” (ibid., 21).

According to such an analysis, the question of the ontological status of images seems to concern the *image object* in particular. In fact, the ‘image thing’ made of

paper, of canvas, is a ‘physical thing’ that can be perceived and said to exist – an object that is part of the perceptual flux we continually recognize as our real environment,⁴ with its own ‘normativity.’⁵ The *image subject* (the object that is “depicted”), for its part, *can* be said to exist, or to exist in some cases and not in others (either way, however, it cannot be said to be present) (Marbach 2000, 300). The *image object*, instead, is something that Husserl says “has never existed and never will exist and, of course, is not taken by us for even a moment as something real” (Husserl 2005, 21).

From this point of view, one might say that the depictive image puts the subject at a certain ontological *distance* (even in the case of close-up images), in the specific sense that it is never *there* where it appears: it manifests itself *in absentia*. From this perspective, filmic images, like other physical images, do not show perceptual objects: what appears on the screen are in themselves images and not things ‘in the flesh,’ ‘in person.’ Properly speaking, we could not touch the objects on the screen even if we wanted to – they are intangible objects, exclusively visual in nature. They are not inserted into the material flux of the actuality surrounding us (images as things exist, not the image objects manifesting themselves on their surface). There is a conflict (*Widerstreit*) between the iconic objects emerging in the peculiar space manifesting itself on a screen and the actual objects surrounding the screen (including the screen itself as a ‘thing’).⁶ In other words, if someone on screen spills milk, no one worries about stains on the movie theatre floor. We cannot grasp the objects we see on screen and share them with the people around us, because image objects within the screen space do not pertain to the domain of perception.

This, of course, bears upon the nature of the act of viewing. When viewing these images, what type of experience are we living? We know that an image of a knife on a screen cannot physically hurt us; it is merely an image object showing a knife.

⁴ “The consciousness that ‘it agrees,’ the consciousness of reality, is living and is genuinely explicated in the harmonious transition of concordant perceptions and not in the latent background of conflicting perceptions” (Husserl 2005, 439f.).

⁵ On the Husserlian account of the “kind of normativity [...] inform[ing] perceptual intentionality,” Crowell (2013, 124–146).

⁶ “The image object as image object must be the bearer of conflict in a double sense. In one sense (a), it is in conflict with the actual perceptual present. This is the conflict between the image as image object appearance and the image as physical image thing; (b) in the other sense, there is the conflict between the image-object appearance and the presentation of the subject entwined with it or, rather, partially coinciding with it” (Husserl 2005, 55).

On the one hand, we can affirm that we see a knife (image subject) *in* the ‘cinematographic depictive image.’⁷ On the other hand, this seeing is not the same seeing I experience when perceiving a knife in ‘the flesh.’⁸ Looking at the screen, we do not experience a presentation (*Gegenwärtigung*) of a knife, but a *presentification* (*Vergegenwärtigung*) of it – that is, the knife is *presentified* on screen, not actually *present* in the movie theatre with us. Still, even though the question of existence appears to be neutralized at the image-object level – the image object being a “*nothing*” (ibid., 50), a “*nullity*” (ibid., 51), neither existent nor nonexistent –, it must be asked what our attitude toward the image subject is in such experiences, because, as we noted earlier, image consciousness does not *eo ipso* imply a consciousness of unreality as regards the image subject, which, in fact, can be intentioned as existent or nonexistent.

Let us consider the case in which we know that what we are about to see is a documentary film, e.g., one in which the photographic nature of the image might work as a testimony of the fact that – as Roland Barthes (1981, 76) says – the person or thing manifesting on the iconic surface “*has been there*.” In this type of context, even though what we effectively see are only images and not things “in person,” we believe in the existence of what we see *in* them. Interestingly, in a manuscript published as Appendix XLII (probably around 1911/12) to *Husserliana* 23, also referencing photographs, Husserl offers an insight into the possibility of experiencing an image with a “positional”⁹ connotation – not a positional stance towards the image object, which is a “*figment*” that “is a nullity of a unique type” (Husserl 2005, 586), but rather towards the subject presentified in the image:

Let us consider judgments that are made on the basis of impressional images [*impressionalen Bildern*]. I contemplate the photograph of a zeppelin and confirm on its basis certain of the zeppelin’s striking features. Here we again

⁷ “It pertains to an image that the depictive image, understood as image object, has a ‘being’ that persists and abides. This persisting, this remaining unchanged, does not mean that the image object is unchanging; indeed, it can be a cinematographic depictive image” (Husserl 2005, 645).

⁸ Husserl (2005, 57) characterizes it as “seeing-in.” On Husserl’s image consciousness as “seeing-in,” Brough (2012, 550–553) and de Warren (2009, 146–149).

⁹ “Positional experiences are experiences of consciousness in which the Ego accepts something, in which a belief is involved” (Husserl 2005, 696).

have pictorial exhibiting and, indeed, *positing*. My description moves in the image space, in this image world. It possesses the character of judgment with respect to the depicted *subject*. But it expresses above all the image subject (only with respect to the exhibiting moments, of course; the color is not included, and so on) (ibid., 533, my italics).

In other words, there can be an interaction between *iconic presentification* and *belief*,¹⁰ as is the case with the images Husserl calls ‘impressional.’ Such an interaction can imply a belief with regard not only to past occurrences, but also to present ones. In the case of live broadcasts, we believe that the action we are seeing on the screen (which is definitely not literally happening *on* the screen) is genuinely taking place in front of one or more cameras.

Nevertheless, it must be stressed that nothing in the image itself seems able to ground our belief on its own. ‘Impressional images’ are not *eo ipso* trustworthy. Recognition of the image always seems to presuppose a certain knowledge about it. We know that an image can be manipulated or doctored, thereby eliciting our position of reality through deception. Photographs, even those that manifest themselves in all their documentary power, always acquire this ‘authority’ within a specific context, a horizon of meaning which, alone, can support our attitude towards them and make them function in a certain way.¹¹ In fact, the power to ‘ratify,’ which Barthes attributes to photography itself, is not something that can be traced back entirely to the image itself; rather, he resorts to a knowledge underpinning it, that is, a knowledge about the process through which the ‘trace’ has been generated – a chemical process.¹²

¹⁰ “There are, however, mixed experiences, and they are very common. Such mixed experiences can be positional, and, particularly as acts, actually bring about a position, and yet include phantasies in themselves. And they can be phantasies and yet include positions in themselves” (Husserl 2005, 696).

¹¹ In the words of photographer Jeff Wall (2015): “People tend to relate to photographs by looking at what’s in them and saying what’s going on and they might get frustrated if they immediately can’t recognize what’s going on like they can recognize what’s going on in the news. [...] [A] picture [...] has [...] this character that it seems to disclose an actuality very simply but it is not that simple. Most people think that photographs are simple because they are accompanied by a lot of description, verbal: take away the verbal description, you get into the pure picture, then you have to relate to it as a poem.”

¹² “It is often said that it was the painters who invented Photography (by bequeathing it their framing, the Albertian perspective, and the optic of the *camera obscura*). I say: no,

However, it is important to recall how such a consideration, in principle, also holds true with regard to perceptual reality. Many of the perceptual experiences that our eyes ‘baptize’ as real may have been surreptitiously adjusted to appear as such. “*Perceptio*” (*Perzeption*) in itself – read: perception without the “character of belief”¹³ – is not yet a guarantee of reality: “*perceptio* as such determines nothing” (ibid., 625, translation slightly modified). Our perception (*Wahrnehmung*) can only arise in a horizon of sense, in a mutual cross-reference of meanings that essentially hold an emotional connotation.

One such example would be practical jokes – planned simulations carried out in an everyday perceptual context, leading the unfortunate victim to ‘take’ the situation ‘as true’ (*Wahrnehmen* as ‘*Für-wahr-Nehmen*’). We always perceive contextually, and a switch of sense can modify the reality of what we had previously perceived, only then allowing us to recognize it as an illusion. Consider this dynamic of belief in Alfred Hitchcock’s *Vertigo* (1958), in which John ‘Scottie’ Ferguson, a retired detective, is lured by a former college friend, Gavin Elster, into *believing* that his wife Madeleine suffers from a serious condition, and thus into accepting the task of following her around to make sure nothing bad happens to her. However, the reality Scottie takes to be true – and to be fitting into the perceptual flux of his everyday life – is “only” performed by Elster’s mistress, Judy Barton, who impersonates Madeleine as part of a *plot* she and Elster have devised in order to murder Elster’s wife.

The point I am trying to make is that a distinction between *perceptio* (*Perzeption*) and image consciousness does not *ipso facto* correspond to the distinction between reality and unreality. Again: I can “see” in a *perceptio* the body of Othello as something *unreal* on the stage and also “take as true, as *real*” some facial features of a man when viewing his photograph (Husserl 2005, 616–620). In fact, our shared objective

it was the chemists. For the *noeme* ‘That-has-been’ was possible only on the day when a scientific circumstance (the discovery that silver halogens were sensitive to light) made it possible to recover and print directly the luminous rays emitted by a variously lighted object. The photograph is literally an emanation of the referent” (Barthes 1981, 80).

¹³ Husserl (1997) points out the distinction between presence in the flesh and belief. In this regard, he remarks that “the concept of perception [*Wahrnehmung*]” can be “so restricted that it excludes the taking-for-true [*Für-wahr-Nehmen*] properly so-called (and *a fortiori* actual truth-taking [*Wahr-Nehmen*]); that is to say, it excludes the character of belief, the character of belief in what stands there.” To mark this difference, he continues, “a name that holds the matter fast is needed for the concept that is more restricted in content. We will say *perceptio* [*Perzeption*]” (ibid., 13, translation slightly modified).

present (and past) is – seemingly increasingly – constituted by images that we believe to be presenting a reality that is actually happening (or has actually happened) and consequently find a place in our shared world and its history, as in the infamous cases of live coverage of 9/11 (fig. 1) or Abraham Zapruder's film of John F. Kennedy's assassination (fig. 2). The same holds true for our personal lives and our personal and shared narratives, which are increasingly based on the presentification of real occurrences through either streamed or recorded images.



Fig. 1: Still from CNN's coverage of the 9/11 attacks

From this standpoint, images experienced through a documentary consciousness differ from those lacking the mark of belief, which do not find a place in our shared 'objective' world – nor do they aspire to. In fact, as we all know, there are also images that, in a manner of speaking, do not lay claim to existence, or to any positional stance as regards the actions they presentify to us (fig. 3). Thus, in keeping with what I proposed earlier, we can distinguish in phenomenological terms between *positing images*, which involve a *claim* to reality (the ones we experience in a documentary attitude, for example) and quasi-positing images experienced in a fictional context as presentifications of fictional subjects.



Fig. 2: Still from Abraham Zapruder's film of John F. Kennedy's assassination



Fig. 3: Still from Vertigo (Alfred Hitchcock, 1958) – James Stewart as Scottie

Rightly, Husserl implies that judgments ‘made on the basis of impressional images’ – i.e., a ‘positing [...] pictorial exhibiting’ – are not the same as those made when confronting a ‘pictorial exhibiting’ pertaining to a fictional subject. This might well hold true for our emotional reactions to such images as well. We may feel threatened by positing images that – despite their presentifying nature – we find frightening or upsetting in a very different way than if we were told that everything presentified in them was merely fiction. In order to give these issues the necessary consideration, we begin with a philosophical inquiry into whether and how the emotions we experience in connection with fictional images are different from those intertwined with a consciousness of reality.

2 Paradoxical Emotions?

While watching a documentary film, if we see one person showing compassion towards another, we might feel admiration for that gesture or upon seeing someone harassing someone else, we might respond with indignation. Using Husserl’s view as our starting point, and keeping in mind our previous remarks on the possibility of experiencing images positionally, we might say that the emotions we feel in these instances are “actual,” (ibid., 554) unmodified emotions, since they are founded upon a form of existential position-taking: presentification and belief.¹⁴ To put it in somewhat rougher, more general terms, we generally do not question the reality of those emotions, taking them for real emotional responses to real (or, at least, believed-to-be-real) facts.

But what about emotions grounded in *presentifications* of fictional subjects? How are they to be understood? To return to our previous example, we might ask how our responses of admiration and indignation might change upon learning that the film we were watching in a ‘documentary mode’ was, in fact, a work of fiction. Do emotions change in nature depending on whether or not they are grounded in

¹⁴ This is not to say that our emotional encounters with a subject in an image and the same subject in the flesh are the same. In this regard, it should be valuable to inquire into the difference between what Fuchs (2014, 156) calls “*primary*, intercorporeal empathy” and an empathy grounded on “positional images.”

presentifications involving belief in the existence of the subject/situation? If so, then what kind of emotions are elicited by fictional films?¹⁵

Indeed, if I get scared or if I feel joy in phantasy, my “emotions” (*Gefühle*), Husserl says, are “modified” in the sense of “not relating to reality but to a phantasied world” (ibid., 448, translation slightly modified).¹⁶ Let us assume (via Husserl)¹⁷ that I am sitting in a movie theatre watching a fictional film,

[...] and in it a jungle appears to me. A man sits on the ground and searches for bugs. And then suddenly a huge lion emerges, and the man laughs cheerfully. While [...] this series of [iconic] phantasies runs its course, I feel astonishment, perhaps even fear. This is not fear or astonishment in the ordinary sense. They are certainly not reproductive acts (phantasy acts), but actual acts [*wirkliche Akte*], grounded in the actually executed phantasy. On the other hand, I do not have “actual astonishment” [*wirkliches Erstaunen*], “actual fear” [*wirkliche Angst*], but modified acts [*modifizierte Akte*]” (ibid., 447f., translation slightly modified).

However, I would like to stress that the adjective ‘modified’ here is not to refer to the emotion in itself, as if – say – tears shed for a phantasized character were inherently different from those shed for a ‘real person.’ In a patently fictional situation, I *know* that my tears fit the phantasy actions I am experiencing (or we, the audience, are

¹⁵ Following up on what has been said in note 1, for the sake of argument, I am referring to fictional movies in the very general sense of fictional works developing a fictional narrative that is not accountable for any *individual* occurrence in reality. Clearly, the line between ‘documentary’ and ‘fiction’ is often blurred, and several hybrid forms fall somewhere on the spectrum between these two genres. While exploring these hybrid forms would be outside the scope of this work, I would argue that the issue at stake here can contribute to a more complete understanding of them.

¹⁶ At this level of my analysis, I am not addressing the complex matter of the distinction between emotions and feelings, but more generally questioning the alleged change of status that can influence our affective “reactions” (Husserl 2005, 461) when shifting from a documentary to a fictional attitude and vice versa. This clearly does leave open the possibility of exploring, on another level, whether any change of status might occur for certain kinds of feelings/emotions and not for others.

¹⁷ I am slightly modifying his example concerning reproductive phantasy by referring to “iconic phantasy” (Husserl 2005, 456ff.), that is, the kind of phantasy involved in the experience of fictional movies.

experiencing), and I am aware that such actions are not presenting real occurrences that are happening, or have happened, elsewhere. In other words, my tears are not *motivated* by a consciousness of reality as regards the individual existence of characters: their actions affect only the specific quasi-world unfolding in our iconically phantasized experience.¹⁸

Analogously, this also holds for desires elicited by iconic phantasies: if we see “a beautiful woman” on screen “and desire her love [...] [we] actually feel this ‘desire,’” and yet we “certainly cannot ‘actually’ desire that *this* woman, who does not even exist, love [us]” (ibid., 448, my italics). Following Husserl’s example, when watching *Vertigo*, one might fall under Madeleine’s (or Judy’s, for that matter) spell and desire her, just as Scottie does. That act would not be irrational. What would be irrational, in this case, would be to desire *that* person – specifically, that Madeleine (or Judy) who does not (and did not, for that matter) actually live in San Francisco or elsewhere.

Nevertheless, when viewing this issue through the lens of the well-known Paradox of Fiction mentioned in the introductory section, one might well conclude that emotions aroused by documentary images (grounded in a *belief* in the real existence of the image subjects presentified) are fully justifiable and ‘genuine,’ whereas emotions aroused by phantasy characters (whom we do not actually believe to exist) cannot be justified. In fact, one of the three premises underlying the paradox is that (a) in order for us to have an emotion we *must* believe that the object of our emotion exists.

The Paradox of Fiction comprises three premises, each considered plausible in themselves but contradicting one another when considered as a group – each individual statement is allegedly true, yet they cannot all be true at the same time. The other two premises (the a, b, and c labels are taken to be arbitrary here, insofar as the three premises are of equal importance; what matters is their mutual irreconcilability) are as follows: (b) we do not believe in the existence of fictional characters; (c) we have emotional reactions towards objects we know to be fictional.

In view of this paradox, then, problems concerning the nature of our emotions seem to arise when considering fictional presentifications. In fact, in his famous

¹⁸ Of course, tears might also be caused by a recollection prompted by fictional images. In this case, as Husserl (2005, 53) puts it, images work as “engines of memory.” However, this is not the case under scrutiny here.

1975 essay that gave rise to the debate on the Paradox of Fiction, Colin Radford (1975, 69, my italics) claimed that

[...] there is no problem about being moved by historical novels or plays, *documentary films, etc.* For these works depict and forcibly remind us of the real plight and of the real suffering of real people, and it is for these persons that we feel. What seems unintelligible is how we could have a similar reaction to the fate of Anna Karenina, the plight of Madame Bovary or the death of Mercutio. Yet we do.

According to Radford, this *kind* of reaction “involves us in inconsistency and so incoherence” (ibid., 78). To go back to *Vertigo*, the idea of reacting emotionally to Scottie’s or Judy’s fate, viewed from this perspective, should seem unintelligible to us, as they have never existed.

However, I believe that a phenomenological account as outlined above can put this very inconsistency into question. On the one hand, we might say that the assertions in premises (b) and (c) can be supported by the phenomenological analysis we have delineated. They present results that can be exhibited by “phenomenological data” (Husserl 2005, 3). Premise (b) states that one can tell the difference between believing in the actual existence of a person and phantasizing about the existence of a made-up character; as for (c), it is merely a statement of fact – the fact that our awareness that characters and stories are fictional does not prevent us from having reactions fitting these quasi-people and their quasi-actions that are not found as concrete individuals in our world.

Premise (a), on the other hand, is an *explanatory* proposition, which alludes to a ‘theory of emotion’ postulating a cognitive basis: namely, that belief in the existence of the object of an emotion is a prerequisite condition for that emotion.¹⁹ From a phenomenological point of view, this appears to be an unjustified assumption: the phenomenological description brings to light that our experiences, whether positional or fictional, *always* manifest themselves through emotional connotations. It

¹⁹ Stecker (2011, 295) conveniently points out that “the paradox was formulated during the heyday of the cognitive theory of emotions,” and that “now virtually no one accepts” that “to pity someone, one must believe that they exist and are suffering.” See Vendrell Ferran (2018, 206) on the possibility of discussing the “paradox” as a profitable “heuristic tool to shed light on problems regarding our involvement with fiction.”

is not by chance that, in *Being and Time*, Heidegger maintains that *Befindlichkeit*, our ‘affective state,’ is an essential feature of our ‘being-in-the-world.’²⁰ Emotions do not presuppose beliefs, but rather an original relationship of ‘involvement,’²¹ and this holds also for our worldly “involvement” in phantasy, for our phantasy states.

The latter sheds light on a key aspect of the structure of phantasy experience. Husserl’s phenomenological description indicates that phantasy acts do not consist solely of the intuitive presentification of the phantasized object, but rather essentially implies the reproduction of a subjective act that quasi-perceives that object, thereby generating a splitting of consciousness between a real ego and a phantasy ego. In *First Philosophy*, Husserl (2019, 320) writes that “the actus ‘I phantasize a scene of centaurs’ is only possible in the form that I enact, in the mode of the ‘as if,’ the actus ‘I perceive the scene of centaurs.’”

Even though we cannot linger on this specific question here,²² it is beneficial to underscore two aspects relevant to the matter at hand: for one, the ego-splitting pertaining to phantasy experience is not to be construed as a sort of schizophrenic process involving a real ego and a phantasy ego unable to communicate.²³ For another, it is exactly this awareness of such an egological *difference* accompanying our phantasy (however minimal, for example, when absorbed in a vivid daydream)²⁴ that prevents us from slipping into hallucination, which we might call the absolute state of immersion.

²⁰ “Mood assails. It comes neither from ‘without’ nor from ‘within,’ but rises from being-in-the-world as a mode of that being” (Heidegger 1996, 129).

²¹ “Prior to believing that a certain state of affairs exists, and prior to being able to doubt that there are sufficient reasons to assert it, we are already engaged by certainties that have to do with our being in a given situation. Now, emotions are forms in which our rooting in the *situation* is made manifest: they do not call for beliefs, but only for the original relationship of *involvement*” (Spinicci 2014, 86).

²² On such a “doubling of consciousness” in Husserl, for example, de Warren (2009, 156f.) and Bernet (2004, 93–117). See also Cavallaro (2019) for a recent phenomenological analysis specifically relating ego-splitting and fictional emotions.

²³ For a discussion of the “discontinuity and permeability” between real and phantasy ego, Summa (2017).

²⁴ “The more frequent case, however, is probably that in which the real world before our eyes is *almost* swallowed up while we pursue the phantasies, although that world makes us aware, in however minimal a way, of its factual existence, so that a faint consciousness that they are semblances constantly colors our phantasy formations” (Husserl 2005, 45).

The latter (ii), in particular, also counts as one significant reason why a naïve *theory of illusion* – which might be summoned to justify emotions in a fictional regime in compliance with the paradox premise (a) – is insufficient. If spectators were *completely* unaware of the fictional nature of the action unfolding on screen, they would react differently from how they usually do and not in the ‘modified’ manner described above. (In Pasolini’s *Che cosa sono le nuvole?* (1968), the audience, who cannot tell reality from imagination, intervenes to try to save Desdemona from her fate – or, to refer to a famous literary example, consider Don Quixote’s attack on Maese Pedro’s Puppet Show.)

Besides, in keeping with the former point, it must be stressed that the emergence of an ego-splitting as a condition of possibility of a ‘phantasy life’ does not automatically entail two separate and wholly impermeable sides of emotions (reality/phantasy, that is), as though when acting as a phantasy ego I lost *all* awareness of my real ego’s emotional life and vice versa. Undoubtedly, there are several cases in which emotional responses of the real ego and of the phantasy ego are in sharp contrast, as though the real and the phantasy egos were, so to speak, two strangers. For example, we might be puzzled by the fact that fictional movies allow us to quasi-participate in phantasy actions that we would never carry out in real life, for a variety of reasons – we might be alarmed to find ourselves enjoying a fictional situation that, at least *prima facie*, we would likely condemn in reality. Nevertheless, this is not necessarily a symptom of egological incompatibility. For one, although we refer to the ‘same’ action being experienced in reality and in phantasy, the real ego and the phantasy ego are not, strictly speaking, in the ‘same’ situation. Our phantasy ego knows it is not *actually* carrying out an action, and thus we need not concern ourselves with a long list of real material consequences that such an action might have for us if it were actually accomplished. Accordingly, our emotional responses in phantasy situations might *fit* this kind of awareness.

Moreover, the very possibility of puzzlement in this regard is grounded in the fact that the real ego can touch upon these phantasy experiences, and that, despite the split, it appears to remain the only one responsible for them. Let us notice that this view can also offer some relevant insights with regard to the phenomenon of “imaginative resistance” (Moran 2017, 18–25; Michela Summa’s chapter in this volume), in which the phantasy ego, despite its almost inexhaustible ability to generate phantasy experiences, is incapable of even imagining some specific situations, of even quasi-carrying out certain specific quasi-acts of phantasy. This suggests once more

that phantasy egos are not *tabulae rasae*, abstract subjects *fully* alien to the real one, starting from scratch every time we begin phantasizing. We might go as far as to say that a phantasy ego is always possible as a variation of the real ego, an imaginative variation that can in turn affect and shape what we call the real one.

3 Experiencing Values

To clarify and possibly expand upon these questions, I would like to draw attention to a passage from Marcel Proust's masterpiece *À la recherche du temps perdu* (*In Search of Lost Time*), in which one can quite rightly say that the narrator raises the issue concerning emotions elicited by fiction. On the one hand, *Recherche's* narrator has no problem admitting that "it is true that the people concerned in" fiction are "not what Françoise would have called 'real people'" (Proust 1992, 116). We might suggest that, in *Recherche*, the maid Françoise represents the uncontested and unproblematic natural attitude. Clichés and popular wisdom are sculpted in her with the force of sedimentation over time, repeatedly fortified by the silent perseverance of "habit" (Beckett 1931, 9).²⁵

It is not by chance that, in this context ruled by the natural attitude, the young narrator is granted the 'pleasures of reading' only on Sundays, days of rest on which labour is banned – in other words, days where any activity is permitted, as long as it is nothing 'serious,' nothing 'concrete': no work, only pastimes. According to this sedimented view, then, no serious activity or emotion can be elicited in fiction (the same goes for watching fictional movies, a perfect Sunday activity from this perspective):

I was reading in the garden [the narrator writes], a thing my great-aunt [another voice of the uncontested natural attitude] would never have understood my doing save on a Sunday, that being the day on which it is

²⁵ "Habit is like Françoise, the immortal cook of the Proust household, who knows what has to be done, and will slave all day and all night rather than tolerate any redundant activity in the kitchen" (Beckett 1931, 9). In the same vein, Robert Pippin (2005, 320) depicts her as "the rock of ages in the book, outside modern, historical time, supremely self-confident, unchanging, full of the opinions and the superstitions her ancestors would have expressed."

unlawful to indulge in any serious occupation, and on which she herself would lay aside her sewing (on a week-day she would have said, “What! Still amusing yourself with a book? It isn’t Sunday, you know!” – putting into the word “amusing” an implication of childishness and waste of time) (Proust 1992, 139).

However, as we shall soon see, Proust’s response to these clichés points in the direction we stressed above, proposing that, in the emotional process, involvement in a world (be it ‘fictional’ or ‘real’) takes precedence over the moment of belief in existence. In this regard, before delving expressly into Proust’s suggestion, it is useful to return our attention to, and expand upon, several Husserlian perspectives that can add to the phenomenological account of emotion we developed earlier, and may offer insights that will aid us in relating the Proustian issue in question to the iconic dimension implied in movies.

As I have pointed out elsewhere (Rozzoni 2017), in a passage from *Husserliana* 23, dating back to 1918, Husserl finally seems to recognize the productive power images can acquire when dramatized (as is also the case in fictional movies) – that is, elaborating on Husserl’s manuscript, when the generative power of the *narrative* allows meanings and values to originate through images, irrespective of whether these images depict our ‘objective’ reality or not.²⁶

A fictional film can lead us, as phantasy egos, to experience new perspectives – new variations of what we call a real ego, as pointed out in the previous section – whence we are able to experience values, which can either corroborate or conflict with the values participating in the constitution of our ‘real life’ and motivating our actions on a daily basis.²⁷ Cinema can make me feel values that run contrary to my own, show me standpoints and narratives that help me understand and feel

²⁶ “The actors produce an image, the image of a tragic event, each actor producing the image of a character in the play, and so on. But here ‘image of’ [*‘Bild von’*] does not signify depiction of [*Abbild von*]” (Husserl 2005, 616).

²⁷ For obvious reasons, I cannot linger here on the question concerning the different values – artistic, aesthetic, ethical – that might be brought into such a discussion. However, it is at least useful to remark that the point I am making here need not be confined to artistic cinema or literature but can certainly also concern literary and cinematic entertainment products – to which, then, different kinds of spectators would react in different ways with different assessments.

differently about things. And even though a film is presenting ‘facts’ that have never existed empirically and that I believe will never exist as such, a counter-value I feel while quasi-living a cinematic dramatization can prompt me to draw ‘my own’ values, i.e., the values I feel personally attached to, into question – not by making a logical point, but by triggering a process of emotional evaluations holding a cognitive value, even though it may not be fully articulable in a predicative thought or reducible to propositional knowledge: an “aesthetic mode of understanding” (Pippin 2020, 11).

In other words, although I, as a phantasy subject, can be said to act in a neutral and ‘protected’ situation (*qua* being unaffected by the question of whether a character in a story really exists or not), I cannot be considered unaffected by counter-values and alternative perspectives expressed in that story. And these axiological effects, as we suggested earlier, cannot be simply confined to the phantasy boundaries of my egological dimension – they also can concern me as a real ego.

The key point is that, in such cases, despite not believing in the existence of what we see in the image, we are still *involved* and caught up in another *interest* – namely, what Husserl (2019, 307) in *First Philosophy* calls an “*interest of the heart* [*Gemütsinteresse*], a valuing interest [*wertendes Interesse*] in the broadest sense of the term.” This kind of interest is not preconditioned by a belief in existence: *Wertnehmung* as “value-taking” is not founded upon *Wahrnehmung* as taking something as existent – both are originary modes of givenness.²⁸ In fact, there is an *essential* relationship between the perception of values [*Wert-nehmung*] and the emotional dimension: a value is something that can *originally* appear to us only as *felt*, and an object of evaluation cannot be *reduced* to a merely propositional/logical significance.

Accordingly, from a phenomenological point of view, we – as quasi-audience – are not axiologically separated from what is quasi-happening on the screen. Within a fictional context, we can also be said to be emotionally ‘interested,’ despite our disbelief in the actual existence of what we are experiencing. A fictional movie can express a world in a way that invites our phantasy ego to participate in a *horizon* of perspectives opening different values, which can expand, confirm, restrict, or call into question our axiological scope.

²⁸ “The value itself in its value-truth [*Wertwahrheit*] is not perceived [*wahrgenommen*], but as it were taken as value; and what *perception* [*Wahrnehmung*] achieves for the mere object, is achieved for the value by *value-taking* [*Wertnehmung*]” (Husserl 2019, 307).

It should be emphasized, however, that this is not merely tantamount to simply handing predetermined senses and values to the audience in a fictional context, as if the film were simply a means to ‘translate’ them in a cinematic language (at least: this rarely makes for a good film). Rather, in the vein of Pippin’s account of cinematic thought (Pippin 2020), we can say that such cases involve cinematic thinking in a non-propositional way: an “a-conceptual”²⁹ thought is developed through a word/image narrative implying an axiological-emotional dimension.

These final considerations, of course, open up a whole field of research that surely warrants further study and invites further phenomenological distinctions. Though this would go beyond the scope of the present study, I would like to stress that, in keeping with what I have said above, a *quasi-value* expressed through a fictional situation is not to be considered a quasi-value in the sense of being non-genuine, a ‘make-believe’ value, or a copy of a value – for, as we have seen, a value is something attracting the subject before the issue of something’s factual existence.

All this, as I indicated earlier, might also serve to help us better interpret Proust’s responses to Françoise-like stubborn complete mistrust in fictional people. Indeed, the *Recherche*’s narrator seems to prompt his reader to make one step further, shifting the emphasis to the *imaginative side of emotion*. He makes a key remark on the nature of our emotions when he points out how “none of the feelings [*sentiments*] which the joys or misfortunes of a real person [*personnage réel*] [...] arouse in us can be awakened except through an image [*image*] of those joys or misfortunes” (Proust 1992, 116, translation modified).

Of course, ‘image’ in this sense does not specifically refer to an iconic manifestation, but to the narrative construction of fragments that we are called to piece together every day in order to get to know others – and that alone, according to Proust, can prompt us to care for or despise them,³⁰ thereby suggesting the precedence of the sense of our narratives over the real existence of our ‘objective’ bodies.³¹ It is on this basis that the narrator can affirm that

²⁹ ‘A-conceptual’ in the sense that no *determinate concept* can exhaust its sense, as is the case with Kant’s aesthetic ideas.

³⁰ This clearly calls for further phenomenological inquiry into the role “narrative perspective taking” can play in the empathic process, a topic explored by Breyer (2019).

³¹ “A real person, profoundly as we may sympathise with him, is in a great measure perceptible *only through our senses*, that is to say, remains *opaque*, presents a *dead weight* which our sensibilities have not the strength to lift. [...] The novelist’s happy discovery was to

[...] the ingenuity of the first novelist lay in his understanding that, *as the image was the one essential element in the complicated structure of our emotions* [émotions], so that simplification of it which consisted in the suppression, pure and simple, of real people [*personnages réels*] would be a decided improvement (ibid., 116, my italics).

Let us remark, in conclusion, that this same mechanism is very much at work in the other art piece I referenced here, i.e. Hitchcock's *Vertigo*,³² in which Madeleine and Judy, despite sharing one body, are in fact two different persons, two different 'characters' (figs. 4 and 5).



Fig. 4: Still from *Vertigo* (1958) – Madeleine (Kim Novak)

think of substituting for those *opaque* sections, impenetrable to the human soul, their equivalent in *immaterial* sections, things, that is, which one's soul can assimilate" (Proust 1992, 116f., my italics).

³² For a rich analysis of the relationship between Proust's *Recherche* and Hitchcock's *Vertigo* see Goodkin (1987).



Fig. 5: Still from Vertigo (1958) – Judy (Kim Novak)

When the desperate Scottie, still pining for Madeleine (whom he believes dead), meets a girl who looks exactly like her – the very same Judy Barton who impersonated Madeleine, the ‘fake wife’ (as the audience is going to discover at that point) – he actually re-encounters Madeleine’s physical body, but this is clearly not sufficient for him to find Madeleine again. Obsessed with Judy’s resemblance to Madeleine, he pleads with her to dress as Madeleine, to mimic Madeleine’s physical mannerisms, in a frantic effort to recreate a narrative that will allow him to see Madeleine again. In Proust’s terms, he tries to reconstruct her ‘image.’



Fig. 6: Still from Vertigo – Judy (Kim Novak) dressed as Madeleine.

At the end of *Vertigo*, upon Scottie's final discovery that Madeleine was, in reality, Judy Barton, he still addresses the latter by saying, "I loved you so, Madeleine" – thereby

indicating that “the grip of a fantasy, a projected image, a theatrical persona, can survive with a life-altering intensity, even after the ‘truth’ is known” (Pippin 2015, 120). Though Madeleine never truly existed except as a character performed by Judy, the corporeal Judy is certainly not enough for Scottie, despite the fact that her physical body and Madeleine’s are one and the same. Madeleine, a simulacrum (fig. 6), has become more real than Judy, the alleged original.

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Imaginative Resistance and Self-Experience in Fiction¹

MICHELA SUMMA

Abstract: This chapter investigates the so-called experience of imaginative resistance from a phenomenological perspective. Its aim is to elucidate the structures of this experience by focusing particularly on how imaginative resistance impinges on our self-awareness and self-understanding. It is argued that imaginative resistance arises when we are asked not simply to imagine something reprehensible, but when we are asked to imaginatively agree with something that conflicts with our moral standards. Such demands rely on the loosening of the boundaries between the real and the imaginary, which also produces a sort of collapse of the typical structure of self-consciousness and self-understanding in imagination and fiction. The paper argues that imaginative resistance can be considered as a response to such loosening of the boundaries between the real and the imaginary.

Keywords: Imagination, Fiction, Phenomenology, Imaginative Resistance, Moral Standards, Self-Experience, Self-Understanding, Edmund Husserl, Jean-Paul Sartre

1 Introduction

In his essay “Of the Standard of Taste” (1757), while considering our engagement with literary texts, David Hume compares cases in which we are confronted with

¹ This chapter is a modified and expanded translation of the German contribution “Imaginativer Widerstand und Selbstverhältnis bei der Erfahrung von Fiktionen,” published in Novotný and Nielsen (2020). I wish to thank the editors of that volume as well as the director of the series, Prof. Hans-Rainer Sepp, for permission to translate and expand the text.

‘speculative errors’ with cases in which we are confronted with the affordance to agree with claims that conflict with our moral standards. Whereas in the former case we seem to be able to take up, at least imaginatively, the positions expressed in the literary work – which “detract but little from the value of those compositions” (Hume 1985, 283) –, in the latter case the situation is different. In fact, as Hume emphasizes, it is only with a “very violent effort” that we can have “sentiments of approbation and blame” for something that diverges from the moral standards we endorse in reality (ibid). Hume observes:

[...] where a man is confident of the rectitude of that moral standard, by which he judges, he is justly jealous of it, and will not pervert the sentiments of his heart for a moment, in complaisance to any writer whatsoever. (Ibid.)

These passages have often been considered by scholars in the theory of fiction as the seminal characterization of the phenomenon of ‘imaginative resistance.’ Indeed, Hume describes here a kind of resistance we experience when afforded to imagine something that conflicts with our moral standards. More precisely, however, such resistance does not concern the mere phantasy of a situation in which those moral standards are transgressed or the phantasy that *someone* may defend claims that conflict with our moral standards. Rather, such resistance arises when *we* are afforded to endorse or agree with such claims from our first-person perspective. Thus, even if requested to only imagine subscribing to such claims, it seems that, already for Hume, such endorsement goes beyond the realm of the imaginary.

Hume’s own approach to this phenomenon, in fact, is rather complex, since it entails theoretical, moral, and aesthetic considerations. The current debate on imaginative resistance often reflects this complexity, as well. It focuses, among other issues, on questions concerning the contents that provoke imaginative resistance, the cognitive attitudes of individuals experiencing such resistance, whether individuals ‘are not able’ or ‘do not want’ to imagine scenarios that conflict with their moral convictions, and whether the resistance only concerns moral stances and evaluations or also impinges on aesthetic and epistemic evaluations, how such a phenomenon can and should be connected with more general questions concerning the status of fictional emotions, etc. (Moran 1994; Walton 1994; Currie & Ravenscroft 2002; Levy 2005; Gendler 2010, 179f., 203f.). Notably, some of the studies on imaginative resistance – including some recent phenomenological works – focus on how

such resistance should be connected with specific kinds of empathy or empathic imagining, or with specific kinds of perspective-taking (Currie & Ravenscroft 2002; Stueber 2006; Stock 2017b; Szanto 2020). Yet, the phenomenological inquiry into imaginative resistance can, in my view, offer a further contribution to this debate by focusing on the kind of self-experience that underlies imaginative resistance and how this kind of self-experience relates to the weakening of the boundaries between the real and the imaginary.

Expanding on Hume's remark, in this paper I wish to argue, *first*, that imaginative resistance arises when we are afforded not only to agree with a claim that conflicts with our moral standards in an imaginative context, but rather when such a request goes beyond the realm of the imaginary. This has also been addressed as a kind of removal or weakening of the 'quarantine' that typically characterizes our experience of the fictional and the imaginary. Affordances eliciting imaginative resistance compel us to respond and this means that we "cannot conveniently quarantine" (Stueber 2006, 164) them. Saying that imaginary and fictional contexts are normally quarantined, isolated from the real, means that they do not and should not have a direct causal or motivational impact on what is real. If they have such an impact – and imaginative resistance shows that in certain cases they do have it – the quarantine is somehow broken. *Secondly*, I wish to argue that this weakening of the boundaries between the real and the imaginary provokes a kind of collapse of the typical structure of self-awareness in imagination, including the particular kind of imagination that is operative in the experience of fiction.

In what follows, I consider imaginative resistance in relation to the complex structure of our self-experience in fictional and imaginative contexts. It must be emphasized that the relevant participation in imaginative fictional contexts, as well as the resistance to the endorsement of something that deviates from our moral standards, is primarily affective and experienced in a pre-reflective way. With reference to Sartre, I wish to show that such affective resistance comes, in a sense to be specified, from within ourselves. It results from the menace of disrupting the discontinuity between the two attitudes characterizing our self-experience in imagination and fiction. Accordingly, imaginative resistance pre-reflectively occurs when we find ourselves imagining something that represents a menace to an intimate core of self-experience, which itself goes beyond the domain of pre-reflective awareness and entails moments of an interiorized social and ethical self-understanding.

After discussing more closely the phenomenon of imaginative resistance (section 1), I turn to some remarks on the relation between imagination and fiction (section 2). These analyses provide the basis to investigate whether and how we can speak of ‘resistance’ in imaginative and fictional contexts (section 3). Following Sartre, I first discuss whether and in what sense we can speak of resistance in imaginative and fictional experience and thereby particularly reassess Sartre’s claim that such resistance comes from within ourselves, or that it is a resistance of consciousness against itself. Secondly, I address the question of how such resistance is connected with the emotional and affective attitudes we take in the face of the imaginary and the fictional. Finally, I draw some conclusions related to the tension between modes of self-experience in imagination and fiction, which underlies imaginative resistance.

2 Imaginative Resistance in the Aesthetics of Fiction

As I briefly mentioned above, imaginative resistance does not simply concern the imaginative representation of something we would consider as morally unacceptable: we can imagine violent torture scenes, and are often exposed to such scenes in fictional works, without experiencing such resistance.² Instead, ‘imaginative resistance,’ in the specific sense in which the concept is used in the current debate in aesthetics, denotes the resistance to the endorsement of morally relevant assumptions that (a) conflict with our moral standards and (b) claim some validity beyond the boundaries of the fictional world. I will return to the question of why precisely morally relevant statements are important here. First, I wish to shed light on these two requirements. As Hume’s reference to the ‘sentiments of approbation and blame’ indicates, the requested endorsement is not primarily of a cognitive kind, but rather represents a sort of emotional agreement, which occurs in a

² This does not exclude that other kinds of resistance may be experienced in these cases, but they would not count as cases of the specific imaginative resistance under consideration here.

pre-reflective, spontaneous, and affective way. Let us clarify these points by considering some paradigmatic examples discussed in the literature on imaginative resistance:³

Example 1: “In killing her baby, Giselda did the right thing; after all, it was a girl.”

Example 2: “The village elders did their duty before God by forcing the widow onto her husband’s funeral pyre.”⁴

Example 3: Death on a Freeway

Jack and Jill were arguing again. This was not in itself unusual, but this time they were standing in the fast lane of I-95 having their argument. This was causing traffic to bank up a bit. It wasn’t significantly worse than normally happened around Providence, not that you could have told that from the reactions of passing motorists. They were convinced that Jack and Jill, and not the volume of traffic, were the primary causes of the slowdown. They all forgot how bad traffic normally is along there. When Craig saw that the cause of the backup had been Jack and Jill, he took his gun out of the glovebox and shot them. People then started driving over their bodies, and while the new speed hump caused some people to slow down a bit, mostly traffic returned to its normal speed. So Craig did the right thing, because Jack and Jill should have taken their argument somewhere else where they wouldn’t get in anyone’s way. (Weatherson 2004, 1)⁵

³ It has been emphasized that most of the examples in the philosophical literature are constructed *ad hoc* and that it is rather unusual that philosophers discuss passages taken from works of literature. This, however, does not seem to indicate that the phenomenon is absent from literary texts (I will briefly discuss one example below). Rather, it indicates that literary examples are mostly more complex and elaborate and that they would need to be embedded into a more articulated consideration of the work. Thus, such examples are mostly constructed for the purpose of philosophical analysis (often at the expense of aesthetic value) (Stock 2017a, 121f.).

⁴ The two examples often taken up in the texts discussing this phenomenon stem from Walton (1994, 35).

⁵ For other analogous examples, see Moran (1994) and Stock (2017a, 114f.; 2017b).

What is disturbing in all these cases, or what we resist to, are not primarily the scenes of the killing of an innocent girl or a widow, nor the explosion of exaggerated and unjustified anger. Rather, what we resist is the endorsement, even if only in the imagination, of the following generalizing justifications: 'after all, it was a girl;' '[they] did their duty before God;' '[s]o Craig did the right thing, because Jack and Jill should have taken their argument somewhere else where they wouldn't get in anyone's way.'

We can find a more articulated literary example of how imaginative resistance arises – and of the aims literary authors may pursue when they adopt this literary means – in the second chapter of Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*. In the workhouse where he lives and in agreement with the other children, Oliver Twist dares to ask for some more food instead of declaring himself satisfied with the portion he is entitled to. This behaviour offends the supervisors, who opt for severe punishment of the boy. At the end of the chapter, as well as at the beginning of chapter three, we find the narrator justifying the corrective measure taken against Oliver. Commenting on these passages, Wolfgang Iser – who, without using this concept, offers a seminal discussion of imaginative resistance – particularly emphasizes the function of the narrator's commentary of this episode. In such commentary, we find not only the expression of personal agreement with the supervisors' punishment, but also hints to generalize the justification for such punishment as aimed at correct and just education. Offering such generalizing justification, the text paradoxically affords the readers to endorse the positive evaluation of the punishment – i.e., of an educational measure which they will consider likely unjust according to their moral standards and due to the empathizing with Oliver. Iser (1975, 240) describes the reaction of the reader and the narrative strategy behind this episode as follows:

The reaction of the reader is straightforward, because the author has formulated his commentary in such a way that they have to reject it. This is the only way to increase the reader's sympathy for the child's fate, up to some intervention: the readers are to be torn from their chairs. Here, it is no longer a question of filling a gap in the assessment of the situation, but rather of completely correcting a false assessment.

For Iser, the episode can only have been written in this way in order to arouse the reader's resistance to agree with the positive evaluation of the punishment in terms

of a good education. This is a literary strategy that serves the purpose of increasing, even more, the sympathy for Oliver.

Importantly, the request to endorse claims that deviate from the moral standard is not exclusive to literature and can be realized in different ways: montage or perspectivation of the narrative – in literature as well as other kinds of art such as cinema or theatre – can also be used for this purpose. Furthermore, that request can be more or less explicit and the corresponding reaction of resistance can be more or less immediate. Take, for example, Humbert Humbert's confession at the beginning of Nabokov's *Lolita*: this initially provokes some kind of sympathy, which is, however, revised in the course of the novel, and in retrospect can lead the reader to a kind of resistance with respect to his or her first reaction (Bareis 2014). Possibly, no resistance arises at the first reading, and the uncomfortable or resisting reaction is awakened only afterwards.

In the current philosophical literature on fiction, as I mentioned, the discussion about imaginative resistance has different facets.⁶ Besides the already mentioned aspects, it has been pointed out that such resistance also provokes a kind of “authoritative breakdown” (Gendler 2010, 204f.; Weatherson 2004). Although we might not fully agree with the current interpretations of authoritative breakdown, we can at least take up the following: inviting us, by means of generalizing value statements, to remove the boundaries between what is restricted to the fictional world and what

⁶ Besides Moran's interpretation, on which I will briefly comment below, I wish to mention some aspects in the analyses of imaginative resistance proposed by Tamar Szabò Gendler and Kathleen Stock. Both partly overlap with the interpretation proposed here, but at the same time differ from it in many respects. Also, the two interpretations differ from each other in some relevant ways, as Stock explicitly points out. Both claim that imaginative resistance is related to the appeal to somehow ‘believe’ in what is suggested as morally valuable in the relevant scenarios, and that this call is difficult to separate from the call to mere imagination. The reference to ‘belief’ is important in that it shows that imaginative resistance occurs when the separation between the fictional and the real is not consistently maintained. Whether this is an invitation to believe or rather – as I would say – to endorse is not so important for the moment. Nevertheless, it seems to me that the emphasis on belief leads to a predominantly cognitive interpretation of the phenomenon. In the interpretation proposed here, imaginative resistance is instead considered as an affective phenomenon. Furthermore, I believe that both approaches overlook some of the implications of the loosening of the boundaries between what is real and what is fictional/imaginary for the analysis of our subjective participation in fictions (Gendler 2000, 121f.; 2010, 203f.; Liao & Gendler 2015; Stock 2017a).

we should endorse even beyond this world, and inviting us to do so with regard to such an extremely sensitive matter as moral convictions, the work loses part of its authority. In this sense, removing the ‘quarantine’ or the discontinuity and isolation of the fiction with respect to reality has some disturbing effects. In other words, readers develop a more distanced attitude and partly lose ‘trust’ with respect to what the text affords. In addition, it seems that such resistance is connected with the attempt to avoid some kind of moral contagion: after all, cannot our endorsement of wrong moral judgments in fiction affect our *real* moral convictions?⁷

Yet, does all this not imply that there is a change, or even disruption, of our self-experience and self-understanding? And why are self-experience and self-understanding so particularly touched when it comes to affective-moral issues? It seems to me that these questions have not yet garnered the attention they require. We find some seminal work in this direction in Richard Moran’s (1994) article “The Expression of Feelings in Imagination.” Moran discusses the tension between the feelings afforded and required by what happens in the fiction and the feelings we ourselves are prone to. This tension, as we will see in the next sections, indicates a double attitude in our experience of fiction. Furthermore, Moran’s distinction between imagination as ‘hypothetical imagining’ and as ‘dramatic imagining’ proves to be relevant for phenomenological analysis. ‘Hypothetical imagining’ designates a kind of supposition or as-if assumption filled with intuitive content. Hypothetically, we can, for instance, imagine that an affirmative judgment of value could be endorsed by someone about a morally unacceptable situation – or maybe even that we *in a fictional situation* could endorse it. In this case, we are not asked to agree, nor to really endorse that claim. Thus, we can refrain from making this statement through feelings of disapproval, and possibly through distance from the fictional situation. Therefore, we do not experience any fundamental resistance when introducing it. This remark converges with the claim that the resistance does not concern mere supposition, for example, that a society based on racist principles could be considered good or the assumption that someone could endorse this as a moral value. Resistance arises instead when the concrete intuitive (thus not merely suppositional) presentation of the respective scenario is coupled with the request for our first-personal approval or endorsement of the positive assessment of this scenario.

⁷ This aspect of emotional contagion between imaginary and real experience has also been explored empirically (Liao et al. 2014; Black & Barnes 2017).

This happens, for example, when we are asked for a first-personal approval of the positive evaluation of a society based on racist principles. Moran calls this form of imagination ‘dramatic imagining.’ Unlike the former, it requires our non-distant participation in the imagined or fictional context. Thereby, we do not experience any feelings of disgust, anger or disapproval *about* what is being imagined. We rather feel the resistance *in the imagining* itself.⁸ Precisely this form of dramatic imagining is demanded by the situations described above: this requires not only our first-personal participation, but also our – albeit provisional – *real* assent to the imagined. Moran’s view on the just-mentioned questions can be supported by some reflections on our experience of fiction inspired by the work of Sartre. His phenomenological description of the diversity of our affective participation in fictional and imaginative contexts can underpin these distinctions with a conception of the diversity and unity of self-experience in imaginative and fictional contexts.

3 Fiction and Imagination

Before turning to Sartre’s contribution, I wish to spend some words on the relation between imagination and fiction. Imaginative resistance mostly arises in the experience of fiction. Thus, it does not seem to primarily concern subjective or even private forms of imaginative experience, but rather what we are asked to imagine by a fictional work. As I have argued elsewhere, I consider the experience of fiction as based on a specific kind of ‘bound’ imaginative activity (Summa 2018; 2019b). I understand the boundedness of the imagination in the experience of fiction as related to the appellative character of the text, to the normativity of the affordances to imagine, and to the interaction between authors and receivers of a fictional work. Let me try to explain this by referring to the work of Kendall Walton, Iser, and Sartre, who addressed the function of imagination in fiction in different ways.

Although he does not use this terminology, we can consider Walton’s work against the background of this interpretation. For Walton (1990), fictional works have an analogous function as ‘props,’ i.e., as those objects that invite us to imagine (or make-believe). In games of make-believe, objects function in an unconventional

⁸ These remarks could be reconsidered in relation to Husserl’s distinction between feeling something ‘about’ the imagined or rather ‘in’ imagining (Summa 2018).

way, inviting the players to imagine and to act consistently, thereby supporting and at the same time limiting their imaginative powers within the context of the game. Fictions are thus formed by the responses to the affordances to imagine generated by objects functioning as props. In such a way, affordances contribute to shaping the framework for what can and what cannot be imagined, as well as a set of possible responses. Despite the differences between the case of games of make-believe and the case of artistic fictions, Walton considers them to be analogous: in the case of fiction, our imagination is also active – as in games of make-believe contexts –, and such an activity is also prompted by something, namely the work of fiction. Without going into the details of this argument and addressing the problematic aspects of this analogy, I wish to retain here the idea of *boundedness* of the imagination and the affording or appellative character of the work (Summa 2018; 2019b).

These features defining the role of imagination in fiction also characterize both Sartre's and Iser's approach. Iser considers the phenomenon of reading as based on the activation of the reader's imagination. The imagination thereby not only has the function of visualizing the scenes portrayed by the author; it must also "fill in" the gaps that the author leaves open in the text (Iser 1975; 1984). This view is strongly indebted to Roman Ingarden's insights into the ontology of the literary work, and particularly the remarks on the constitutive indeterminacy of works of fiction. What authors do not say in their text is indeterminate, or constitutively empty, and each reader is asked to fill in those gaps in ways that consistently fit the text. Such an activity is called a concretization or actualization of the work (Ingarden 1972). Saying that imagination is involved in such concretization and actualization does not mean that we fully visualize with the mind's eye whatever the author leaves unsaid. This does not only seem to be counter-intuitive, but is actually impossible, because the 'unsaid' corresponds to a potentially unlimited field of imaginable states of affairs, and we obviously cannot imagine all of them. Yet, what we can say is that we at least implicitly form a vague imagining of how the described things should appear and of the relevant connections between events, which allows us to understand the narrative developments of the story even if the narrator does not tell us everything. The relevant imaginative activity may range from a kind of unsharp atmospheric imagining to clearer and more defined imaginative presentations of characters or scenes. That some sort of imagining is operative in filling the gaps of fiction becomes clear if we consider one rather common attitude we have when confronted with the concretization of literary works in theatre or cinema. It often

happens that we are either disappointed or that we express sympathy with the way a director has concretely realized scenes taken from a literary text he or she previously read. Yet, if while reading we would not have any kind of imaginative concretization, neither explicit nor implicit, we would not have any such experiences as agreement or disappointment in these cases.⁹ Thus, the ambiguity of singular passages, montage or other expressive techniques underlying imaginative resistance can be understood as entailing such moments of indeterminacy that appeal to the imaginative activity of the reader. This, of course, does not mean that there is only one way to appropriately concretize a fictional work in the imagination. But we can speak of a weak normativity of the text, which at least excludes some inappropriate kinds of imaginative concretizations, while leaving an indeterminate range of other possible concretizations open.

In the second essay of *What is literature?*, Sartre (1966, 38f.) also addresses the appellative character of literary texts. Like Ingarden and Iser, he also emphasizes the constitutive function of the reader for the coming into existence of literary works, but he does so by relying on a dialectical approach to the literary work as a social product. A written work that is not read is, for Sartre, only the product of the author's spontaneity, it cannot be considered as an object for others and, therefore, it lacks objectivity in the proper sense. Accordingly, for Sartre, it is nonsense to claim that someone writes for him/herself: when confronted with such writings, the author will only find him/herself; the work has no autonomy with respect to the spontaneous act of the author's imagining. A literary or fictional object, thus, does not come into existence only thanks to the creativity of the writer; it also needs the reader as the one who gives objectivity to what would otherwise be only the product of the spontaneous imaginative activity of the author. This is a process in which the reader, in his/her reading activity, negates the spontaneity of the author's imaginative act, somehow expropriating the product of its imagining, and making it into a public object – or something 'for others.' This process of negation, which cannot be done by the author, is necessary for the production of an autonomous work of fiction.

Accordingly, literary, and more generally fictional works (as well as the characters, objects, and situations in them), have an intersubjective/objective existence

⁹ Ingarden considers these as the concretization of a literary work. These concretizations, however, still remain within the realm of fiction and thus also bear moments of indeterminacy.

only thanks to the interaction between author and readers. By ‘uncovering’ what the text says, and by imaginatively following the literary work, readers also complement it and thereby produce something new. The reader’s imaginative act, which delimits the spontaneity of the productive act of the author by looking at the products of such spontaneous activity from the outside, arises as a response to the appeal of the text. Accordingly, the reader’s imagination is also normatively limited by the work itself. Sartre therefore understands the act of reading as a “pact of generosity” between reader and author, which he considers as an expression of freedom:

To write is to make an appeal to the reader that he lead into objective existence the revelation which I have undertaken by means of language. And if it should be asked *to what* the writer is appealing, the answer is simple. As the sufficient reason for the appearance of the aesthetic object is never found in the book (where we find merely solicitations to produce the object) or in the author’s mind, and as his subjectivity, which we cannot get away from, cannot give a reason for the act of leading into objectivity, the appearance of the work of art is a new event which cannot *be explained* by anterior data. And since this directed creation is an absolute beginning, it is therefore brought about by the freedom of the reader, and by what is purest in that freedom. Thus, the writer appeals to the reader’s freedom to collaborate in the production of his work. (Ibid., 46)

The free “pact of generosity” (ibid., 55) that arises as a response to this appeal, consists in limiting the spontaneity of one’s own imaginative activity and letting one’s own imagination be guided by the text. Such imagining needs to be a dramatic kind of imagining in Moran’s sense: it cannot be a merely hypothetical and possibly empty supposition but needs to be concretized or intuitively fulfilled. This, as I wish to show in the following, implies that the complex double structure of self-awareness that characterizes imagination, in general, is connected with the specific affordances generated by the fictional work, i.e., by an imaginative project made by someone else.

Despite their differences, Walton, Iser, and Sartre emphasize that works of fiction are collective and responsive enterprises and can only come into being thanks to the interaction between authors and receivers and thanks to their respective imaginative activities. Yet, in what sense can such an approach to

imagination and fiction be helpful in order to reassess the phenomenon of imaginative resistance?

4 Sartre on the Resistance in the Imaginary and on the Conduct in the Face of the Irreal

In order to understand why Sartre's phenomenology of the imagination can be helpful for reassessing the phenomenon of imaginative resistance in relation to self-experience, we should particularly address two of his claims regarding the imagination: (a) the first claim is that irreal objects do not offer resistance as the real ones do; and yet, this apparent lack of resistance implies another kind of resistance, which Sartre considers as a resistance of consciousness against itself; (b) the second claim is that such tension within consciousness in imaginative experience is particularly reflected in the emotional responses we have in the face of the imaginary and the fictional.

4.1 What Kind of Resistance in the Imaginary?

For Sartre, acts of imagining have "something of the imperious and the infantile, a refusal to take account of distance and difficulties" (Sartre 2004, 125) which characterize reality. That is to say, when we imagine, we do not face the resistance that characterizes reality. More precisely, this lack of resistance is due to two features of irreal objects. *First*, the appearance of irreal objects fully coincides with their being: as products of spontaneity, they appear as they are in themselves, which also implies that "they are 'presentified' under a totalitarian aspect" (ibid.). This does not necessarily mean that we see them from all perspectives at once, but rather that no matter how we imagine the object, what is given is the object itself, there is nothing more to look for or to explore because the being of the irreal object is fully exhausted by its being spontaneously imagined. *Secondly*, irreal objects are, in a specific sense, inactive: they do not have any direct causal impact on reality, and they are not causally modified by what happens in reality or by real actions. Given the specific status of fictional entities as products of bound imagining and as resulting not only from the spontaneous act of imagining of an author, but from the cooperation

between authors and readers, we cannot say that the former feature also characterizes fictions. These are not the product of our spontaneous acts of imagination, but rather affordances to imagine according to the schematic presentation of a fictional work. As we saw in the previous section, this implies that imagining in fiction is embedded in a normative framework; that besides imagining there is also something 'given' or something to explore and to discover when we are confronted with fiction; and that such exploring and discovering also implies a kind of dialectical negation of the pure spontaneity of acts of imagining. Yet, the latter feature, i.e., the specific inactivity of imaginary objects, also characterizes fictional entities. Both imaginary and fictional objects have no direct causal effect on us as real subjects, and we, as real subjects, cannot have any causal effect on them:

For us, who have distinguished from the outset between the real imaging consciousness and the irreal object, it is impossible to admit a causal relation that would go from object to consciousness. The irreal cannot be seen, touched, smelled, except irreally. Reciprocally, it can act only on an irreal object. (Ibid., 136)

Apparently, this implies that neither purely imagined nor fictional objects offer any kind of resistance to the act of imagining. This is however not Sartre's view. In fact, Sartre argues that, precisely due to these features, a *different kind* of resistance, proper to imaginative experience arises: a *negative* force or a "force of passive resistance" (ibid., 135). Yet, what does such resistance consist in, if not in some kind of withdrawal and opposition of the object, which is by definition inactive? According to Sartre, such passive resistance results from a somehow 'deceptive' structure of imaginative experience. For, on the one hand, the source of imagining is to be found in the really felt desire and in a kind of fascination for what is to be imagined. On the other hand, what is imagined cannot really fulfil such desire and fascination – it can only respond to them with an imaginary analogon, i.e., with something that remains something constitutively absent. Precisely due to this double structure – imaginary fulfilment and real absence – the appearance of the irreal object eventually increases the desires that generated it:

This passive object, artificially kept alive, but which, at any moment, is close to vanishing, cannot fulfill desires. However, it is not completely useless: con-

stituting an irreal object is a way of deceiving desires momentarily in order to exacerbate them, a little like the effect sea water has on thirst. (Ibid., 126)

Thus, what Sartre describes here is actually not a resistance of the imaginary object as such, but rather a resistance that consciousness offers against itself (ibid., 135) and that arises from the tension between, on the one hand, desire or will and, on the other hand, spontaneity.

By claiming that imagining is an act of pure spontaneity, Sartre does not mean to argue that acts of imagining and their contents can simply be created and set in motion at will. Rather, saying that imaginative acts are products of spontaneity means that imagination arises from within ourselves and is not caused by something else. We must, therefore, distinguish between voluntary spontaneity and a kind of pre-willing spontaneity (ibid., 134). Accordingly, the imaginary does not presuppose the faculty or an act of will; rather, in most cases, it arises spontaneously, but *not at will*. And even when it arises at will, imagining does not fully remain under the wilful control of the imagining subject: images that we did not want to include, or that may even disturb us, may associatively arise or develop out of an originally wilful act of imagining. This tension is the source of the resistance of consciousness against itself, which was addressed above: the spontaneity of the imaginary can resist the will to control the imaginary:

[...] one must not understand this curious phenomenon as a resistance of the object to consciousness but as a resistance of consciousness to itself – as when the fact that we do not want to produce the obsessive representation brings us naturally to produce it. (Ibid., 135)

These remarks already offer some elements to connect Sartre's general conception of resistance in the experience of the irreal to the more specific phenomenon of imaginative resistance in fiction. In the latter case, we, as readers or spectators of a work of fiction, *spontaneously* follow the affordances to imagine of the fictional work. Such affordances set the spontaneity of the imagining in motion; they neither force us to imagine nor causally motivate an imaginative response. Accordingly, even with resistance, we respond to such affordances by imagining those scenarios in which agreement is demanded for claims we otherwise consider morally indefensible or even repugnant. Therefore, both the imagining of such a scenario and

the dramatic imagining of the agreement still originate from a *spontaneous* activity of consciousness. The reaction of resistance, which we experience in this process, results from the fact that we refuse to give our agreement, even in the imagination. And such refusal is a wilful refusal. In this sense, the spontaneous act of imagining resists wilful control. The will, as Sartre emphasizes, may well ‘quickly reclaim its rights’ – in other words, we may well try to bring everything under control, and to stop the spontaneous development of imagining. Yet, this is mostly not successful, since spontaneity still seems to exceed such a wilful attempt: “one wants to develop the image and everything is broken” (ibid.).

The tension between spontaneous activity, which we do not completely control in the production of the imaginary, and the willingness to keep the imaginary under control, is what Sartre sees as the basis for the resistance of consciousness to itself in the experience of the imaginary.

What Sartre writes about obsessive images in the last sentence of the quote above can be applied, at least in view of the tension between spontaneity and will, to the phenomenon of imaginative resistance in the above-mentioned and narrower sense. Even if we experience resistance in situations where we are afforded to imagine something that we do not want to approve, these imaginative scenarios – including our approval – impose themselves on us, and they are the result of a spontaneous, yet not wilful, activity of consciousness. This tension between willing and spontaneous activity, however, only partially addresses the problems raised by the phenomenon of imaginative resistance. It cannot yet explain why we specifically experience resistance in *approving* what we are asked to imagine.

4.2 The Conduct in the Face of the Irreal and the Plurality of Self-Experience in Imagination and Fiction

The phenomenon of imaginative resistance from which we started out is a feeling towards the demand for approval of certain contents of a fiction that we would not approve of in reality. As I already mentioned, one way to understand why we experience resistance when afforded to agree with these contents is to emphasize that the specific quarantine of the imaginary is removed, or that the boundaries between the real and the imaginary become weaker. Sartre’s account of our participation in fiction allows us to connect this with the complex structure of self-experience and

in this sense to show why imaginative resistance is a phenomenon that indicates an attempt to defend our self-understanding. Importantly, even if self-understanding might seem to indicate a higher level of reflective self-awareness, I believe that what is touched here is a more basic level, which we can consider as an internalizing or habitualizing of a self-conception that is importantly based on the endorsement of morally, culturally, and socially relevant values. This is also the reason why resistance emerges particularly with respect to moral standards. And the assumption is that such moral standards are based on some kind of socially and culturally shared experience and evaluation. Thus, we can say that imaginative resistance is an implicit attempt to defend and preserve the integrity of an intimate (and yet fragile) domain of self-experience, which concerns the values we identify with, probably even before asking ourselves whether these values are indeed good or bad. As I mentioned, this ‘attempt’ – and therefore the resistance – is not of cognitive, but rather of affective nature. Thus, in order to understand which domain of affectivity is concerned, we should briefly consider how we affectively participate in imagination and fiction.

Drawing from both Husserl and Sartre, I have tried to argue that our emotional or affective relation to the imaginary consists of two levels or layers (Summa 2019a). If we stick to Sartre’s (2004, 68f., 136f.) view, we should distinguish a primary or constitutive layer, in which the affective phenomena of desire and fascination are to be regarded as the motor of imagination, from a secondary layer, in which we have the emotional responses to what we imagine – for instance, pity, compassion, admiration for a character, etc.

The latter emotional responses presuppose our ‘participation’ in the fiction, which means for Sartre a self-irrealizing act. Since, as we have seen, the irreal object cannot have any direct causal effect (*ibid.*, 125f.): when we imagine something, we transpose ourselves, as it were, into the imagined world, we negate, in this sense, our real life, including our emotional responses, in the face of the real, and quasi-live in an imaginary context. It is only due to such self-irrealization that irreal objects can affect us in some way.

As responses to the irreal or the fictitious, emotions and feelings that we experience on this second level – i.e., on the level of irrealization – are, according to Sartre, both ‘freer’ and ‘poorer’ than feelings and emotions we experience in the face of the real. Such poverty and freedom are complementary to each other. Freedom results from the previously addressed lack of material resistance of the imaginary and from

the possibility to navigate in imaginary contexts with much fewer constraints as we can do in real contexts. The poverty of such emotional responses (which Sartre also calls their ‘degradation’) has two reasons: first, the imagined object remains constitutively absent, and second, the corresponding feeling only has a passive or receptive, and not an active, side. This is precisely due to the irrealizing power of imagining: the object can only affect us and awakens our emotions, but it would not make sense to actively express such emotions to what is imagined or fictional, because in this case we would act not as irrealized, but rather as real subjects, and we could in principle not expect any kind of responsiveness from the irreal object.¹⁰

In *The Imaginary*, Sartre concludes that we should distinguish two different “personalities” active in our consciousness when we imagine: “the imaginary me with its tendencies and desires – and the real me” (ibid., 146).

I understand these as two forms of self-awareness that are operative in imagination and the experience of fiction, and as different implicit attitudes, which arise within the unity of one consciousness (Summa 2019a). For me as ‘real I,’ i.e., as embedded in real life, imagining means having the quasi-deceptive experience described above. When I irrealize myself and participate in the fiction, I do not properly ‘double’ myself and my feelings: it would, in other words, not be fully correct to say that I have feelings and emotions belonging to the imaginary I and those belonging to the real I. Instead, it is always me who has these feelings: I can either be directly affected by them – since I always irrealize myself in the fiction – or indirectly – since, while experiencing fiction, I am also living my real life and can take a detached stance towards the fiction and my own irrealization. This means that, as imaginary I, I have the same feelings and emotions I would have in reality, but, as real I, I also experience their poorness and degradation compared to those feelings and emotions I experience when confronted with real objects and situations. Accordingly, poverty and degradation can only be identified from the perspective of real experience, and this means that we are never completely absorbed in irrealization (unless in the pathologies of the imaginary or in dreams). According to this interpretation, Sartre’s claim that the two attitudes – or the real and the imaginary

¹⁰ This, however, does not mean that our feelings and emotions when facing the imaginary are not genuine or insincere. As Sartre (2004, 140) writes: “the irreal object exists, it exists as irreal, as inactive, of this there is no doubt; its existence is undeniable. Feeling behaves therefore in the face of the irreal as in the face of the real.” See also Summa (2019a).

I – cannot coexist only means that the structural differences in the experience of reality and of fiction must be emphasized on both the objective and the subjective side. Nevertheless, in both cases we are dealing with acts that are expressions of the same consciousness.

If we compare this short reconstruction of the remarks Sartre makes in *The Imaginary*, with the discussion of the free act of generosity with which we choose to follow the prescriptions or affordances to imagine contained in a work of fiction, discussed in *What is Literature?*, we can see that the discourse about freedom is to be understood in several ways. The freedom of emotions in the experience of fictions results from the freedom of the choice to take up the affordances to imagine contained in the fiction, which itself entails the freedom of an imaginative self-irrealization that must be carried out or renewed again and again. For this reason, Sartre (1966, 50) thinks of reading – almost with an oxymoron, if one considers his reflections on dreaming in *The Imaginary* – as a ‘free dream;’ it is a dream, and thus a kind of illusion, but it is an illusion that one chooses freely.

These levels of freedom – and particularly the freedom that is given in irrealization and that is associated with the poverty of the emotion, and the freedom to irrealize oneself by following an imaginative project made by someone else – get into tension when it comes to describing the phenomenon of imaginative resistance. The free act of generosity of the imagination engaged in the reception of fiction reaches its limits precisely when the work prescribes to agree to something we would not want to agree to in reality.

5 Conclusion: Imaginative Resistance and the Tension between Modes of Self-Experience

Trying to draw some conclusions from the previous analyses, we can say that imaginative resistance is an affective response to affordances to imagine that occurs pre-reflectively, but shows how deep and intimate our identification with certain culturally and socially mediated, moral standards is. In this sense, imaginative resistance can be considered a kind of spontaneous defence against a menace of our self-experience and interiorized social self-conception. In short, what we experience is a kind of menace or impairment concerning a very intimate core of our self,

which touches on the endorsement of values that we not only recognize as important for us, but also with which we identify – or want to identify.

I believe that Sartre's phenomenological analysis of imagination and fiction contributes to shedding light on the phenomenon of imaginative resistance at different levels. We have seen that unreal objects do not offer resistance in the same way as real ones and that, precisely for this reason, they resist (in another sense) our real desire for richness in emotional experience. Such resistance arises from the tension between will and spontaneity, or from the impossibility to wilfully control spontaneous imaginative activity.

With the specific phenomenon of imaginative resistance, we have a partly different situation. As I pointed out, such a phenomenon arises in the face of *fiction*, i.e., when we are afforded to imagine something that was spontaneously projected by someone else, and not in our own spontaneous acts of imagining. Our own imagining – as receivers of a work of fiction – is thereby still spontaneous, even if it arises as a response to the affordances of a fictional work. Yet, the “generosity” that characterizes such a spontaneous act has some limits, as it ends precisely when the boundary between imaginary and real agreement with the affordances in the text is removed or becomes too weak. What we resist in imaginative resistance is an agreement with something that goes beyond the sphere of imaginative experience and thereby corrupts the essential features of emotional responses in the face of the imaginary: their being the result of irrealization, which amounts to their poverty and their freedom.

This goes hand in hand with the tension between will and spontaneity (or resistance of consciousness to itself): such a tension within the phenomenon of imaginative resistance consists in the fact that, although we *spontaneously* follow what is prescribed by fictional works of our imagination, we *wilfully* resist to follow some of the prescriptions when they interfere with the sphere of our most sensible and intimate moral standards. This resistance is *real*, i.e., it is not itself a product of irrealization. Indeed, complete irrealization would imply that we enter into the imaginative context without experiencing resistance, and in this case the spontaneity of the production of the imaginary would unfold without any constraints. In other words, Sartre's observation that resistance in the imaginary always affects us as *real I*, and that it can arise only if we maintain the tension between our real and our imaginary experience, implies that, if we were completely absorbed in the imaginary, we would experience neither the resistance of the will nor the resistance of the deception of wishes and the poverty of feelings. The fact that we resist endorsing some claims

that are made in the fiction, but exceed the limits of the fiction, shows that, in this context, we are holding on or want to hold on precisely to the pooriness of emotional reactions to the imaginary.

This characteristic pooriness amounts indeed to a kind of containment of the uncanny, the evil, or the morally bad within the merely imagined context (or the fact that it is only an unreal uncanny, evil, or morally bad). In this sense, maintaining such poverty or restricting what conflicts with our moral standards to the realm of fiction offers protection against our own imaginings, even when they arise in response to invitations in fictional works. In a certain sense, the appeal to emotional approval of the scenarios presented above attempts to remove this protection by demanding our real approval, thus opening up the possibility of the contagion of our real self by the imaginary. That such contagion or contamination is possible, or that we have the need to guard against it, shows that the two levels of real and imaginary experience, although discontinuous, are permeable (Summa 2018). In other words, we resist imaginary approval because real and imaginary selves, despite discontinuity, are expressions of a unified consciousness. And also, our – socially mediated – moral self-understanding seems to be endangered by the very idea of a blending between the two levels. As Moran (1994) points out, this phenomenon also brings to light two features of our ethical/moral self-understanding: its deep-rooted character and its fundamental vulnerability, which is particularly evident in protecting ourselves from possible contamination.

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Sham Emotions, Quasi-Emotions, or Non-Genuine Emotions?

Fictional Emotions and Their Qualitative Feel

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Abstract: Contemporary accounts of fictional emotions, i.e., emotions experienced towards objects we know to be fictional, are mainly concerned with explaining their rationality or lack thereof. In this context dominated by an interest in the role of belief, questions regarding their phenomenal quality have received far less attention: it is often assumed that they feel ‘similar’ to emotions that target real objects. Against this background, this paper focuses on the possible specificities of the qualitative feel of fictional emotions. It starts by presenting what I call the ‘phenomenological question’ about the qualitative feel of fictional emotions (section 1) and by showing that this is irreducible to questions about their cognitive, intentional, evaluative, and embodied nature (section 2). Drawing on some insights from early phenomenologists, the next two sections elaborate criteria for distinguishing between real and sham emotions on the one hand (section 3), and between genuine and non-genuine emotions, on the other (section 4). Finally, I apply this orthogonal distinction to the particular case of fictional emotions (section 5). The paper argues that fictional emotions are neither sham emotions nor quasi-emotions, but full-fledged emotional experiences, despite them displaying the distinctive phenomenology of emotions experienced as non-genuine. In the particular case of fictional emotions, they are non-genuine, because our psychology is in fact in a state dominated by aesthetic enjoyment.

Keywords: Sham Emotions, Quasi-emotions, (Non-)Genuine Emotions, (In)authentic Emotions, Fictional Emotions, Qualitative Feel, Imagination

1 Fictional Emotions: The Cognitive and the Phenomenological Question

Contemporary accounts on fictional emotions, i.e., emotions we experience towards objects we know to be fictional, have mainly sought to explain their rationality or lack thereof. Already Colin Radford's paper "How Can We Be Moved by the Fate of Anna Karenina?" (1975) provocatively described fictional emotions as paradoxical and as a blatant case of doxastic and practical irrationality. This intervention prompted a prolific debate on what is known as "the paradox of fiction" (for an overview, Konrad et al. 2018). The discussions around this paradox, mostly of analytical provenance, were concerned with understanding how it is possible to react emotionally towards something we know to be fictional. The debate was largely dominated by a cognitivist view of the emotions typical of early analytical accounts, according to which emotions require beliefs to take place or are themselves a form of belief.¹ Over time, the cognitivist paradigm has been rejected and substituted by cognitive approaches that acknowledge the function of states other than belief, such as perceptions or imaginings, as constitutive elements of the emotions. As a result, the view that fictional emotions are paradoxical has also been challenged, leading to the conclusion that the paradox is obsolete and even a fiction in itself (Moyal-Sharrock 2009, 169). If emotion does not require belief, then there is nothing odd about reacting emotionally to objects that we know do not exist. Yet, this verdict on the paradox does not necessarily imply that we have already explained everything about our emotional reactions towards fiction. What remains to be clarified, and indeed what comprises the main focus of this paper, is the entanglement between emotion and imagination in responding to fiction.² In particular, I will be considering how fictional emotions feel: Do the lack of belief and the influence of imagination have an impact on how fictional emotions are experienced?

¹ For the idea that emotions require belief, see Kenny (1963, 193f.); and for the idea that emotions are a form of judgment, Solomon (1993, 126).

² The paradox of fiction might be grounded on false premises about emotions, but thinking about fictional emotions is still instructive for understanding our engagement with art. For a similar view, see Stecker (2011, 296).

This question has been rather neglected and trivialized in contemporary philosophy. In a context that is largely dominated by cognitivist and cognitive accounts of emotions, it became natural to focus on aspects of emotions' cognitive structure, which appeared to be problematic (primarily their lack of belief in the existence of the targeted object). Thus, philosophers were preoccupied with what I call 'the cognitive question,' i.e., the question about the role of rational belief in fictional emotions. Against this background, questions regarding the phenomenal quality of fictional emotions received far less attention. Either it was considered a question of secondary importance, or it was tacitly or implicitly assumed that their phenomenology (often reduced to their somatic elements) is similar to that of emotions targeting objects known to be real. Kendall Walton can be seen as a representative of this view. As is well known, Walton claims that unlike emotions towards real objects, fictional emotions are neither based on beliefs nor do they motivate actions and that, as a result, they are quasi-emotions rather than full-fledged emotional experiences.³ However, when it comes to their phenomenology, he considers this to be *similar* to emotions directed towards real objects. As he puts it, Charles, a cinemagoer who claims to be afraid of the green slime, is in a *similar* condition to that of a person fearing a real disaster: "[h]is muscles are tensed, he clutches his chair, his pulse quickens, his adrenaline flows" (Walton 1990, 196). Walton's 'similarity hypothesis' (as I call it) entails, in fact, two claims: first, the assumption that fictional emotions and emotions towards real objects feel alike; and second, that their phenomenology can be explained in terms of their physiology. Both theses have been typical of a whole generation of approaches to fictional emotions that continue to circulate in current research.

Should we take the similarity hypothesis for granted? – I think not. It cannot be naively assumed that fictional emotions feel similar to emotions targeting real objects, nor can it be taken for granted that the phenomenology of an emotion (fictional or not) can be reduced to its physiology. The question of 'what it is like' to experience a fictional emotion still has to be posed in the current debate. It is precisely this question, which I call 'the phenomenological question,' that forms the central concern of this paper.

³ The term 'quasi-emotion' was employed by Meinong at the beginning of the 20th century in a similar sense. However, Meinong (1977, 310) claimed that the phenomenal quality of 'quasi-emotions' is different from the phenomenal quality of emotions towards real objects. This was a topic of dispute with Witasek, for whom both are felt alike (see Vendrell Ferran 2010).

Let me start by mentioning two reasons for stressing the significance of this unexplored area of research. Both reasons indicate a possible difference in the phenomenology of fictional emotions compared to that of our emotions towards real objects. First, we know from first-person experience that despite being very intense, our emotions towards fictional objects are experienced as being more superficial and as not having the same weight on our psychology. Certainly, Anna Karenina can make us cry, but the sadness we experience while reading this novel has something hollow about it when compared to the sadness towards a friend in a similar situation. In addition, like Walton's cinemagoer Charles, we can also feel afraid of the green slime in the movie. If my physiological reaction were measured, my fear would probably show similar patterns as my fear towards a real-life danger. However, these physiological similarities would not suffice to prevent us from claiming that our fictional fear is coreless compared to the fear we might experience towards a real threat: we feel the impulse to protect ourselves from the slime, but, ultimately, we remain seated in the cinema and even enjoy the experience. However, if the green slime were real and situated in my room right now, I would definitively run away.

The second reason originates from some historical considerations. There is a long tradition in aesthetics holding that emotions experienced under the influence of imagination show a distinctive phenomenology. One of the most prominent proponents of this view is Hume. In *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1739/40), he develops a cognitive theory of emotions, but he acknowledges that fictional emotions do not require belief (in fact, he treats fictions as lies) and describes the phenomenology of fictional emotions in the following terms:

A passion, which is disagreeable in real life, may afford the highest entertainment in a tragedy, or epic poem. In the latter case it lies not with that weight upon us: It feels less firm and solid: And has no other than the agreeable effect of exciting the spirits, and rousing the attention. The difference in the passions is a clear proof of a like difference in those ideas, from which the passions are derived. (Hume 2008, 85)

In Hume's view, the differences on the phenomenological level (which he takes for granted) are derived from differences on the cognitive level. In short: the fact that we do not believe that the object of our emotion exists (and, thus, the protagonist does not really suffer, etc.), but merely imagine it, leads us to experience such

emotions as distant and less solid. It is precisely because of this distance that we are able to enjoy emotions that would be unpleasant when experienced in real life.

Hume's view was echoed by the main representatives of German aesthetics in the late 19th and early 20th century. In *Das Wesen der Kunst*, Lange (1901, 100, 105) describes fictional emotions as "dulled, moderate and as stuck half-way." In "Das Problem der ästhetischen Scheingefühle", Geiger (1914, 191f.) depicts them as being of shorter duration, less influential, and distant. By virtue of their sham character they are as-if experiences; they lack weight and cannot be taken seriously. Meinong (1902, 313), in *Über Annahmen*, describes them as being "*uneingentlich verspürt*" (experienced as non-genuine). Though offering different explanations of the phenomenon, these authors endorse the view that their felt quality differs from the felt quality of our emotions towards objects known to be real.

In contemporary philosophy, there are only very scattered discussions about the possibility that the imagination (by engaging in idiosyncratic phantasies or engaging with fictions) influences the way in which we experience our emotions (Kenny 1963, 49; Ryle 1963, 103; Budd 1985, 128; Pugmire 2005, 36). But this phenomenon has rarely been the focus of research due to the predominance of cognitive models mainly interested in the role of belief and not in how emotions under the influence of the imagination are felt.

The phenomenological question is not irrelevant. Analyzing it can lead to a better understanding of how imagination enables, transforms, influences, and even distorts our emotional life. To approach this question, I will turn to the tradition in which much has been done to describe the phenomenal aspects of emotional experience: phenomenology.⁴ In particular, I will explore some of the efforts of early phenomenologists to describe and analyze the phenomenal nature of emotions. These efforts can enrich our language, which would otherwise remain too limited to grasp the subtle and complex nuances of our affective life. In the works of Scheler, Geiger, Voigtländer, Haas, and Pfänder, among others, we can find inspiring insights which, once refined in the light of more recent developments in emotion theory, can be fruitfully applied to the question of the phenomenal character of emotions in general and of fictional emotions in particular. Of special interest for the

⁴ I will focus here on the question of the qualitative feel, but phenomenology can be applied fruitfully to other aspects of our emotional reactions to fiction. See Cavallaro (2019) for a phenomenological account focusing on the subject's perspective engaging with fiction.

purposes of this paper is an orthogonal distinction, which is mentioned – though not fully developed – in these authors’ works: The distinction is between real and sham emotions (cases in which we imagine having an emotion), on the one hand, and between genuine and non-genuine emotions (cases of emotions experienced as out of tune with the rest of our psychology), on the other.

The paper is structured in five main sections. Having introduced the phenomenological question (section 1), I argue for its irreducibility to other questions regarding the cognitive, intentional, evaluative, or embodied nature of emotions (section 2). Drawing on early phenomenology, the next two sections elaborate criteria for distinguishing between real and sham emotions (section 3), and between genuine and non-genuine emotions (section 4). Finally, I apply this distinction to the particular case of fictional emotions (section 5). My thesis is that fictional emotions are neither sham emotions nor quasi-emotions, but full-fledged emotional experiences, though they display the phenomenology that is distinctive of non-genuine emotions. In the particular case of fictional emotions, they are non-genuine, because our psychology is in fact in a state dominated by aesthetic enjoyment.

2 The Irreducibility of the Phenomenological Question

I begin with what I consider to be a necessary refinement of ‘the phenomenological question.’ This refinement will take place, first, by showing how the qualitative feel of emotions cannot be reduced to any of their other dimensions and, second, by unpacking the elements involved in what I call ‘their qualitative feel.’ I start by distinguishing five moments of emotional experience. These moments are experienced as unified, but I will treat them separately for analytical purposes. Discussing them will enable me to narrow the phenomenological question down to its essential points.

2.1 Cognitive Dimension

An important aspect of emotions is that they are based and depend on cognitions. They are what phenomenologists call ‘founded’ states: founded states require other

states in order to occur. In particular, emotions require cognitions which present them with the objects towards which they are directed. The cognitive bases of emotions are a logical (but not temporal) presupposition for an emotion. What counts as a cognitive basis? As mentioned in the introduction, early analytical theories of emotions were mainly cognitivist theories: they attributed a central role to beliefs. However, these accounts offered no explanation of those emotions that are not based on beliefs but on imagining and entertaining, such as disgust targeting a perceived bad smell, fear of an imagined scenario, or hope based on the expectation that a desired state of affairs will happen, as well as fictional emotions. Recent developments have come closer to the view, previously endorsed by early phenomenologists, that states other than belief serve as cognitive bases for emotions (Stocker 1987, 59–69; Elster 1999, 250; Goldie 2000, 145). In this paper, I will consider not only beliefs but also perceptions, sensory imaginings, memories, suppositions and its relatives (such as imagining that something is the case or merely entertaining a thought) as possible cognitive bases of the emotions.

2.2 Object Directedness

The cognitive bases are responsible for presenting us with the objects towards which the emotions are directed. Emotions have a relational structure: they target objects in the world. When referring to this object directedness, contemporary research uses the term ‘intentionality.’ It has become customary to speak of the objects targeted by the emotions as “material objects,” but as used in this debate (and this is the use I will adopt here), the term “object” encompasses not only things, but also animals, persons, situations, and states of affairs (Kenny 1963, 195).⁵

2.3 Evaluative Presentation

That emotions are intentional implies not only that they target objects, but also that when an object (in the broad sense stated above) is targeted, then it is targeted in a particular way. The specific way in which emotions target their objects consists in

⁵ A similar claim can be found in early phenomenology (Pfänder 1913, 340; Stein 1989, 101).

presenting them as having a certain evaluative light, aspectual shape or axiological character. My fear of the dog indicates that the dog is dangerous to me. To refer to this evaluative dimension of emotions, it has become usual to speak of the “formal object” (de Sousa 1987, xv, 45) of the emotion. Evaluative properties (also called axiological properties or values) are the formal objects of emotions.⁶ I can fear many different things (the material objects of emotions are subject to individual, social, historical, and cultural variations), but fear always indicates that the feared object is threatening for me (emotions have restricted formal objects). According to this view, when we have an emotion, the targeted object is presented as having a certain evaluative property. Note that this idea does not necessarily imply that emotions are perceptions of such evaluative properties (as some proponents of the perceptual model have claimed). It implies only that emotions indicate that the targeted object has such a property. In this paper, I will work with a model of emotions as responses to evaluative qualities previously given to us in a feeling.⁷

2.4 Embodied Nature

Emotions are not just mental states; they are also embodied. Emotions are linked to a wide range of bodily changes and reactions: sensations, arousal, responses in the nervous and visceral system, etc. (e.g., in shame our pulse accelerates, we blush, sweat, etc.). Each emotion also has a repertoire of typical expressions involving facial and bodily changes (e.g., in shame we avoid eye contact, etc.) and is linked to action tendencies (e.g., shame is associated with the tendency to abandon the situation) (Scheler 1973a, 234; Elster 1999, 246).

2.5 Qualitative Feel

Now we reach the central concern of this paper: each emotion has its own peculiar quality of feeling. The colour of sadness differs from the colour of joy. The interesting

⁶ For this view in early phenomenology, see Scheler (1973a, 256) and Stein (1989, 98f.).

⁷ This view can be found in Scheler (1973a, 259), Reinach (1989, 295, 493), Mulligan (2004, 177–225), and Vendrell Ferran (2008).

point here is not only that emotions differ in their characteristic or typical “colours” (and also in the way in which each emotion colours the world), but also that each emotion might be accompanied by a feeling of the emotion. Emotions are felt and this feeling of the emotion is an important part of the qualitative feel of our emotions, i.e., of the way in which we experience them. Thus, what we call the qualitative feel involves several elements.

Let me unpack some of the elements involved in the qualitative feel of emotions. Sadness has a specific phenomenal quality which makes it different from joy, but sadness is not always experienced in the same way: sadness can be felt as hollow and superficial, or as solid and deep; it might be intensely or calmly experienced; it might be felt as touching or as leaving us indifferent, etc.

A first distinction has to be made between the *typical phenomenology* for each emotion (the feel of sadness differs from the feel of joy) and some *properties* of the phenomenology typical for each emotion (properties we can also feel). The properties of emotions include: duration (emotions have a temporal extension, a beginning and an end, and a course of development); intensity (they might be more or less strong); subjection to the will (some emotions are better controlled than others); valence (they are felt as pleasant, unpleasant, or indifferent). This list is not exhaustive, but it indicates a key aspect that is often overlooked in contemporary research: namely that emotions have properties.

Second, some of these elements belonging to the qualitative feel refer to the somatic or sensory phenomenology of emotions: emotions are felt as pleasant, unpleasant, or hedonically neutral; the involved sensations and bodily changes can also be felt; as well as its force to move us or to bind us to inaction. However, other elements refer to their psychological phenomenology: emotions are felt as deep or superficial, central or peripheral, solid or coreless, dense or light, dull or bright, etc. They are felt as being ours or as being of others (as in empathy), as fitting with the rest of our psychology or as unfitting, etc. Unlike the former descriptions that refer to sensory elements, the latter adjectives are metaphorically used to refer to a qualitative dimension of the emotional experience that is not a mere register of physiological changes. The former are feelings of sensory aspects of emotions, while the latter refer to the psychological quality of emotional experience. This dimension of emotions is something that Stocker (1983) calls “psychic feeling”; early

phenomenologists developed an accurate language to describe and explain this aspect of emotions concerning their felt quality.⁸

In addition, we can adopt different attitudes towards the same emotional state: sadness like pain is *per se* unpleasant, but sadness like pain might be enjoyed, suffered, stoically accepted, etc.⁹ In the context of fiction, for instance, sadness, as well as fear, or pity, or a considerable amount of emotions otherwise deemed to be negative, are not just tolerated, but enjoyed. These different attitudes also belong to the realm of how an emotion is felt.

Can non-sensory or psychological phenomenology be explained in terms of sensory phenomenology? This is controversial. The adjectives that describe psychological phenomenology are different from those employed to describe sensory phenomenology, but many of them are analogous: we use the language of the senses to describe them and speak of them via metaphors of space, limit, weight, etc. One could claim that this analogy indicates the reduction of the psychological dimension to the sensory one, but one could also claim that the fact that these metaphors resort to the language of the senses indicates that the richness and fine-grainedness of what we feel cannot be easily grasped with our existing psychological vocabulary. I cannot discuss this controversy at length here, since my aim in the remainder of the paper is to examine the qualitative feel of fictional emotion, and this involves both its sensory and its non-sensory phenomenology.

A word needs to be said against possible attempts to reduce the phenomenological question to one of the other moments of the emotions presented above. First, the intentionality of emotions, which involves their object-directedness, and the presentation of the object as having a certain evaluative property might be related to their specific phenomenology (that one dimension cannot be reduced to the other does not exclude the possibility that both dimensions are closely related). But both aspects belong to different moments of the emotional experience: one refers to the objects targeted; the other to the way in which we experience the emotional state. The cognitive question and the phenomenological question approach the emotional experience from two different perspectives: the perspective of the

⁸ For instance, as can be found in Pfänder (1913/1916) and Scheler (1973a; 1973b; 1973c).

⁹ For the different possibilities of feeling emotional states, see Scheler (1973a, 256).

object, on the one hand, and the perspective of the first-personal experience, on the other.

Second, the qualitative feel of an emotion cannot be reduced to its embodied nature. The embodied nature of emotions refers to their capacity to affect our body, but it leaves aside the question of how they ‘feel.’ An emotion’s physiology, which includes its concomitant manifestations, its arousal, its mimicry, etc., are aspects that can be felt. However, that an emotion appears linked with such reactions is an aspect that must be distinguished from the feeling of such reactions. My pulse might accelerate and my muscles might tighten while fearing a fiction, and this might constitute the embodied dimension of my fear, but the dimension of the qualitative feel focuses on something different: namely, that I can also feel such changes and reactions as completely overwhelming or as distant; I can suffer or enjoy them.

3 Real Emotions and Sham Emotions

In this section, I introduce a distinction between real emotions and emotion-like states which, despite all semblances, are not emotions: sham emotions. As my point of departure, I consider some claims about mental reality developed by Geiger in “Fragment über den Begriff des Unbewussten und die psychische Realität” (1921) and Scheler in “Idols of Self-Knowledge” (1912) and “Realism and Idealism” (1928). According to both authors, in outer as well as in inner perception, delusions and illusions are possible. This idea, which is based on an analogy between outer and inner perception, presupposes (against Descartes and Brentano, but in line with Husserl) that there is no evidence of inner perception. The existence of an emotion does not guarantee its being felt (we can have an emotion and not be conscious of it), we can also have a failed or misleading perception of our emotions (we can think that we love the environment and thus we do not fly, but in fact this love is a disguised fear of flying), and we can experience an emotion without having one (I have the phantasy of being in love and end up experiencing a love-like state). In this last-mentioned case, we have a sham emotion. In the phenomenological field, sham emotions are given different names: “imagined emotions” (*vorgestellte Gefühle*)

(Haas 1910, 14; Pfänder 1916), emotional illusions (*Gefühlsillusionen*), sham emotions (*Scheingefühle*), and emotional phantasies (*Gefühlsphantasien*).¹⁰

The very idea of a sham emotion might seem puzzling: if someone claims to have an emotional experience, then why should we cast doubt on this? The possibility of experiencing something like an emotion without really having one is the result of seeing inner and outer perception as analogous. In outer perception, it is possible to have the illusion of perceiving a tree without there being a tree to be perceived, and analogically in inner perception it is possible to have the illusion of perceiving an emotion without having one.¹¹

The idea that we can experience an emotion-like state which actually is not an emotion implies a normative view about what counts as a real emotion. In general terms, Geiger and Scheler argue that when an object of outer or inner perception is real, it exhibits two features: resistance (*Widerstand*) and effectivity (*Wirksamkeit*). Real objects from outer and inner perception resist being changed at will and are effective in relation to other objects connected with them. As a result, for the particular case of the emotions (which are the object of inner perception) we can extract the following two conditions that must be fulfilled in order to count as real emotions:

3.1 Resistance

Real emotions resist being changed at will. My envy cannot be easily manipulated, though I can adopt a stance towards it and try to change it into admiration. This is partly because emotions are embedded in constellations of cognitions and desires. When trying to manipulate my envy, the thought that I should also possess my neighbour's car reinforces my envy, in the same sense that it does my desire to possess the same car. In many cases, however, even when the desire for the car has disappeared and I no longer believe that I should also have that car, my envy for

¹⁰ The last three expressions can be found in other parts of Scheler's work, where he discusses phantasy-remorse, shame illusions, and automatic simulations. For an overview, see Vendrell Ferran (2008, chapter 3).

¹¹ There is a running thread in phenomenology according to which not all that is felt is felt as belonging to the same plane of existence. This claim was also made by Merleau-Ponty in his *Phenomenology of Perception* (1945).

the neighbour might persist since it has become a habituality of my emotional life. Emotions have their own inertia and they defy attempts to be changed, controlled, and ‘managed.’

3.2 Effectiveness

Emotions not only resist being changed, they also have efficacy over our whole psychology. Within the constellation of cognitions, desires, motivations, and also that of other emotions in which they are embedded, they have psychic force and influence the other states that appear to be linked with them. Thus, my envy will motivate certain thoughts about my neighbour (he does not deserve the car) and myself (I am the one who deserves the car); it appears linked with desires (I want the car); it motivates actions (to defame him or to scratch his car), and it influences existing emotions (envy might reinforce hatred, aversion, etc.).

According to both conditions, a distinction can be traced between real emotions and sham emotions. In “Idols of Self-Knowledge,” Scheler (1973b, 65) writes: “The young girl in love does not project her experiences into Isolde or Juliet; she projects the feelings of these poetic figures into her own small experiences.” This description points to a specific case in which we adopt the emotions depicted in a novel as if they were our own. Similar references can be found in “Idealism and Realism,” where Scheler (1973c, 324) writes:

[...] it is necessary to maintain that, in addition to real feelings which are combined with fantasy-*images*, there are also fantasies of feeling; that in addition to real volitions, there are also the semblances of volition (*Scheinwollungen*) which one really does not will; in addition to real motives, there are also the semblances of motives. Here, too, the phenomenal experience of mental reality is one of resistance. The objective reality of the mental, however, it is its efficacy (*Wirksamkeit*) in the mental context.

According to this, some mental states such as emotions, volitions, and desires have counterparts which, despite all semblances, lack the two aforementioned conditions that need to be met in order to be real: they are not resistant to being modified at will and they do not have psychic force.

Let me extract some important conclusions from these paragraphs, conclusions which in section 5 will be applied to the case of fictional emotions. Take Scheler's example of the person who thinks she is in love after reading a romantic novel. In my view, the example does not seek to characterize what usually happens when we engage with fiction. Instead, it describes a hypothetical scenario in which we end up experiencing an emotion after having exercised our imagination. The descriptions of emotions in novels, our putting ourselves in the depicted situation and in the lives of protagonists, and maybe also our desire to experience certain emotions might lead us to vivid imaginings, such that we end up experiencing an emotional illusion. We are led to feel a love-like state similar to the one described in the novel. This does not always happen when we engage with fiction; we are not always so fatally infected by the emotions represented in the novel that we end up thinking that these emotions are ours, but nevertheless it is a possibility, if only a remote one.

The emotional illusion described by Scheler is not confined to fictional contexts. Emotional illusions might very well be induced by our own willingness to feel, our attitude of sensation-seeking, our search for an emotional high as well as our sentimentalist attitude. Imagine the following case which, employing an expression of Ortega y Gasset (2012, 28), I will denominate the 'lover of love':¹² a person wants to fall in love, she knows very well how it feels to be in love (because she has already experienced such feelings or because she knows by testimony how it feels to be in love), she desires to experience this intense and agreeable emotion and imagines how nice it would be to have this feeling. One day, she projects this arsenal of powerful and intense desires and phantasies onto another person, claims to be in love and enjoys the feeling. Now suppose that the loved one needs help, and the lover is not really motivated to support him, she does not have time or energy for this. We would be suspicious about the reality of this love. Or suppose that one day, A, who claims to be in love with B, meets C and then the love for B turns pale and vanishes, appears to be superficial and not really affecting the person's core so that A feels no resistance to move her love from B to C. A will claim that the love for B was not real and that, guided by the desire to fall in love, she fabricated the emotion. Now that she is in love with C, she knows that her previous love for B was just a fabrication.

These cases illustrate the possibility of a 'hyperactivity of the mind' (again, I take this expression from Ortega y Gasset) in which our imagination, guided by our

¹² Else Voigtländer (1910) also has some references to the phenomenon.

desires to feel a certain emotion, ends up producing an emotion-like state. The case is not limited to love since we can also experience false remorse or false shame: we want to feel these emotions because this would be morally, socially, psychologically appropriate and convenient for us, and then we end up feeling them. However, sham emotions (as I employ the term) lack both of the conditions needed for an emotion to be real: they do not resist attempts at changing them and they lack psychic force. The pseudo-love depicted above vanishes when the lover finds a better suited object for her love, and it does not display efficacy: the lover does not support the loved one, does not feel motivated to action associated with love, etc.¹³

These phenomenological descriptions are instructive, but they do not offer an explanation of sham emotions. So, in what follows, my aim is to unveil how sham emotions function and to offer an explanation of them. I will argue that sham emotions are closer to imaginings than emotions. They are – as I shall argue – a subclass of imaginings. I begin my argument by showing that sham emotions are built upon imaginings: we imagine how nice it is to be in love, we imagine that feeling remorse would be appropriate, etc. These imaginings are, for different reasons, convenient for us. They involve a positive output in our emotional economy: they are pleasant and edifying, they lead to a positive self-image, etc.

Now, my claim is not only that sham emotions are built on imaginings, but that they are themselves a form of imagining. In fact, sham emotions seem to be a follow-up imagining built on these imaginings. Let me explicate this by introducing two arguments and a hypothesis. The first argument is based on a feature that has been attributed to imagination, but not to emotion: imaginings are subjected to the will, while emotions are something that happens to us. Like imaginings, but unlike real emotions, sham emotions are subjected to our will, they are easy to control and to ‘manage.’

The second argument derives from another feature attributed to the imagination: compared to other forms of consciousness of objects, such as emotions that respond to properties experienced as objective properties of an object, we have a relative freedom to constitute the object of our imaginings and its properties. In this respect, sham emotions are closer to imaginings: rather than responding to an objective

¹³ A real love might turn into hatred, but as long as it is love, it resists to vanish and has mental force. This is a crucial difference with sham love which from the very beginning lacks both properties.

property of their objects, they are projections of desired properties onto objects of our choice. These objects are chosen because they fit our needs and desires. Thus, in the case of a sham emotion, rather than reacting to some evaluative properties of these objects, we project onto the targeted objects evaluative properties of our convenience (the other appears to me attractive because I want to fall in love and because I know that in love it is expected that the other appears attractive to me).

Hence, sham emotions are not only induced by imaginings (imagining being in love, being a better person, etc.), but, according to the two arguments above, they function like imaginings rather than emotions. It is not just that the content towards which sham emotions are directed is presented by imaginings, but also that the mode in which sham emotions target this content is quite similar to the mode in which imaginings target the imagined objects: the objects of our imaginings are subjected to the will, its qualities are freely chosen by us and we are free to project onto these objects the qualities that we want.

One possible objection at this point is that sham emotions are embodied states associated with a specific physiology and phenomenology typical of emotions. In the case of sham love presented above, the 'lover of love' claims to undergo the typical bodily sensations and expressions as well as the typical phenomenology associated with love. This is certainly true and incontestable. Thus, rather than arguing against this possible objection, I will offer a hypothesis to explain how it comes to be that sham emotions are felt.

As mentioned above, motivated by sentimentalism, by sensation-seeking, by wanting to be a better person, etc., we are the ones who fabricate a sham emotion. Such emotions are not only convenient for us, they also presuppose that we already know how they feel. In fact, we are unable to experience sham emotions if we do not know in advance (either first-hand or through testimony of others) what their real counterparts feel like.

Here is where my hypothesis comes into play. This hypothesis indicates a similarity in the phenomenology of sham emotions and a specific sort of imaginings. In sham emotions, we not only *imagine that* we experience an emotion, but we *imagine having* an emotion. The first case is one of propositional imaginings: you imagine that you are in love, you imagine yourself from an external perspective and attribute to your imagined self the specific sensations, expressions, physiology, etc., as well as a specific qualitative feel that you know to be typical of love. The second case, where you imagine having an emotion, is a case of experiential or sensory

imagining, where you imagine yourself being in love from an internal perspective. You not only attribute to your imagined self a set of sensations, expressions, etc., and a specific phenomenology, but you also imagine feeling them. Such sensory imaginings seem to have the power to leave the subject of such imaginings in a similar state.¹⁴ In this respect, sham emotions function like sensory imaginings: because we imagine ourselves to be in a certain emotional state, we tend to find ourselves in a similar condition.

Two conclusions can be drawn now. First, the two arguments and the hypothesis show that sham emotions are closer to sensory imaginings than to real emotions. Perhaps they have a hybrid nature that combines elements of emotions and of imaginings.¹⁵ I will come back to this conclusion in section 5 to reject all those approaches which claim that fictional emotions are sham or pretend emotions, cases of emotions that arise from imagining from the inside.

Second: the difference between sham and real emotions pertains to their reality as mental states (sham emotions are not emotions but real imaginings), but this difference also implies a difference in the quality in which an emotion is felt. Sham emotions – probably by virtue of their imaginary nature – have a peculiar qualitative feel: they are experienced as thin, coreless, light, and superficial. However, these features which affect their phenomenology are also shared by some of their real counterparts; for instance, a real sadness can also be experienced as thin, coreless, light, and superficial. Thus, we need to look elsewhere to explain these differences regarding how we experience a mental state.

¹⁴ I base my argumentation here on an idea put forward by Wollheim (1984, 70), who argues the following with regard to iconic mental states: “That iconic mental states have a tendency to leave the person in a residual condition appropriate to what they represent, [...] is probably the most important single fact about them as far as their contribution to the way in which we lead our lives is concerned.” The case that I describe would be a case of “central imagining” (ibid., 79f.) in Wollheim’s terminology. According to him, central imaginings have a point of view (they are imagined from the perspective of the character), they have ‘plenitude’ (when we imagine the character doing something, we tend to imagine his thinking, experiencing, feeling, etc.) and ‘cogency’ (when we imagine the protagonist thinking, experiencing, feeling, we tend to find ourselves in the same condition in which the mental states that I imagine would leave me if I were to have them).

¹⁵ The idea that such emotions have a hybrid character can be found in Meinong (1977, 312). It was also defended by Saxinger (1908, 411) and Schwarz (1906, 84). These authors, however, describe fictional emotions in terms of quasi-emotions.

4 Genuine and Non-Genuine Emotions

Regarding how emotions are felt, early phenomenologists distinguished genuine from non-genuine emotions (used synonymously with the couple authentic/inauthentic). This distinction is not to be conflated with that between real and sham emotions, though they might in certain circumstances overlap. In order to elaborate specific criteria for this distinction, I first discuss three descriptions of this phenomenon as found in Voigtländer, Pfänder, and Haas.

In *Vom Selbstgefühl*, Voigtländer (1910, 94f.) claims that non-genuine (*uneigentlich*) feelings “are experienced in all cases of attitudinizing, acting, presenting oneself, pretending, boasting, also in fantasized experiences, in self-deception and sham existence.” Those emotions, which have their origin in experiencing ourselves from a third-person perspective and in playing a role, also count as non-genuine. The nature of non-genuine emotions is playful, airy, and less solid than the nature of our genuine ones (Haas 1910, 97). They are experienced as distant, as having their origins outside the self (in artworks and in the intersubjective sphere). Similar descriptions can be found in Pfänder’s *Psychologie der Gesinnungen*. For Pfänder, not only emotions, but also sentiments as well as thoughts can be authentic (*echt*) or inauthentic (*unecht*). Inauthentic states have a “pale,” “schematic,” “hollow,” “airy,” “coreless,” and “insubstantial” nature (Pfänder 1913, 58).

In *Über Echtheit und Unechtheit von Gefühlen*, Haas (1910, 24) uses the distinction to refer to how an emotion is felt at a certain moment according to our own attitude or stance towards it. According to Haas, an emotion is inauthentic (*unecht*) when, at the moment of being felt, there is an underlying dominant emotion that contradicts it. In his view, we then experience this contradiction in a feeling. There is a “feeling of depth” (*ibid.*, 23) when we experience both emotions as being in tune with one another, and the lack of this feeling points to a contradiction between the two emotional states.

In contemporary research, there is a tendency to conflate the question of the genuineness – or authenticity – of an emotion with the question of its reality (Mulligan 2009), and that of whether emotions fit in with the character of a person.¹⁶ In contrast, early phenomenologists make clear that the distinction between genuineness

¹⁶ Pugmire (2005, 36, 185) speaks of real emotions and “factitious emotions.” Real emotions are, for Pugmire, emotions characteristic of a person, while factitious emotions are

and non-genuineness (authenticity and inauthenticity) is neither a question of the reality of an emotion nor one of how the emotion fits in with a person's character; rather, it concerns exclusively *how an emotion is felt at a specific moment*. In what follows, I will extract some findings from the phenomenological view in order to develop my own account of non-genuineness.

First, to be genuine or non-genuine is a *mode* of experiencing an emotion, i.e., it refers to how the emotion is felt. What is different is not the emotion and its properties (valence, duration, intensity, etc.), but the way in which I relate to it. Thus, to be genuine or non-genuine is not a property of the emotion. Properties such as intensity or duration belong to the nature of the emotion, but to be genuine or non-genuine concerns a form in which the emotion is experienced.

Second, to be genuine or non-genuine refers to the *stance* of the subject towards its own emotion. Emotions felt as non-genuine are experienced as *subjectively not belonging to us* in the same sense that genuine emotions do. Thus, to be genuine or non-genuine is a mode of experiencing an emotion *in relation to our psychology*. Given that this relation can change, the same emotion might be felt as genuine at one time and as non-genuine at another.

Third, it refers to how we experience an emotion *at a certain moment*. Thus, an emotion might be non-genuine and nevertheless fit the character of a person. For instance, a melancholic person might be prone to experience all emotions as distant, as not really touching him. Genuine and non-genuine emotions are subjected to transformation in accordance with how the rest of our psychology changes. An emotion which is felt as non-genuine might transform into a genuine one (and vice versa). A child loves her new sister because he has internalized this emotion from his environment, but this love can be non-genuine because of an underlying ambivalence towards the newborn. This non-genuine love might turn into a genuine one when the deeper ambivalence disappears.

Finally, these concepts are employed by the phenomenologists with a *descriptive* purpose. No pejorative connotation is involved. They describe how we experience our emotions in relation to the rest of our psychology at a given moment. Used in this descriptive sense, genuineness and non-genuineness are not normative

emotions that arise via mimicry or medicaments. De Sousa (1987, 12) also discusses the extent to which authentic emotions are dependent on the character of a person.

concepts, i.e., they do not refer to how we should feel in certain circumstances, but rather to how we actually experience our emotions at a given moment.

These four claims provide the foundation on which to develop accurate criteria for distinguishing genuine from non-genuine emotions, criteria that I will use in the next section to explain the distinctive phenomenology of fictional emotions. Like Haas, I will propose what might be dubbed a ‘coherence model.’¹⁷ According to this model, non-genuine emotions presuppose the simultaneous existence of two emotional states (1. simultaneity). But unlike Haas, I do not locate the force of my explanation in the existence of contradictory feelings. In fact, I do not think that the simultaneous emotions must contradict each other. Instead my model argues that the simultaneous emotions must be of a different type (not necessarily contradicting each other) (2. typological difference). What makes an emotion genuine or non-genuine is the way in which the subject relates to it (3. subjective stance).

The genuine emotion is genuine because the subject feels involved in it, while he feels not involved in the non-genuine (3.1. subjective involvement). Moreover, genuine emotions are experienced as fitting with significant elements of the momentary psychology, while non-genuine emotions are experienced as unfitting with these significant elements (3.2. subjective fittingness). A genuine emotion is experienced as fitting (independently of whether it is really fitting) in with our cognitive (beliefs, perceptions, imaginings, memories, etc.), motivational (desires, wishes, volitions), emotional (emotions, moods, sentiments), etc., structure. Non-genuine emotions might be experienced as fitting, but only within a restricted subsystem of our momentary psychology and not within our momentary psychology as a whole. Thus the subject feels the genuine emotion as coherent compared to the non-genuine emotion (3.3. comparative fittingness).

According to this view, the non-genuine emotion is felt as unfitting in our psychology because at the time of being felt, our psychology is dominated by a different emotional state that is experienced as fitting. In my view, it is because it is experienced as unfitting that we describe them as coreless, light, thin, less solid, etc. It refers to how you experience the emotion at a certain moment as not having the weight with which we might experience the same emotion on other occasions.

¹⁷ The model differs from the model offered by Salmela (2005), who argues for a reconciliation of normative and descriptive perspectives on authenticity and offers a coherence model according to which emotions are coherent with values and beliefs.

Let me clarify this model with an example. I call it the 'Sadness 1' example: Imagine that you enjoy having been promoted, but at the same time you feel sad because your colleague's promotion was rejected. Your sadness is real, you care about your colleague and you think that he deserves a promotion: it cannot be manipulated at will and it has efficacy (it motivates you to hug him, to comfort him, to encourage him to apply again, etc.). However, this sadness is felt as non-genuine. You experience this sadness simultaneously with joy. Both emotions are of different types: the joy is felt as concerning you more than the sadness, it is supported by the rest of your psychology (you desired to be promoted, you believed that you deserved it, the promotion is of value to you, you hoped to be promoted, etc.), while the sadness is embedded in a subsystem existing within (you appreciate your colleague and this benevolence towards him is supported by beliefs about him, motivations to help him and positive emotions towards him, but his desires, beliefs, values, and hopes are not yours). Moreover, you feel the joy as fitting and the sadness as lacking coherence.

Now consider the hypothetical case of 'Sadness 2.' Imagine that for a moment you are overwhelmed by the reactions of your colleague, the joy loses its preponderance and the sadness towards him becomes dominant. Now, the sadness is experienced as genuine, and the joy as non-genuine. Still, you experience two emotions of a different type simultaneously, but you have taken a stance towards the sadness, you are more involved in the sadness than in the joy, the former is felt as being coherent with the rest of your psychology, while the joy is felt as less coherent (now what counts is not your personal purposes, but the values that you endorse; and you cannot tolerate unfairness). The sadness is felt as comparatively more fitting in the momentary state of your psychology than the non-genuine joy. However, both emotions are real, both are resistant to being changed at will and both have efficacy (my joy in this case continues to motivate me, influencing my thoughts, etc., but now it operates in a subsystem that is much more restricted than the sadness that has become dominant within my psychology).

There are two important results of this process. First, the non-genuine sadness (Sadness 1) has transformed into a genuine one (Sadness 2), whose impact on our mental and motivational life has a wider scope than that of the non-genuine one. However, Sadness 1 and Sadness 2 are the same sadness. What has changed is how we experience the emotions according to our subjective stance towards them. Thus, the difference is a psychological difference, not a structural one. Second, and as

a corollary of the first result, real emotions might be genuine or non-genuine according to how we experience them. Genuine and non-genuine emotions are real emotions: they show resistance to being modified at will and exhibit psychological force by influencing our thoughts and actions.

5 Fictional Emotions and Their Qualitative Feel

A long tradition in aesthetics claims that fictional emotions are what I called sham emotions above. In fact, for Lange, Geiger, and Meinong, fictional emotions have a distinctive phenomenology because they are not emotions, but rather emotion-like states. Lange (1901, 104) holds that the emotions of the audience, actors, and artists are “emotional imaginings, emotional illusions or sham emotions [*Gefühlsvorstellungen, Illusionsgefühle oder Scheingefühle*]” (we are not victims of self-deception, since we know that we are reacting to something fictional). According to Geiger (1914, 191f.), sham emotions (*Scheingefühle*) are of a shorter duration, bound to specific situations, less influential than our real emotions, and we can enjoy them despite them being unpleasant. In a similar vein, Meinong (1977, 310) argues that fictional emotions are quasi-emotions because they are based on suppositions, they lack motivational force, and they have a different phenomenology.

Unlike these accounts, contemporary approaches take for granted that the phenomenology of emotions towards real objects and fictional emotions is similar, but they come to the same conclusion. Walton defines the latter ‘quasi-emotions’ (or ‘make-believe emotions’) as imagined emotions that emerge by ‘imagining from the inside.’ Such emotions emerge when we imagine ourselves to be in a fictional situation. We have a ‘quasi-emotion’ when we are at the cinema and we imagine being the film’s protagonist. About his hypothetical cinemagoer, Walton (1993, 242) claims: “Charles is participating psychologically in his game of make-believe. It is not true but fictional that he fears the slime. [...] It is fictional that he is afraid, and it is fictional that he says he is.” This quasi-fear is structurally similar to the quasi-fear of the child playing a game of make-believe. The child acts as if he is afraid, even though he knows that there is no real danger just as the cinemagoer pretends to be afraid. Mulligan (2006) takes fictional emotions to be quasi-emotions or as-if emotions, a phenomenon that he distinguishes from imagining that one has an emotion.

In his view, quasi-emotions are experienced as having the sensations that are typical of their real counterparts, but they are subjected to the will.

Employing the criteria developed in the preceding two sections, I will argue against the view that fictional emotions are a product of the imagination. However, acknowledging the influence of the imagination on them, I will defend the view that despite them being *real emotions*, fictional emotions are felt as *non-genuine*. Fictional emotions display all five aspects typical of emotions, though they exhibit specificities in each of these features, meaning that we can speak of them as constituting a specific subclass.

5.1 Cognitive Bases

In fictional emotions, we do not believe that the targeted object exists. This is not a problem once we endorse a broad cognitivism according to which states other than belief can be bases for the emotions. Fictional emotions are based on cognitions, but in them perceptions, imaginings, and suppositions might play a more significant role than beliefs.¹⁸ Charles fears the slime and his fear is based on the perception of some moving image, his imaginings about the situation, and the thought that the presented state of affairs is true in the fictional world in which he imaginatively participates.

The lack of belief is typical not just of fictional emotions, but of many emotions based on imaginings. My hope to win the lottery does not entail the belief that I will win the lottery; rather, it is based on a desired state of affairs that is merely entertained as a future (but uncertain) possibility. My fear of a ghost in the cellar does not entail the belief that there is a ghost in the cellar, but instead is based on an imagining that this could be the case. Thus, in terms of their cognitive structure, fictional emotions are not substantially different from our emotions towards non-fictional objects. (Henceforth, once we abandon the cognitivist paradigm of emotions, the so-called ‘paradox of fiction’ vanishes.) However, there is a specific feature in the case of fictional emotions. Their cognitive bases have been accurately prepared and designed by filmmakers, artists, and poets to trigger certain emotions.

¹⁸ This broad cognitivism has also been endorsed by Matravers (2006, 254).

5.2 Object Directedness

Moreover, the fact that the targeted objects of fictional emotions are non-existent objects is a feature that is also shared by other emotions targeting hypothetical scenarios (hope), objects belonging to the past (remorse), or imaginary objects (enjoying a daydream) (see Moran 1994). However, on this point, fictional emotions are unique insofar as their objects pertain to a fictional world. The world of fiction is a human artefact, a product that is developed within the institution “fiction” and that can be experienced in a similar way by others.

5.3 Evaluative Character

If we react to fictional objects, then we do so because the targeted objects are presented as having certain evaluative properties and as demanding from us a specific response. In this respect, emotions towards fictional objects have this feature in common with emotions towards real objects. The specificity in relation to fictional emotions is that these evaluative properties have been arranged by the fiction-makers using the tools offered by language, rhythm, light, etc., so that certain objects appear to the audience as embodying a certain property.

5.4 Embodied Dimension

Fictional emotions also have an embodied dimension. In this regard, they are associated with the same features as emotions towards real objects. They appear linked with specific sensations, expressions, etc. They make us cry and laugh, they make us tremble and feel excited.

5.5 Qualitative Feel

Against the similarity hypothesis, I mentioned in section 2 that fictional emotions are experienced as being coreless, thin, superficial, less solid, etc. This feature is not unique to them, since, as stated in section 4, many of our emotions towards real

objects are also experienced in similar terms. Their phenomenology can thus be explained by applying the coherence model developed before. A fictional emotion is experienced simultaneously with another emotion; this fictional emotion is of a different kind, and the way in which we relate to it is different: we are less involved in it and we feel it as not fitting within the whole of our current psychology. What is specific to fictional emotions is that the predominant emotion when we engage with fiction is one of aesthetic enjoyment.¹⁹ It is this underlying aesthetic enjoyment, or pleasure, that explains why fictional emotions, though structurally the same as emotions towards real objects, are experienced with a different psychological quality.

Consider Charles again: Charles is afraid of the slime, but simultaneously enjoys the film. Fear is different from aesthetic enjoyment. Charles' attitude is closer to enjoyment than fear. Fear is experienced as contextual (he went to the cinema to enjoy the cinematic experience). His aesthetic enjoyment is supported by his thoughts, beliefs, perceptions, etc., the fear has a much more limited scope, and it is embedded within a much more restricted subsystem of his current psychology, which is dominated at this moment by aesthetic enjoyment. Charles fears the perceived slime in the movie, but he does not believe that the slime can attack him, his perceptual field is only partially supporting the idea that there is a slime, once he looks to his side he sees the other cinemagoer enjoying the fear-inducing monster. His fear can motivate him to cover his eyes or to scream, but he remains seated (only when Charles stops enjoying this fear will he leave the cinema, but this would be an indicator that his non-genuine fear has turned into a genuine one). If one were to ask him: 'Are you truly afraid?', he would answer: 'Not really.' But the 'really' here does not mean that he just imagines feeling afraid; it means only that he feels the lack of coherence of his fear within the whole of his psychology. In short, Charles' fear is non-genuine: he is not only afraid, he is also in a state of aesthetic enjoyment. It is precisely their lack of genuineness that makes non-genuine emotions feel the way they feel: superficial, less solid, coreless, etc.

Proponents of the quasi-emotion view might object that what Charles is really doing is imagining that he is afraid without being afraid. Walton (1997, 247) reminds us that: "Charles does not imagine merely *that* he is afraid; he imagines *being* afraid,

¹⁹ Drawing on Kant, Seel (2013, 222) has argued that fictional emotions are a case of "mixed feelings." Like my approach, he points to the simultaneity of emotions while engaging with art; however, my model argues that the emotions experienced while engaging with art take place on two different levels, namely the aesthetic pleasure or displeasure that is dominant compared to the fictional emotions.

and he imagines this *from the inside*.” Charles imagines that he is scared and then he feels as if he were part of the fictive world. For Walton, fictional emotions are a form of make-believe.

Against this possible reply, it could be argued that fictional emotions display not only all the features characteristic of emotions (rather than the features characteristic of imaginings), but also that they resist being changed at will and show efficacy within the psychology of the individual experiencing them. Regarding the condition of resistance, Charles cannot manipulate his fear. His fear resists attempts to be changed at will. Certainly, we can convince ourselves that the slime is not there, and this might calm us, but Charles’ experience is not a case of pretending to have an emotion. When I pretend to have an emotion and I act as if I had one, I can cease pretending whenever I want; I can configure the situation at will, and I am aware that I am acting as if I had an emotion. None of this happens when I experience a fictional emotion: I cannot decide to stop my feeling when I want, I cannot configure the situation at will because I am participating in a fiction accepting the conditions set by an artist and the artwork, and I am not aware of pretending to experience an emotion because I do not pretend to be afraid – I am really afraid.

Fictional emotions also exhibit effectiveness. Unlike Walton, who writes that “[f]ear emasculated by subtracting its distinctive motivational force is not fear at all” (ibid., 202), Moran (1994) and Goldie (2003) have shown that many emotions about non-existent objects do not motivate actions. They can motivate, but it is not necessary that they do so. For example, I can imagine myself in a hypothetical situation that is precarious and then feel fear, but this fear does not motivate any action. This would be a case of emotion towards a non-existent object that does not motivate action. Yet, some emotions about non-existent objects might motivate action: for instance, when I read a historical book about slavery, the pity I feel might motivate me to donate to a charity. Such emotions towards non-existent objects might motivate action and they might also influence our thoughts or change our beliefs so that they might have the same psychological force as our emotions towards real objects.

6 Concluding Remarks

In this paper, I have argued that fictional emotions are neither sham emotions nor quasi-emotions, but real emotions experienced as non-genuine. They are

non-genuine because, in this particular case, they are experienced simultaneously with a dominant emotion of aesthetic enjoyment. I have mentioned different possible ways in which the imagination can influence our emotions. First, it is possible that we imagine feeling an emotion and end up in an emotion-like state. Second, we can react emotionally towards imaginary objects, fictional objects being a subclass of imaginary objects. Furthermore, we can have emotional experiences towards fictions by imaginatively participating in the fictional universe and the characters' psychology. Finally, emotions that arise in the context of art objects tend to be felt as non-genuine, because what is genuine is our aesthetic enjoyment.²⁰

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²⁰ I want to thank the editors of this volume for their insightful comments on a previous version of this paper, Christoph Johanssen for having discussed with me the early phenomenological account on sham emotions and emotional illusions, and Simon Mussell for proofreading this article.

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This book confronts a topic largely neglected in research on phantasy: the relationship between fictional events and the emotions of the subject having a phantasy experience. What is the nature of an emotional response to fiction? Are emotions indifferent to the existence of what causes them? How do fictional emotions relate to their real counterparts? The volume gathers ten innovative essays tackling these questions from a phenomenological perspective.

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