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## Intuitions

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### RESUMEN

Este artículo expone una explicación fenomenológica de la intuición, que tiene importantes diferencias con explicaciones no fenomenológicas del sentido habitual del término “intuición”. La explicación fenomenológica tiene cuatro características: un carácter episódico; la presencia de una mente atenta; claridad perfecta, en el sentido de tener directamente presente el objeto intencional tal como es; y un carácter revelador de la verdad. Esta explicación se ejemplifica mediante el examen de distintos tipos de intuición. El artículo concluye que, a pesar de las diferencias, ambos enfoques respecto de la intuición guardan alguna relación entre sí.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *intuición, evidencia, creencia, convicción.*

### ABSTRACT

This paper develops a phenomenological account of intuition that differs in important respects from non-phenomenological accounts of the ordinary sense of “intuition.” The phenomenological account is characterized by four features: an episodic character; the presence of an attentive mind; perfect clarity, i.e., having the intended object directly present as it is itself; and a truth-disclosive character. The view is exemplified in discussions of different kinds of intuition. The paper concludes that, despite the differences, the two approaches to intuition have some relation.

KEYWORDS: *Intuition, Evidence, Belief, Conviction.*

Philosophers regularly appeal to intuitions as evidence. This use of intuitions seems to presuppose that intuitions are characterized by propositional contents that can serve as premises for the conclusions advanced. The intuition itself, however, is not the result of any reasoning process or direct observation. Nor is the intuition a mere guess or hunch. Unlike guesses and hunches, which do not have for us the force of truth, intuitions do, at least apparently, have the force of truth despite the fact that we have no prior reasons or observations testifying to that

truth. And, in a departure from an earlier philosophical tradition, intuitions are not self-evident either. Indeed, we can have an intuition that, say, the lines in the Müller-Lyer illusion are of unequal length even when we know they are equal in length. These features of intuitions have generated a recent debate about the nature and content of intuition.

Phenomenology, at least in the person of Edmund Husserl, developed a view of intuition that is more in line with that earlier philosophical tradition. For Husserl, intuition is evidence, but his conception of evidence is different from the view operative in the current epistemological debates, including those regarding intuition. On Husserl's view, what he calls "evidence" is the fundamental sense of reason [Husserl (1976 [1913]), pp. 314 ff.; (2014), pp. 270 ff.], and the sense of reason as the reasoning process that infers conclusions from propositions involves secondary senses of both reason and evidence. Evidence, for Husserl, is a certain way of experiencing an object; it is the having of the object, whether an individual or a state of affairs, in an experience that directly and attentively apprehends that object in such a way that it confirms our non-evidenced sense of that object. The object in intuitive experiences is present to us in an "originary" way, "in person." A less metaphorical description is that intuitions are characterized by what Husserl calls "perfect clarity": "the having of the meant itself" [Husserl (1974 [1929]), pp. 65-66; (1969), pp. 61-62]. Intuitive evidence, then, whether sensory or intellectual, involves a kind of observation in which the object is directly present to an attentive mind and in which is confirmed the truth of the object as intended in experiences where the object is not itself present.

The reference to intellectual intuition evokes Aristotelian notions of rational insight into first, indemonstrable principles [Aristotle, *Post. Anal.*, 72b21–23, 100a10–b6] and Cartesian notions of an intuitive faculty that rightly employed yields necessary, universal, and infallible truths independent of any prior reasoning process or perceptual observation [Descartes (1988 [1641])]. In both cases, intuited truths are thought to be self-evident, i.e., not needing any evidence apart from the formulation of the truth itself. There is, however, a criterion by which this self-evidence is verified: a self-evident truth is one whose negation is self-contradictory; hence, the original proposition must be true. There is an element in Husserl's phenomenology, as we shall see below, that echoes this view, but Husserl's view of intuition is much broader than this in its scope. Like Aristotle, but unlike Descartes, Husserl roots even intellectual intuitions in perception. Unlike Aristotle, however, Husserl thinks simple perception is itself a form of intuition, indeed, the fundamental form of intuition.

This phenomenological view of intuition seems distant from the sense of intuition at work in the current discussions. In what follows, I shall develop some features of the phenomenological view and explore some ways in which it might be related to contemporary views. Some of these ways will be negative. For example, the phenomenological view claims (1) that intuitions are either perceptions or perceptually rooted [vs. Bealer (1998), (2002); Sosa (1998); Huemer (2001); Chudnoff (2011)]; (2) that intuitions are neither beliefs [vs. Gopnik and Schwitzgebel (1998); Kornblith (1998); Devitt (2006); Ludwig (2007)] nor dispositions to believe [vs. van Inwagen (1997); Sosa (1998)]; (3) that intuitive content need not always be propositional; and (4) that intuitions are not merely presentations that *seem* to be true [vs. Bealer (1998), (2002); Pust (2000); Huemer (2001), (2005)] but presentations that are recognized as true [cf. Chudnoff (2011)] and, as such, justify a subset of beliefs that we might call “convictions.”

### *Simple Perceptual Intuition*

The paradigmatic case of intuition is simple perception, the apprehension of an object merely as a natural thing, where a natural thing is a spatio-temporal individual characterized solely by physical properties along with its internal and external relations. This might seem an odd claim, since our ordinary experience of things is seldom of this sort. Our ordinary experience is of things as having value attributes, functions, and practical significance. Nevertheless, examination of this fundamental form of intuition can serve to highlight some important features characteristic of intuitions in general.

Simple perceptual intuition is the recognition of a directly present physical thing as of a certain type and as having certain (physical) parts, (physical) properties, and (spatial, temporal, or causal) relations, only some subset of which are the focus of our perceptual attention in any particular perceptual encounter with the object. In the case of simple perception, direct presence means bodily or physical presence; the object is presented “in person.” The evidential experience of this bodily presence is rooted in the perceiver’s bodily activities insofar as they motivate a continuous manifold of appearances whose phenomenal content is coherent, that is, agrees in sense, and insofar as these activities disclose the object as having a bodily enclosedness and spatial position of its own [Drummond (1979-80), pp. 20-22, 27-31]. The felt sensuous aspect of perceptual intuition is found in the kinesthetic sensations accompanying

these bodily activities. We can represent simple perceptual intuition as follows:

1. At  $t$ ,  $S$  perceptually intuits  $O$  as an  $F$  or as  $p$  or as having  $R$  if and only if  $S$  attentively and clearly perceives  $O$  through a series of bodily activities that optimally and truthfully disclose to  $S$  the bodily presence of a spatio-temporally individuated  $O$  as an  $F$ , as  $p$ , or as having  $R$ .

The qualification “at  $t$ ” indicates the episodic character of intuition. When  $O$  is no longer bodily present, I can remember  $O$  as, say, an  $F$ , but I no longer intuit  $O$  as an  $F$ . The qualification “attentively” indicates that  $O$  must be the thematic focus, and not part of the background, of the perception. If I see a tree in the background while focusing my attention on the person approaching me, I do not intuit the tree since it is not the focus of my attention and any bodily activities I undertake will be aimed at clarifying the perception of the person approaching rather than the tree. The qualifier “optimally” relates to the practical interest at work in the perception. For a perception to be optimal, the perceiver must remove all those features in the perceptual situation that cause obscurity – a lack of clarity – in the perception but only insofar as necessary to satisfy the practical interest that is at work in the perception. For example, the perceiver might be at too great a distance to see the detail necessary to satisfy her interest in the object, or the medium through which the perception occurs might distort the appearance and require the perceiver to restore the medium to its normal condition. Finally, the attentive, optimal having of the thing itself is the truthful disclosure of  $O$ . It is not enough to say that to intuit something perceptually is for  $O$  as an  $F$ , or as  $p$ , or as having  $R$  to *seem* true to  $S$ ; rather, it is for  $O$  as an  $F$  or as  $p$ , or as having  $R$  to be *apprehended as true* by  $S$  [cf. Chudnoff (2011), p. 637]. The simple perceptual intuition of  $O$  is not merely truth-conducting; it is truth-disclosive.

This basic form of intuition provides the key to understanding what is fundamental and common to all intuitions, namely, their episodic character, their clarity – the direct presence of the object to an attentive mind – and their truthful disclosure of the thing as it is. On this view, intuitions cannot be characterized merely as doxastic attitudes or acquisitions of doxastic attitudes [cf. Chudnoff (2011), p. 626]. Nor, however, can the position be characterized, as Chudnoff characterizes it [(2011), p. 626], by what he calls “perceptualism” and which he also attributes to

Bealer and Huemer. The perceptualist position recognizes a distinctive kind of pre-doxastic experience that represents *abstract* matters in a certain way and provides presumptive justification for our beliefs about those matters; they are *intellectual* experiences insofar as they are directed to abstract matters rather than concrete individuals [Chudnoff (2011), pp. 626, 641; cf. Huemer (2001), pp. 99-100; cf. Bealer (2002), p. 73]. Chudnoff claims that Husserl is a perceptualist, but this is too quick an attribution, since simple perceptual intuition is directed to a concrete individual rather than an abstract matter.

As opposed to the view that simple perception is itself a kind of intuition, Chudnoff argues that perception and intuition are analogous. They are analogous because both are characterized by a “presentational phenomenology” [Chudnoff (2011), p. 630]. A perceptual experience has a presentational phenomenology when one experiences a scene as if the scene’s “objects and their features are directly before the mind” [Chudnoff (2011), p. 631]. Chudnoff defines this as follows:

(Presentationality of Perception) Whenever you seem to perceive that  $p$ , there is some  $q$  (maybe =  $p$ ) such that — in the same experience — you seem to perceive that  $q$ , and you seem to be sensorily aware of an item that makes  $q$  true [Chudnoff (2011), p. 641].

Analogously, the presentationality of intuition is defined as follows:

(Presentationality of Intuition) Whenever you seem to intuit that  $p$ , there is some  $q$  (maybe =  $p$ ) such that — in the same experience — you seem to intuit that  $q$ , and you seem to be intellectually aware of an item that makes  $q$  true [Chudnoff (2011), p. 641].

Husserl and Chudnoff agree, then, on the direct presence of the intuited to the intuiting. They differ, however, in that, for Husserl, an intuition can be purely perceptual whereas, for Chudnoff, “for perception, the seeming is perceptual and the awareness sensory [but] for intuition, the seeming is intuitive and the awareness intellectual” [Chudnoff (2011), p. 641]. Moreover, Chudnoff’s perceptualist view claims that intuited content is propositional. For Husserl, by contrast, the structure of the intentional correlate of simple perception – the object as of the type  $F$ , the object as having property  $p$ , or the object as having (internal or external) relation  $R$  – is such that there is an implicit distinction between the intended object and its type, properties, and relations. This implicit distinction underlies the possibility of judging that  $O$  is an  $F$ , or that  $O$  is  $p$ , or

that *O* has *R*, but the perceptual *as*-structure is not yet a judgmental *is*-structure; the perceptual sense, in other words, is not yet a propositional sense. The categorical structure of perception is pre-propositional; it is not yet articulated in a syntactically well-formed judgment [cf. Husserl (1974 [1929]), p. 310; (1969), p. 308; cf. also Drummond (2003); but vs., e.g., Sosa (1998), pp. 257-60; Pust (2000), p. 39; Bealer (2002), p. 74; Chudnoff (2011), p. 641].

This account of simple perceptual intuition can be complicated in two different directions, by introducing the different spheres of reason and by introducing the different levels of reason. Given, in other words, that things are immediately experienced as having value attributes and practical significance, we must distinguish three spheres of reason – cognitive, axiological, and practical – and consider the analogous forms of intuition for axiological and practical reason. Moreover, given that intuitions arise in the context of fulfilling and confirming our empty intended sense of things, they often arise in critically reflective contexts wherein our perceptions will tend toward judgments grounded in those perceptions. This entails that we must also consider the secondary senses of reason (i.e., the senses beyond directly evidencing things). We must, in other words, consider the senses of reason that pertain to judging: reason as what accounts for the well-formed judgments that articulate the pre-propositional structure of perception, and reason as the reasoning process in which we form arguments out of these well-formed judgments.

Hence, a two-fold task remains: we must consider whether, and if so, with what structures, axiological and practical intuitions occur, and we must consider under what circumstances we would say that the higher-order acts of judging and reasoning in all the spheres of reason are intuitive. I turn first to a consideration of higher forms of intuition in the cognitive sphere. I shall then briefly point to the comparable features of axiological and practical intuitions.

### *Conceptual Intuition*

The representation of even the fundamental form of simple perceptual intuition involves conceptual content in its recognition of *O* as an *F*, or as *p*, or as having *R*, although the perception is not exhausted by its conceptual content. This recognition presupposes a conceptualization of the type, property, or relation apprehended. When, for example, we say “My car is red,” we typically mean more than “My car is (this) red.” “My car is red” typically means that my car instantiates a property and is

thereby similar to other red things. All these other things share this property with my car even if their shade of red, the brightness of the red, and the intensity of the red are noticeably different from the red of my car. The conceptualization presupposed by this kind of perceptual recognition is grounded in the synthesis of like with like [Husserl (1972 [1939]), pp. 385-94; (1973), pp. 321-27].

This prior acquaintance with the concept is most often gained in the acquisition of language, but this is a passive acquisition and not intuitive. A genuine knowledge of the type, property, or relation requires an active and intuitive comprehension of it. What is unique about Husserl's general notion of intuition – and this is reminiscent of Aristotle – is that higher-order forms of intuition, even what we might want to call “intellectual intuitions,” never fully break their connection with the fundamental mode of simple perceptual intuition; they are rooted in but not reducible to simple perceptual intuitions. There are three different kinds of conceptual intuition: (a) the intuition of empirical species; (b) the intuition of inexact essences; and (c) the intuition of exact essences.

(a) Perceived objects are experienced against a background of other objects, or, to put the matter another way, perceptual experience is always the experience of groups of objects. We can turn our attention to the group, and when we do, the group can present itself as either an aggregate or as united by similarity. I experience an aggregate when I experience the group as a totality, e.g., I experience a (single) flock of geese flying overhead or a collection of flowers as a (single) arrangement. But I can also experience the collection of objects as having properties in common; they are all geese or all flowers.

In directing my attention to the different members of the group, I note their similarity. There is here, once again and as in perception, an agreement of sense, but the agreeing contents do not replace one another in the presentation of a spatially individuated object. Instead, the agreeing contents are spread out in several spatially individuated objects, and in noticing the similarity or sameness of the contents I do not cancel the recognition of the difference among the spatially individuated objects. The consciousness of difference among the similar objects persists through the recognition of the similarity.

I can, however, actively change the focus of my attention from the multiplicity of objects with similar properties to that single character which binds these objects into a community [Husserl (1972 [1939]), pp. 387; (1973), pp. 323]. I turn my attention, in other words, to the identity

that becomes prominent amidst the perceived similarity, an identity that confronts me as an object of a new kind. This new object, by virtue of this turning of attention, is attentively and clearly present to the mind in an intellectual apprehension as an ideal object grounded in our perceptions of similars [Husserl (1972 [1939]), pp. 391-92; (1973), pp. 325-26], an identity instantiated in, but transcendent to, the many similar, real objects.

There is no independent awareness of the universal object; it becomes present to us and is understood only against the background of the synthesis of like with like [Husserl (1972 [1939]), pp. 397; (1973), pp. 330]. Although my attention can focus exclusively on the universal insofar as I can be forgetful of the manifold through which it is presented, the universal cannot genuinely become present as an object – a universal known in the concept – apart from the manifold of similar objects. We can, therefore, represent the conceptual intuition of the empirical species as follows:

2. At  $t$ ,  $S$  conceptually intuits the species  $\Phi$  if and only if  $S$  attentively and clearly apprehends  $\Phi$  (i) as an identity uniting a multiplicity of similars, each of which is (or has been) perceptually intuited as  $\varphi$ , and (ii) without the admixture of non- $\varphi$  content.

(b) The basic pattern of abstracting empirical concepts can be extended in two directions. First, we can move beyond the actual to the possible and imaginatively and systematically vary the examples of the type under consideration. When we take into account feigned instances of the characteristics under consideration, we become aware of what is essential to a thing. For example, in systematically varying the idea of a tree, we recognize that there are features, such as the capacity for self-nutrition, without which we could no longer take something to be a tree. Similarly, in systematically varying the idea of, say, round, we recognize that there are certain deformations that would prevent us from continuing to call the shape “round.” In this recognition, we again apprehend what is essential for being round. In the course of such variations, we discover what features belong necessarily to any possible object or property under consideration. It is only at this point that we arrive at *a priori* knowledge, for the pure, *a priori* essence so understood now contains the marks of necessity and universality.

These essences, however, although they identify what is necessary for a thing to be of a certain type still possess some of the inexactness of empirical species. There are cases in which it is unclear whether an essential



feature defining the type can properly be predicated of an individual. This fact does not entail that we have failed to grasp what is essential to the type or property; it means only that we are limited in how definitively we can predicate the type or property of the individual; we are sometimes unsure about whether the essential property is truly instantiated in the individual. Following Husserl, we can refer to these essences as inexact or morphological essences [Husserl (1976 [1913]), pp. 154-56; (2014), pp. 133-34].

We can represent the conceptual intuition of a morphological essence as follows:

3. At  $t$ ,  $S$  conceptually intuits the morphological essence  $\Psi$  if and only if  $S$  attentively and clearly apprehends  $\Psi$  (i) as an identity uniting a multiplicity of similars, (a) each of which is (or has been) perceptually intuited or imaginatively presented as  $\psi$ , and (b) each of which has the parts, properties, or relations essential to the object's being  $\psi$ , and (ii) without the admixture of non- $\psi$  content.

(c) The second way to extend the basic pattern of abstracting empirical concepts is to array the similar objects so as to form a progression as an asymptotic approach toward a limit that is not itself realized in any member of the progression. When we shift our attention to the ideal limit of such a progression, we have apprehended a new kind of essence — an exact essence [Husserl (1976 [1913]), pp. 154-56; (2014), pp. 133-34]. This kind of idealization is achievable where measurement is possible, and the paradigmatic examples of idealization are the figures of Euclidean geometry. Since the array upon which our apprehension of the ideal limit also extends beyond the actually given to the purely possible, it too yields an *a priori* universal. Once again, however, this universal must be understood against the array through which it is approached; without the awareness of the array, there can be no awareness of the limit approached asymptotically by the array. There can be no awareness of, say, the ideal and idealized figure of the cube as opposed to the merely empirical or essential concept of the box-like, three-dimensional volume.

We can represent the conceptual intuition of an exact essence as follows:

4. At  $t$ ,  $S$  conceptually intuits the exact essence  $\Omega$  if and only if  $S$  attentively and clearly apprehends  $\Omega$  (i) as a mathematical limit asymptotically approached by an ordered array of similars, (a) each of which is (or has been) perceptually intuited or imaginatively

presented as  $\omega$ , and (b) each of which has the parts, properties, or relations essential to the object's being  $\omega$ , and (ii) without the admixture of non- $\omega$  content.

### *Categorical Intuition*

The structure of simple perceptual intuition points not only toward conceptual intuitions of various sorts; it also, as suggested above, points toward the possibility of judgment. The “crease” – the implied distinction – in the perceptual sense of  $O$  as an  $F$ , or of  $O$  as  $p$ , or of  $O$  as having  $R$  points to a possible “unfolding” of the “crease.” The *as* points to an *is* or a *has*. I unfold the crease in the judgment that  $O$  *is* an  $F$ , or that  $O$  *is*  $p$ , or that  $O$  *has*  $R$  to  $x$ .

The judgment introduces a new sense beyond what is contained in the perceptions. There is an affirmation of both the distinction between the intended object and its type, property, or relation as well as an explicit recognition of their unity and of the object's *being* a certain way. Both the difference and the unity are recognized in the perception, but they are explicitly affirmed as *being so* in the judgment. This requires that there be a kind of evidencing appropriate to the judgment that captures this new sense, an evidencing that involves a modification of the original perceptual sense. This new kind of evidencing is categorical intuition, which I represent as follows:

5. At  $t$ ,  $S$  categorially intuits the state of affairs correlative to an act of judging, e.g., that  $O$  is an  $F$ , or that  $O$  is  $p$ , or that  $O$  has  $R$ , if and only if (i)  $S$  perceptually intuits  $O$  as an  $F$ , or  $O$  as  $p$ , or  $O$  as having  $R$ ; (ii)  $S$  conceptually intuits  $F$ ,  $p$ , or  $R$ ; (iii)  $S$  at one and the same time, in a modification of perception, attentively and clearly recognizes (a)  $F$ ,  $p$ , or  $R$  as belonging to  $O$ , and (b)  $O$  as a whole to which belongs  $F$ ,  $p$ , or  $R$  as a piece or moment, such that in these two recognitions  $S$  recognizes the unity of  $O$  and  $F$ ,  $p$ , or  $R$  [Husserl (1984 [1901], pp. 681-85; Husserl (1970), pp. 792-97].

Epistemologists regularly distinguish between seeing  $p$  and seeing that  $p$ . But they rarely provide detailed accounts of the difference between the two. Nor do they indicate how the apparent unity between evidenced perceiving (seeing  $p$ ) and evidenced judging (seeing that  $p$ ) is achieved. It is a merit of Husserl's conception of categorical intuition that he attempts to do both these things. To see the *paper as white* and to see *that the paper is white*

involves a shift between an attributive and a predicative mode of experience [Husserl (1984 [1901]) p. 660; Husserl (1970), pp. 775-76]. This shift arises insofar as the perception of the paper as white is modified so as to focus attention on the white as belonging to the paper and thereby to recognize that the paper includes the white as a qualitative moment. The shift to the judgment arises in the explicit recognition of the unity between the whole and its moment, and the categorial intuition unifies the perceptual and judgmental moments insofar as the modified perceptual moment of seeing that  $p$  presents the state of affairs itself as *being so* and thereby confirms the judgment [Husserl (1984 [1901]) p. 668-70; Husserl (1970), pp. 782-83].

Worthy of note also is the fact that categorial intuition encompasses the other types of intuition sketched above. In one sense, this is not surprising, for the being of things and the truth of things are ultimately given in fulfilled acts of judging. Insofar as intuition is truth-disclosing, the preeminent – although not most fundamental – form of intuition is the categorial intuition of the states of affairs intended in acts of judgment. While there is a truthfulness appropriate to each kind of intuition, the apex of intuitive truth is realized in categorial intuition.

The discussion of categorial intuition helps to clarify the relation between intuition and belief. It is more or less a philosophical commonplace to distinguish between intuitions and beliefs. It is quite possible for something to *seem* intuitively true to  $S$  without  $S$  thereby believing it to *be* true. It is, as noted above, quite possible for it to *seem* to be true to  $S$  that the lines in the Müller-Lyer illusion are of unequal length without  $S$  believing them to *be* unequal. It is quite possible for the parallel axiom in Euclidean geometry to *seem* to be true to  $S$  without  $S$  believing it to *be* true. Indeed,  $S$  knows the Müller-Lyer lines to be equal in length and that both non-Euclidean geometries and relativity theory show the Euclidean parallel axiom to be false. [Huemer (2001), pp. 99-100]. Moreover, the Müller-Lyer illusion reveals how perceptions, even perceivings that  $p$ , are belief-independent, whereas beliefs are not independent of one another [Chudnoff (2011), p. 628]. Nevertheless, it is another philosophical commonplace that intuitions provide *prima facie* but defeasible evidence for beliefs [Pust (2000); Huemer (2001), p. 100; Bealer (2002), p. 102; Chudnoff (2011), p. 626].

These views are comprehensible in the context of philosophical clarifications of our ordinary usages of the term “intuition,” but they do not perfectly fit Husserl’s technical, philosophical conception of intuition. For Husserl, beliefs can be empty or full intendings. They are not simply judgments (in the sense of judgments), since they are not episodic

but abiding and dispositional in that they shape our understandings of what we encounter. When our beliefs are empty, for example, when they are passively held as a result of the handing down of traditional beliefs, they can be distinct or indistinct. An indistinct judgment becomes distinct when a subject actively takes up the received belief and formulates it as a judgment for herself. The one judging has now determined for herself that the judgment is formally and materially consistent, that is, well formed and well formulated [Sokolowski (1974), p. 219]. These distinct judgments possess what Husserl calls the “clarity of anticipation” [Husserl (1974 [1929]), pp. 66-67; (1969), pp. 61-62]. Insofar as they are distinct, but empty, judgments, they seek fulfillment in a categorial intuition, an evidencing that possesses perfect clarity. Hence, the intuition does not provide a supporting reason on the basis of which I hold a belief, a reason that warrants the belief. Instead, the judgmental content of these evidential experiences has the *same* propositional content as the emptily intending belief. The categorial intuition provides fulfilling evidence that allows one henceforth to hold the belief as a personal conviction and not merely a received, traditional belief or a belief whose justifying evidence has been lost from view.

### *Axiological Perceptual Intuition*

I now turn briefly to the different spheres of reason. There are two additional kinds of perceptions I wish to consider: axiological perception and moral perception. These are complex modes of perception insofar as they identify their objects as having qualities beyond the qualities that belong to them as purely physical things or events, beyond, in other words, the qualities disclosed in simple perception. Hence, their intuitive instances will have a structure somewhat more complicated than that of simple perceptual intuitions.

Axiological perceptions in the form of intentional feelings or episodic emotions apprehend the value attributes of their objects. While not all phenomenologists share this view, a substantial subset including Brentano [(1995 [1874]); (1969 [1889])], Husserl [(1988); (2004)], Scheler [(1973 [1913-16])], von Hildebrand [(1916); (1922)], and Hartmann [(1967 [1949])] does. A thing or state of affairs has value or disvalue insofar as some of its non-axiological properties arouse a feeling in us in which we both recognize the object as advancing or hindering our interests, cares, or commitments and value or disvalue the object accordingly. Both the grounded relation of axiological attributes to the non-axiological prop-

erties of the object and the affective relation to our interests, cares, and commitments complicate the structure of axiological intuitions. We can express this structure as follows:

6. At  $t$ ,  $S$  axiologically intuits  $O$  as  $v$  (i.e., *valuable* or *disvaluable*) if and only if (i)  $S$  perceptually intuits  $O$  as an  $F$ , or as  $p$ , or as having  $R$ ; (ii)  $S$  attentively and clearly apprehends the relation of  $O$ 's being an  $F$ , or being  $p$ , or having  $R$  to  $S$ 's interests, cares, or commitments; and (iii)  $S$  registers the value or disvalue of  $O$  in an intentional feeling or episodic emotion.

### *Moral Intuition*

Axiological intuitions, although not limited to moral concerns, are relevant to our moral concerns in a number of ways. Axiological perceptions are at work in determining the ends toward which we order our lives. They are also at work in appraising our own actions and the actions of others as well as the moral value of the various institutions we establish to organize and govern our communal lives. These two tasks of axiological perceptions surround, as it were, the choice (and performance) of the action undertaken to realize our ends. What I shall call "moral perception" focuses particularly on the choice of the action conducing to our ends such that we can understand the choice as "perceiving" the rightness (or wrongness) of the chosen action. Hence, we can represent the structure of a moral intuition as follows:

7. At  $t$ ,  $S$  morally intuits the choice  $C$  of action  $A$  as *right* if and only if (i)  $S$  axiologically intuits an end  $E$  as a good end; (ii)  $S$  attentively and clearly apprehends  $A$  as conducive to  $E$ ; and (iii)  $S$  attentively and clearly apprehends  $A$  as not frustrating (or frustrating least) the realization of more highly valued ends.

Axiological intuition rests on simple perceptual intuition, and moral intuition rests on axiological intuition. The sense disclosed in axiological intuition presupposes the sense disclosed in simple perceptual intuition, and the sense disclosed in moral perception presupposes the senses disclosed in both simple perceptual intuition and axiological intuition. This relation is not to be conceived in temporal terms. I do not first have simple perceptions, then axiological perceptions, then moral perceptions. Instead, there are relationships of sense built into the complex perceptions,

and these complex perceptions simply are our immediate, ordinary experience of things in our everyday, straightforward experience of the world.

As we have seen, even the fundamental form of simple perceptual intuition involves conceptual content in its recognition of  $O$  as an  $F$ , or as  $p$ , or, as having  $R$ . Axiological and moral perceptions involve additional conceptual content, but this additional content is of a significantly different kind. Axiological intuitions, for example, invoke the concepts of different kinds of emotion, including a sense of the kinds of circumstances in which different emotions are appropriate. Axiological intuitions also invoke value-concepts. Both kinds of concepts are such that there are cultural variations in the concepts even while there are broad transcultural dimensions to them. Moral intuitions, over and above natural, physical, biological, and axiological concepts, contain as part of their conceptual content a relation to the human capacities to set our own ends for action, to choose those actions, and to reflect on our ends and choices as well as a relation to the social, cultural, and political concepts in terms of which we organize and order our collective lives. Moral intuitions, moreover, invoke concepts that are incomprehensible apart from our intersubjective efforts to delineate what constitutes a good life for humans, both individually and collectively, as well as what responsibilities we have towards the others with whom we share our common world.

Axiological and moral intuitions, therefore, by virtue of this self-reference that is not present in our scientific concepts, press more firmly toward categorial intuition in the axiological and moral spheres. The limitations of space require that I only state a suggestion for the structure of these forms of intuition:

8. At  $t$ ,  $S$  axiologically and categorially intuits a state of affairs correlative to an axiological judgment, e.g., that  $O$  is *valuable* on the basis of being an  $F$ , or being  $p$ , or having  $R$ , if and only if (i)  $S$  perceptually intuits that  $O$  is an  $F$ , or *is*  $p$ , or has  $R$ ; (ii)  $S$  axiologically intuits in an intentional feeling or episodic emotion that  $O$  as  $F$ , as  $p$ , or having  $R$  is  $v$  (*valuable*); (iii)  $S$  attentively and clearly apprehends the value-concept  $V$ ; and (iv)  $S$  at one and the same time, attentively and clearly judges (a) that  $V$  is appropriate to  $O$  as  $F$ , as  $p$ , or as having  $R$  and (b) that  $V$  is appropriate to the interests, cares, and commitments of  $S$ .
9. At  $t$ ,  $S$  morally and categorially intuits an axiological state of affairs correlative to a moral judgment, e.g., that  $A$  is *right* on the

basis of conducing to end  $E$ , if and only if (i)  $S$  axiologically intuits  $E$  as a good end; (ii)  $S$  attentively and clearly judges (a) that  $\mathcal{A}$  is conducive to  $E$  and (b) that  $\mathcal{A}$  does not frustrate (or frustrates least) the realization of more highly valued ends.

In summary, this phenomenological account of intuitions is characterized most importantly by four features: an episodic character; the presence of an attentive mind; perfect clarity, i.e., having the intended object directly present as it is itself; and a truth-disclosive character.<sup>1</sup> The kinds of intuitions discussed herein, although importantly different from the more common sense of intuition mentioned at the outset, nevertheless have some relation to that more common sense. Insofar as intuitions on the phenomenological view evidentially underlie our convictions – our confirmed and settled judgments about things – intuitions in the ordinary sense appear as empty intended convictions (although this is not a sense in which Husserl would use the term “intuition”). This accounts for the characterization of intuitions as more than guesses or hunches, and they are more, too, than judgments as mere suppositions. Their “seeming” to be true or their “being understood” (but not evidenced) as true reflects their character as convictions. But to claim that they provide evidence for our beliefs misses, as it were, a step. These empty convictions themselves need fulfillment; they need to be evidenced. Once evidenced, we have a conviction in the full sense, a conviction that we can adopt as a belief capable of informing our continuing experience. It remains true, therefore, that intuitions – at least as understood phenomenologically – are not the product of a course of reasoning, but it is not true that intuitions and the convictions they underlie are not achieved through observation. Indeed, when theory and intuitions conflict, say, in discussing moral philosophy, we settle the issue by turning to experience, and in doing so, we attempt to confirm or disconfirm our original, empty intuitions or to reshape our intuitions in the light of moral theory. When these empty convictions are confirmed, however, they are confirmed by an intuition in the phenomenological sense.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> I make no claim that this is a complete account of the kinds of intuition. Nor do I claim that the concept of intuition is as unified as I have presented it here. If we consider Husserl's views, for example, there are at least two important gaps in this account of intuition. The first has to do with one of the secondary senses of reason, viz., reason as the process of reasoning. The question arises as to what sort of intuition, if any, corresponds to this logical function. Evidencing the correctness of an argument would seem to involve the intuitive grasp that the movement from premises to conclusion is truth-preserving. There is, however, here no reference to the direct having of an object otherwise than in the individual judgments that make up the argument.

The second gap derives from the fact that we can grasp groups either as totalities or as communities of similars. We have seen that the latter underlies conceptual intuitions of empirical concepts, morphological essences, and exact essences. Husserl, however, also considers that the grasp of totalities underlies our experience of collections or collectivities, and he considers these as categorial objects subject to categorial intuition. Here there is an object directly at hand, but the experience of collections requires a categorial intuition having a structure different from the one presented here.

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