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## EMOTIONS AND MOODS IN HUSSERL'S PHENOMENOLOGY\*

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The topic of emotions has always been important in the phenomenological tradition, inspired by Husserl and Brentano. This topic is central to the philosophical program developed by Brentano and his successors (Fisette and Fréchette 2017) and thereafter in the phenomenological tradition inspired by Husserl, from the young phenomenologists of Munich and Göttingen to Sartre and R. Solomon (Hart and Embree 1997; Drummond and Embree 2002; Ferran 2008; Ubali and Wehrle 2015; Drummond and Rinofer-Kreidl 2018). However, in the works published during his lifetime, Husserl granted much more importance to cognition and intellectual acts than to emotions and feelings even if they constitute, if not what is more phenomenological in phenomenology, at least a fundamental aspect of Husserl's conception of the human mind. This is confirmed by a series of manuscripts which, upon the request of Husserl, were collected by his assistant Ludwig Landgrebe in 1927 under the title, *Studien zur Struktur des Bewußtseins* (*Studies on the Structure of Consciousness*) (hereafter *Studies*). This monumental work contains detailed analyses not only in the field of affective life (Melle 2012, 2015, 2020) and volition (Melle 1992, 1997), but also on moods (Lee 1998) and drives (Bernet 2006). Even though most of these manuscripts date from the late Göttingen period between 1909–1914, Husserl planned to publish them, as shown by the sketch of an introduction to the *Studies* he prepared in 1927 (2020a, 469–488). These manuscripts were composed during his lectures on ethics from 1908–1909 (Husserl 1988) and 1914 (Husserl 2004b), and this research is partly motivated by the importance of emotions, values, and volition in Husserl's ethics. Husserl's main interlocutor in the *Studies* is Brentano, and as shown by the sketch of an introduction to this collection of working manuscripts, Husserl seeks to re-evaluate the principles of his descriptive psychology, the term which described the first version of phenomenology in *Logical Investigations* (Melle 1980, 117; 1997, 174; 2002, 231; 2012, 72; 2015, 8; 2020, lii; Drummond 2002, 17).

This chapter is about emotions and affective life in Husserl's work. I will pay particular attention to the second volume of the *Studies* on emotions but will also take into account Husserl's first writings on the emotions (1982, 106–112; 2004a, 159–189), which contain valuable analyses on the topic. But emotions do not exhaust the entire field of the phenomenology of affectivity. Husserl places great importance on what he calls “sense feelings” (*Gefühlsempfindungen*), which he clearly distinguishes from emotions (*Gemütsbewegungen*, *Gefühlsakt*) and moods (*Stimmungen*). In this chapter, I will first introduce Husserl's analysis in

the *Studies* by emphasizing the reasons that motivate these analyses of descriptive psychology and their status in Husserl's transcendental phenomenology of the late Freiburg period. I will then focus on the structure of acts with a particular emphasis on three aspects stressed by Husserl in the *Studies*: intentionality, the taxonomy of acts, and Brentano's principle of presentations as the basis of other mental phenomena (*Vorstellungsgrundlage*). The last three parts of this chapter outline the characteristic features of three fundamental aspects of affective life in Husserl's phenomenology: emotions, sense feelings, and moods. I will conclude with some general remarks on the status of affects and values in Husserl's phenomenology.

### Studies on the structure of consciousness

The *Studies* is composed of a series of manuscripts written between 1909 and 1914 (Melle 2015, 2020). At Husserl's request, these manuscripts were collected by his assistant Ludwig Landgrebe in 1927 and, as said previously, this work also contains a draft of an introduction to this collection of manuscripts (2020a, 469–488), which Husserl prepared in 1927. The work is divided into three volumes dealing with the three respective classes of acts and their objects in Husserl's classification: understanding and object, emotion and value, and will and action. The first volume contains original analyses on the class of intellectual acts, i.e., presentation and judgment. The significance of the other two volumes is that they make significant contributions to topics of emotions, values, and volition that are underdeveloped in the other volumes of the *Husserliana* (1988, 102–125). The second volume is of particular interest for this study because it brings together several of Husserl's writings on the phenomenology of affective consciousness and values. It also provides us with first-hand information not only about affective life including drives (see Bernet 2006) and moods (see Lee 1998), but also regarding the place of emotions in the architectonics of consciousness. The third volume contains several manuscripts of detailed analyses of volition as it relates to action and practical reason. These working manuscripts contain several sketches and a number of overlapping extended analyses that are corroborated in Husserl's published writings (1982; 2004b; 2014b, §§95, 115, 121, 127; see also Steinbock 2013).

Moreover, these manuscripts are important and valuable with respect to Husserl's phenomenology because, as Heidegger pointed out in 1927, they contain “the essential pieces” of Husserl's intentional psychology to which the study of emotions belongs (Husserl 1994, 145). It also testifies to the importance of descriptive psychology and the study of mental states in Husserl's transcendental phenomenology from the mid-1920s. This topic is indeed one of the most important in Husserl's phenomenology of the late Freiburg period (see Peucker 2002; Breyer 2017). Several factors are worth considering in this reinstatement of psychology within transcendental phenomenology insofar as they are relevant to his investigations on emotions. The first is the partial identification of phenomenology with intentional psychology under the broad definition of phenomenology as both psychology and philosophy. From the mid-1920s, phenomenology was considered a discipline with a dual meaning and a dual function: it is, on the one hand, defined as transcendental phenomenology and, as such, it is first *philosophy* in the classical sense of the term; on the other hand, it is defined as intentional psychology, the task of which being to serve as a preliminary stage for philosophical investigations, to reform empirical psychology and to ground the human sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*) as a whole. In Husserl's *Crisis*, for instance, phenomenological psychology is considered to be “identical to transcendental philosophy” with the two being “inseparable although distinct [from one another]” (1970, 257–258). Hence, there is a parallelism (1962, 343) between the philosophical and the psychological aspects of phenomenology, and Husserl maintains that both disciplines

have the same content, namely, noetic-noematic correlations and that the results of the analysis of descriptive psychology are necessary conditions for the grounding of transcendental phenomenology.

However, despite the importance granted to intentional psychology during the Freiburg period, Husserl clearly distinguishes it from transcendental philosophy, arguing that it belongs to a dimension of phenomenology that is not philosophical. That is why, in the sketch of the introduction to the *Studies*, Husserl explains that he brackets all philosophical interests in these psychological investigations insofar as he is mainly interested in a “non-philosophical phenomenology.” He brandishes the specter of psychologism to those who would be tempted to abandon transcendental philosophy in favor of phenomenological psychology (2020a, 469–470). In any case, this rehabilitation of descriptive psychology partly explains his renewed interest in Brentano’s descriptive psychology. Indeed, Brentano is the starting point of this research on the nature of emotions (Melle 2015, 8–9; 2020, LII, LXXII), as confirmed by Husserl’s general introduction to the *Studies*, in which he emphasizes the importance of Brentano for his phenomenological psychology despite his sharp criticism of several aspects of Brentano’s philosophical program (2020a, 475, 491–493, 497–498).

### On the structure of mental states

Let us look at three aspects of Husserl’s investigations which are particularly important for Husserl’s architectonic of the human mind in the *Studies*: intentionality, the tripartite classification of intentional states, and Brentano’s thesis of the presentations as the basis of other mental phenomena (*Vorstellungsgrundlage*). Here again, the starting point of Husserl’s analyses in the *Studies* is the so-called Brentano’s thesis, according to which intentionality is the main characteristic of mental phenomena. The notion of act by which Husserl seeks to account for intentional experiences is described in terms of the actualization of a potential experience or disposition (2020a, 482). An act is by definition an intentional experience; “intentional,” in this context, broadly understood means “aboutness” – e.g., perception is *about* something perceived, imagination *about* something imagined, etc. The perceived and the imagined, in these cases, are the intentional objects or correlates of these acts. The two essential components of an act are its quality and matter or what he also terms in *Ideas I* as *noesis* and *noema*. The term “matter” refers to the component of an act that gives it a specific relation to its object. It is also called the intentional content of an act, and its main function is to determine the object that is intended and with what properties, forms, etc. it is intended (2020a, 42). Matter is intimately related to the quality of acts (1982, 167; 2020a, 71–72), by which Husserl is referring to the way consciousness relates to its objects. Every act is intentional and has therefore an intentional relation with its objects, but the modes of relation to objects vary from one class to another, e.g., as presented, judged, willed, etc. We shall see that in the *Studies* Husserl also uses several other notions such as mode of consciousness, position taking, evaluation etc., to help describe the agent’s emotive attitude towards an object.

There are several overlapping classifications in the *Studies*, but the two most important ones for the present study are that between the two classes of phenomena and that between the three classes of acts. Husserl’s starting point in *Logical Investigations* is Brentano’s distinction between physical and psychical phenomena. This classification is relevant here because of the importance placed upon sense feelings in Husserl’s discussion of Brentano’s notion of a physical phenomenon. In this regard, Husserl’s criticism in *Logical Investigations* of Brentano’s theory of emotion occurred in the context of a discussion of Brentano’s criteria for the delineation of the field of psychology from that of the natural sciences (1982, 81). This issue depends in turn on the

question “as to whether the ‘intentional relation’ suffices to demarcate ‘psychical phenomena’ (the domain of psychology) or not” (1982, 107). This last issue concerns, in fact, the criteria used by Brentano to delineate the field of psychology from that of the natural sciences, and it involves, beyond intentionality, his theory of internal and external perception. Yet that is precisely what Husserl disputes in *Logical Investigations* (1982, 94). He argues, contrary to Brentano, that there are phenomena such as sense feelings which belong to a dimension of experience that do not fall under any of Brentano’s two classes of phenomena. Hence, Husserl’s important distinction during the Halle period is between the class of intentional phenomena, which includes emotions, and the class of sense feelings, which are closely related to moods. We shall see that this distinction constitutes the basis of Husserl’s analysis of the affective life in the last two volumes of the *Studies*.

The many classifications discussed by Husserl in the *Studies* vary according to several criteria. In the case of the classification of acts, Husserl’s main criterion is based on the notion of quality (2020a, 330; Melle 2012, 54; Melle 2020, LXII). Every act has an intentional relation to its object, and to every class of acts there corresponds a position-taking (*Stellungnahme*) which determines the way in which consciousness refers to its objects (2020a, 118f.). There are therefore as many classes of acts as there are modes of relation to objects, the three main classes being the representational-judicative, emotional, and volitional. Husserl’s starting point in his classification of acts is Brentano’s tripartite classification of presentation, judgment, and emotion (which includes volition) (Melle 2012, 53; 2015, 9). Husserl discusses this issue at length in the first volume of the *Studies* (2020a, 491f.) and proposes a reform based on a new taxonomy of mental phenomena into three classes: cognition, emotion, and will. The class of intellectual acts merges Brentano’s first two classes, presentation and judgment. Despite the significant structural differences in acts of presentation and judgment, there is, according to Husserl, no specific difference between them the way there is between judgment and emotion on the one hand, and between emotion and will on the other. Husserl maintains that there is only a difference of degree, and not in kind, between presentation and judgement (2020a, 67). This class of intellectual acts includes perception as the main act of presentation, as well as imagination and memory, conceived of as modifications of perception (Melle 2002, 232). The second class is based on emotions understood as acts of pleasure (*Gefallen*) and displeasure (*Missfallen*) whose objective correlates are values. Contrary to Brentano, Husserl dissociates emotions from volition because in his view they have different qualities and are based on different modes of consciousness. Husserl also claims that the will is more directly related to action than to emotions even if both have values as objects. Finally, just like Stumpf (see Fisette 2009), Husserl admits at the level of sensory perception a non-intentional awareness of primary contents, and we shall see that this thesis is central to his doctrine of sense feelings.

As for Brentano’s presentational foundation (*Vorstellungsgrundlage*), Husserl maintains that there exists between the three classes a form of foundational relation, or a relation of one-sided dependence, of the higher-order classes (emotion and volition) on the lower-order class of intellectual acts. Husserl maintains that perception is a simple founding act which is autonomous with respect to the other two classes to the extent that its existence does not depend on, nor is founded in, any other act (2020a, 3). Husserl adopts Brentano’s principle according to which an act is either a presentation or based on a presentation. In *Logical Investigations*, Husserl introduces the distinction between objectifying and non-objectifying acts in the context of his reformulation of Brentano’s principle, and he claims that the intellectual acts of presentation and judgment, which together constitute the cognitive basis of all acts, belong to the class of objectifying acts (1982, 404). Under the class of non-objectifying acts, emotion and will have no objective relation apart from that provided by objectifying acts. Thus, volition is a

higher-order intentional state based on the class of objectifying acts and the class of emotions, and it entertains a one-sided dependency relation with the two classes that precede it in the hierarchy of acts. It depends on the presentation of what is intended (i.e., the project or plan that the mental state is *about*) because this act provides it with its cognitive basis, and on the class of emotions since the objects of volition are values conceived of as objects previously evaluated by a perception of value (*Wertnehmung*) (2020b, 40f.). Volition is directed towards something that is intended as a valuable object, but unlike the other two classes of acts, this aboutness involves a practical action by which the agent carries out or fulfils a project by means of his bodily movements. Hence the reformulation of Brentano's principle in the *Logical Investigations* is: "Each intentional experience is either an objectifying act or has its basis in such an act" (Husserl 1982, 167; see Rinofner-Kreidl 2013, 66–67).

### Main properties of emotions

These three aspects of the structure of consciousness apply a fortiori to emotions, which can be defined, as a first approximation, as position-takings (see Drummond 2002, 17–20). In contrast to sense feelings, emotions are intentional states (Husserl 2020b, 69) in relation to an object referred to as pleasing, and as such, necessarily have an intentional correlate (Husserl 2020b, 14–15). Emotions are grounded in states belonging to the class of intellectual acts which constitute, as previously stated, their cognitive basis to the extent that they provide them with their primary, or "formal," objects (Husserl 2020b, 37). Emotions are modes of apprehension (Husserl 2020b, 69), or "takings as," which consist in the mode through which one takes something as valuable. Emotions are also related to negative or positive position-takings towards an object, which is characterized by what is called the polarity or valence of emotions (*Gefallen-Missfallen*), i.e., the property of being either positive (e.g., proud or amused) or negative (e.g., sad, shameful, etc.). These are attitudes that the agent takes towards an object presented in sensory perception, e.g., an attitude of fear ~~that one apprehended~~ towards something taken as fearful. Emotions are thus closely related to a kind of evaluation (*Wertnehmen, Wertschätzung, Für-Wert-Halten*) (Husserl 2020b, 53), a perception of value (*Wertnehmen*), understood by analogy to perception (*Wahrnehmen*), which literally means taking something as true, and it consists in taking a position towards an object, to take it as a valuable object. But Husserl emphasizes that despite the structural similarity with perception, this perception of value is not a perception as such, as perceptual theories of emotions claim. For its object is not a percept, or something perceived (Husserl 2020b, 22–23), but a value: to have an emotion, for Husserl, means ultimately to apprehend the objective correlate of emotion in evaluative terms. The objects of emotions are therefore values: "It is manifest that the joy about the beautiful, the elation that it elicits, is not joy about the mere being of the object, but joy about the being of the object of value" (Husserl 2020b, 94–95). An evaluative predicate, e.g., hateful, disgusting, shameful, etc., corresponds to emotions and these values can be either positive or negative, depending on the agent's position-taking or evaluation. Another important feature of emotions, perhaps the most salient, lies in their "felt character" that depends in turn on sense feelings, which I discuss in the next section. Finally, following Brentano, Husserl claims that an emotion can be correct or incorrect, i.e., can fit the intended object as valuable or not (2020b, 310–311; see Mulligan 2017) – and like truth, the content of an emotion can also be evident.

We can illustrate this general structure of emotions using the case of the pleasure that one takes in smoking a cigar (Husserl 2020b, 22). First, there is the presentation of the object, in this case the perception of the cigar, which comes from Havana with all the anticipation that this phenomenon may elicit in the connoisseur, such as how to hold it, how to smoke it,

etc. One therefore apprehends this object in this way and perceives oneself as smoking a cigar. One perceives more or less consciously that the cigar is new and still fresh, that it has floral and herbal scents, that its taste evokes perhaps the aroma of tea, cedar, oak, etc. The taste and scent, like nicotine in cigar tobacco, provide pleasant or unpleasant sensations and feelings. Husserl distinguishes the primary content in this experience from the apperception of sense feelings that cigar-smoking may elicit. Sense feelings can also depend on the smoker's mood, which may predispose one to enjoy this experience or not, as well as several other factors related to, for example, what one knows about the consequences of tobacco smoking. In any case, the feelings triggered by cigar smoking give rise to a reaction in the smoker, a position-taking towards the object that provides those feelings, what Husserl calls pleasure and displeasure. This position-taking is actually an evaluation (*Wertnehmen*, *Wertschätzung*) of the cigar based on this experience: this cigar provides pleasure or displeasure (Husserl 2020b, 22). The correlate of this evaluation, the object (i.e., the cigar) as pleasing (*gefallend*), thus acquires the status of value (Husserl 2020b, 23) and with this assessment, the cigar is referred to as good or bad. But the cigar as a valuable object is not perceived as such, and Husserl insists on the distinction between the elements that are "perceived" in this experience of cigar smoking and the evaluation of, or position-taking towards, the cigar itself (Husserl 2020b, 25). This object does not appear as something perceived but as something enjoyed – precisely, as a valuable object (Husserl 2020b, 22, 25). The dimension of moods is also involved both in the state of mind of the smoker, which can influence his disposition and his feeling towards the cigar (Husserl 2020b, 22), and in the transformation of this enjoyment into a long-lasting state when this positive experience intensifies and places the smoker in a state of euphoria, for example.

### Properties of sense feelings

Within the class of affective states, Husserl distinguishes emotions, sense feelings, and moods. We saw that one of the main objections to Brentano in *Logical Investigations* rests on this distinction, and Husserl also criticizes Kant and those who entertain prejudices against the sphere of sensory taste (Husserl 1988, 408–409). In §15 of the Fifth Investigation, Husserl criticizes the conceptual confusion in Brentano's conception of sentiment (*Gefühl*) between sense feeling (*Gefühlsempfindung*) and emotion (*Gefühlsakt*, *Gemütsbewegung*). The object of the dispute with Brentano is *prima facie* the question as to whether pain and bodily pleasure – feelings related to specific types of sensations such as temperature, sound, taste, color, and even aesthetic pleasure – are intentional, just as joy, sadness, anger, hope, desire, and disgust are for Brentano, or whether they are sensory in nature. However, the real issue is whether such sense feelings belong to the class of physical phenomena or to the class of mental states to which joy, sadness, etc. belong. The position advanced by Husserl in *Logical Investigations* is based on the distinction between primary content and mental acts, and it consists in classifying pleasure and pain, for example, as falling within the category of primary content while considering, in agreement with Brentano and in contrast to phenomenalism, emotions such as shame or disgust as belonging to the class of intentional states. Sense feelings such as pain are, in this view, therefore more akin to sensations of touch, taste, or smell than to intentional states such as fear or disgust.

Even before *Logical Investigations*, Husserl emphasized this distinction between primary and intentional content. Sensory pleasure such as pain is an example of the first, while aesthetic enjoyment is an act and therefore an intentional state – in short, an emotion that has a worked-out intentional content. Another way of spelling out this distinction is as one between an act and a state (*Zustand*) – i.e., between mental states and states of mind (Husserl 1982, 107; 2004a, 176, 179, 180; 2020b, 178). Intentional experiences are conceived of as acts, or even as activities

(*Betätigungen*) understood as dispositions, while states of mind are passive experiences that one undergoes and which are not intentional (Husserl 2020b, 482). In several fragments dated from 1911 and 1920, Husserl reiterates the thesis that what distinguishes these two subclasses of affective states is intentionality, insofar as only emotions possess intentionality while sense feelings, like sensations in general, are devoid of this property (2004b, 326–327; 2020b, 69).<sup>1</sup>

However, sense feelings are not, strictly speaking, sensory qualities, and they do not belong as such to the category of *qualia* (Husserl 2020b, 37–38). As Husserl explains: “The content of sensation has no rosy light, no rosy gleam” (2020b, 64–65). True, there is a correlation between “the emotional excitement” (rosy gleam) and the event’s “objective property” (“the event as bathed in rosy gleam”) (Husserl 1982, 110), and Husserl sometimes suggests that this relation is intentional (see Lee 1998, 111; Ramirez 2015, 98). However, Husserl also claims that this relation is merely an “affective apprehension” of the event whereby the sensations of pleasure are linked to the event. Sense feelings are understood in this case as “figurative contents” in the same way as tactile sensations, taste, etc., and as such they serve as footholds (*Anhalt*) to an affective apprehension. This affective apprehension is, in turn, related to primary content, i.e., to a figurative content, which is not an act and can therefore hardly be intentionally related to a primary content. Although the affective states of this class are not, strictly speaking, secondary qualities, they are based on sensations which also serve as footholds to an affective apprehension (Husserl 2020b, 37–38). They are based on primary contents and thus are dependent on them. Also, they constitute the upper layer of primary contents in the same way that emotions are higher-order mental states grounded in the class of lower-order cognitive states on which they depend: “Both layers together – the relatively independent founding (if it is really independent!) and the founded – constitute the so to speak soulful (*gefühlvollen*) primary content” (Husserl 2020b, 51, 85, 92).

### Main characteristics of moods

The study of moods goes hand in hand with the study of emotions. For states of mind such as anxiety, euphoria, ecstasy, melancholy, or depression have an obvious kinship with mental states like fear, hate, love, envy, etc. There is indeed an affective dimension that is specific to these kinds of states of mind. But that does not mean that emotions and moods, like drives and instincts (Husserl 2014a), belong to the same species of mental phenomena. Some philosophers claim that moods have properties of their own and maintain that the case of moods testifies to the fact that there are states of mind which are not intentional. Husserl attaches great importance to moods and it is largely agreed upon that the distinction between emotions and sense feelings is a presupposition in his analysis of affect after *Logical Investigations*, and that it constitutes the starting point for his analysis of emotions and moods in the second volume of the *Studies* (Lee 1998, 103, 110; Melle 2012, 56–57; 2015, 8; Ramirez 2015, 94–98). I will now sketch some of the main properties that Husserl attributes to moods.

The first question pertains to the source of moods. Husserl claims that moods have their origin in a prior feeling, such as, e.g., anger, which persists and predisposes one to be in an irritated state of mind (2020b, 59, 91; Melle 2012, 60). Over time, this feeling can be emancipated from the state of anger that provoked it and can migrate into an “excited disposition” when the founding act disappears and fills the affective field as a whole. The mood then seizes the subject in the sense that he is now dominated by the feeling that gave birth to it, in this case, anger (Husserl 2004a, 177). This emancipation process is comparable to the way a virus spreads and grows, in a manner that possibly overruns the whole field of consciousness (Husserl 2020b, 103; Bernet 2006, 103). This process is best understood in light of Solomon’s

thesis, according to which moods are metaphysically generalized emotions (Solomon 1993, 133). However, let us bear in mind that Husserl also maintains that moods do not necessarily relate to any actual or past sentiments: “We sometimes awaken with a reluctant feeling that does not leave us, we are sad and do not know about what” (2004a, 177). Husserl also explains the genesis of moods in terms of sense feelings. He maintains that moods are “annexes (*Annexe*) of sense feelings, extensions, propagation, irradiation of original feelings” (2020b, 173). To explain what is meant by “annexes,” Husserl uses the examples of passion (*Leidenschaft*) (Husserl 2004a, 175–176) and religious experience which bring about a particular mood. This mood continues long after the religious service ends, or when this situation loses its meaning, the mood can still prevail in the absence of the initial figurative content by which it was triggered (Husserl 2004a, 175–176). When the content of this feeling disappears, the feeling can persist in the form of a mood.

Whatever the origin of moods may be, they are, if not objectless, at least without specific objects because moods lack an objective reference in the trivial sense that depression and melancholia, for example, do not seem to be about anything, whereas fear is, *per definitionem*, about something specifically feared. A state of anxiety, for example, does not seem to be about anything, at least not about anything in particular. Some believe that these states of mind nevertheless have an object even if it is diffuse and underdetermined, while others – including, even occasionally, Husserl – believe that, in principle, such a state of mind cannot have any object at all because it is devoid of intentional content (Husserl 2004a, 176; 2020b, 101, 112). Furthermore, moods have a longer duration than emotions or any other mental states. Husserl sometimes describes moods as enduring feelings “which [have] taken possession of the soul” (2004a, 176). Take the case of a conversation with a charming person where this charm affectively colors the situation and illuminates it in a particular way. The person’s charm lingers in the form of a sustained mood that can then occupy the emotional background of the agent for a long period of time (Husserl 2020b, 103; Ramirez 2015, 99). This also explains why moods also have prolonged and extended effects on memory, perception of things, reasoning, etc.

In the second volume of the *Studies*, Husserl further claims that moods are motivated (2020b, 171–172, 103–104). Motivation is a key notion in Husserl’s phenomenology and is sometimes used to account for reasons for acting that do not have their origin in the internal content of intentional states, but rather in aspects of the surrounding world. However, unlike a causal relation, the motivational relation occurs between the agent and the phenomenal properties of the surrounding objects, such as their shapes, colors, textures, etc., which act on the agent and, in some cases, motivate them to act. And to the extent that motivation has its origin in the agent’s environment and not in his own intentional contents, intentionality does not seem to be relevant to account for this particular relation (Husserl 2020b, 104, 171–172). Another way to describe this characteristic feature of moods is to say that they are “groundless” – i.e., that moods, unlike emotions, do not figure in typical explanations by rationalization of action.

Moods make people more or less receptive or sensitive (*empänglich*) to emotions (Husserl 2020b, 111, 172). When a person is in an irritable mood, he is more likely to become angry, for example, than is usually the case. In this sense, moods seem to lower the threshold for triggering or awakening emotions. Furthermore, moods are comparable to a horizon- or background-consciousness (Bernet 2006, 49; Ramirez 2015, 98; Husserl 2020b, 65–66; 104–105, 150, 163–165, 192–193). A mood and the affective tone associated with it constitute a kind of “emotive background of experience” (Husserl 2004b, 327; 2020b, 111, 159, 189). This aspect of moods can be illustrated through the figure–ground relation in gestalt psychology: emotions are comparable to figures whereas moods are comparable to the ground insofar as they are similar to a kind of permanent coloring of the affective field of experience.



Moods are ubiquitous in the sense that they permeate the experiences of an individual as a whole and constitute the background of all mental states without exception. Some philosophers claim that every normal human being is always in a mood and that all cognitive or conative states, and not only the class of emotions, are necessarily accompanied by the affective dimension associated with moods. Heidegger and Sartre, for example, consider moods as constituting the existential background of our lives. One of the arguments in favor of the ubiquity of moods rests on cases of sudden changes in one's moods whereby one realizes that one was, before this change occurred, in a state of mind that was not explicitly noticed. When one's mood is radically shifted either into an unexpected elation or a depression, one suddenly becomes aware that one must have always been in some mood. In Husserl's own words, sense feelings constitute the permanent background of consciousness, and each sense feeling influences the whole affective surrounding (*Gefühlsmilieu*), which belongs to the unity of moods. In this sense, affective sensations are parts of a whole, i.e., of the unity of one's mood, and they can consequently influence the entire feeling environment or one's mood (Husserl 2004b, 326; 2020b, 326–327).

Moods determine how one depicts the surrounding world and, more generally, our relation to the world because they provide the tone or color that characterizes the whole of a conscious state of mind and constitute the affective background of the agent's surrounding world (Husserl 2004b, 327). In this, a thesis advocated by Heidegger and later by Sartre can be recognized, according to which moods are an essential condition of an individual's "modes of being tuned" into the world. Husserl merely says that moods create an affective light over the surrounding world, "bathing" the object of feeling, and he argues that there is a kind of spreading light over the perceptual field (1982, 409–410; 2004b, 342–346; 2020, 111, 126–127, 178–181; Lee 1998, 115; Melle 2012, 90, 95; Ramirez 2015, 96–97). But this lighting or coloration is first and foremost related to modes of appearances and indirectly to what appears (Husserl 2004a, 176). When Husserl states that moods provide a coloration or tonality to one's perception of the world, he surmises that this mode of presentation depends in turn on one's apprehension of the surrounding world which confers to perceptions their dark or bright coloration in a similar way as apprehension confers meaning and orientation to sensations. As Husserl already pointed out in the *Logical Investigations*, there is a certain duality in the sensations of pleasure and displeasure which is apprehended and localized both subjectively "as an affective excitation of the psychophysical subject who experiences it" and objectively as an "objective quality" of the event. That is why the "joyful event" appears to us "as if bathed in a rosy gleam" (Husserl 1982, 110), while the "sad event" appears to us clothed and colored with sadness (Husserl 1982, 111; see Lee 1998, 111).

Now, philosophers are divided on the question as to whether moods are intentional (see Lee 1998, 114; Bernet 2006, 50; Melle 2012, 90, 98–99; Ramirez 2015, 97), and Husserl himself seems ambivalent with respect to this issue (2004a, 176, 180; 2020b, 60, 104–105). But considering all the features and properties that he attributes to moods, including a lack of a specific object, duration, and ubiquity to name only a few, and to the extent that moods are not attributable to emotions, it is difficult to identify a form of intentionality that would fit with moods. However, a way out of this difficulty is to consider that emotions' intentional contents and primary contents work together in the experience of moods and fulfill two different but correlative functions. Husserl seems to believe that these types of content, namely sense feelings, moods, and emotions, are always involved in affective life: no moods without acts, no grounds without figures, and vice versa. This is the position he seems to advocate in *Logical Investigations* regarding the Brentano-Hamilton debate on pain: we need both the dimension of sense feelings and the dimension of emotions in order to adequately account for the affective life as a whole.

### Final remarks

This short and schematic study only gives a glimpse of the magnitude and complexity of Husserl's phenomenology of affectivity and its place in his philosophy because it is indeed the affective dimension, with all of its ramifications, that takes us back to the very heart of phenomenology. One of the main difficulties that such a study faces is the non-intentional nature of certain aspects of affective life, such as sense feelings and moods, as opposed to emotions, which are full-fledged intentional states just like presentation and judgment. It raises the important issue of the unity of affective consciousness, which, for lack of space, must be left open in this study. Moreover, Husserl's studies on affectivity have a scope that goes far beyond intentional psychology. Indeed, the class of emotions and their correlates, values, are presupposed not only in ethics but also in Husserl's practical philosophy and in his conception of the cultural world based on the notion of lifeworld. For the primary objects of doxic consciousness and its surrounding world are values related to practical interests (see Melle 1997). This is particularly the case in ethics, understood in a broad sense, which is based on volition and indirectly on emotions and values. That is why the working manuscripts collected in the *Studies* constitute an essential complement to his lectures on ethics when one considers the context of his analyses of affective states and the structure of consciousness in general. Indeed, in the second part of these 1908–1909 lectures, Husserl examines the relationship between theoretical and axiological reason, and it is in this context that he systematically examines not only emotions, but also volition (Melle 2002, 71, 75). Furthermore, in his lectures on ethics, as in the *Studies*, his starting point is again Brentano's philosophical program and his ethics based on the class of emotions and volition (Husserl 2004b, 15). In this regard, it is no coincidence that Husserl approaches the field of ethics in a way similar to Brentano's in his lectures on practical philosophy when one considers that Husserl attended Brentano's lectures during the winter semester of 1884–1885 (Brentano 1952). This raises another interesting issue that is worth investigating regarding Husserl's commitment to several aspects of Brentano's philosophical program, including ethics and descriptive psychology, for example.

Finally, let us underline the relevance and significance of Husserl's research on emotions and volition in light of contemporary debates in the philosophy of mind. In the field of emotions and values, Husserl and Brentano advocated what is today called the attitudinal theory of emotions and the fitting attitude theory of values, which are considered influential theories in current philosophical debates in the study of emotions and values (Deonna and Teroni 2012, 76). Another significant aspect of Husserl's research bears on volition, which is central in his practical philosophy (2004a, 102–125, 2020c; Nenon 1990; Melle 1992, 1997, 2002; Drummond 1995, 2002; Peucker 2015). In this regard, it has been pointed out that Husserl's research on volition has similarities to some aspects of Searle's theory of action (Searle 1983, 84; Peucker 2015, 22). In particular, Husserl's distinction in his Göttingen lectures on ethics between two types of volition is relevant. The first aspect lies in the agent's decision (*Entscheidungswille*), which precedes the actual action and aims at an action to be carried out in the future. This decision can result from a deliberation on the choice of the means, i.e., on the choice of the appropriate action with regard to the realization of one's project. The other form of volition is the will to act (*Handlungswille*), which is related to the agent's bodily movement and therefore to an action understood as an intentional behavior (Husserl 1988, 355–356, 373–374; 2004a, 103; Melle 2002). This notion of will involves a form of practical intentionality – an *intention* to do something in the future and to act *with the intention* of achieving something. Indeed, Husserl's distinction is similar to Searle's distinction between prior intention and intention in action. Prior intention is the result of deliberation about ends and means, desires and beliefs and takes

its name from the fact that it is prior to action and marks the agent's commitment to carry out his plan in the future. On the other hand, intention in action, also called trying, is simply the intention with which the agent tries to carry out his plan by means of his action.

### Notes

- \* Thanks to Thomas Vongehr and the Husserl Archives–Leuven for the permission to use, in this study, the manuscripts of Husserl's *Studien zur Struktur des Bewußtseins*, which have recently been published in the *Husserliana* series.
- 1 In his discussions of Geiger's article "Das Bewusstsein von Gefühlen" (1911) (2020b, 143–144), Husserl criticizes Geiger's interpretation of sense feelings in the *Logical Investigations*, which he assimilates to Brentano's theory of emotions, and he thus confirms the importance, in the *Studies*, of this distinction in the class of affective states between emotions and sense feelings (and the whole class of primary contents) (2020b, 149).

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