



Motivation and Horizon

Phenomenal Intentionality in Husserl

Philip J. Walsh

Fordham University
pwalsh03@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper argues for a Husserlian account of phenomenal intentionality. Experience is intentional insofar as it presents a mind-independent, objective world. Its doing so is a matter of the way it hangs together, its having a certain structure. But in order for the intentionality in question to be properly understood as phenomenal intentionality, this structure must inhere in experience as a phenomenal feature. Husserl's concept of horizon designates this intentionality-bestowing experiential structure, while his concept of motivation designates the unique phenomenal character of this structure as it is experientially lived through. The way experience hangs together is itself a phenomenal feature of experience.

Keywords

Husserl – phenomenal intentionality – horizon – motivation – phenomenology – intentionality

1 Introduction

The idea of “phenomenal intentionality” has come to occupy a central place in philosophy of mind. Rather than explaining the intentionality of mental

states in terms of naturalistic tracking relations that obtain between brain states and the world, the “phenomenal intentionality research program” (PIRP) seeks to explain intentionality in terms of the phenomenal character of conscious experience.¹ For those who find PIRP promising, this amounts to identifying “the kind of phenomenal character whose appearance injects intentionality into the world” (Kriegel 2013b, 17). In other words, we seek the “phenomenological signature of directedness” (*ibid.*). In this paper, I argue for a Husserlian account of phenomenal intentionality. We can explain how intentionality is grounded in the phenomenal character of experience by attending to the subjective and temporal nature of experience, and the subtle but pervasive form of phenomenal character that allows us to so attend.

It should not come as a surprise that the founding figure of the phenomenological tradition offers a detailed account of how the phenomenal and intentional aspects of experience are related. Indeed, one might understand Husserl’s corpus as a sustained investigation of phenomenal intentionality. My strategy here is to trace the development of Husserl’s notion of horizon, which many have recognized as the key to Husserl’s understanding of intentionality. There is an outstanding exegetical difficulty, however, when it comes to understanding how the concept of horizon denotes *both* phenomenal and intentional features of experience. I address this difficulty by arguing that the genesis of Husserl’s notion of horizon lies in his concept of motivation, which he introduces in the first chapter of the First Investigation of the *Logical Investigations* (Husserl 2001a vol. 1) and plays a central role in his analyses of time-consciousness and passive synthesis. Stated briefly and preliminarily: Husserl’s notion of horizon is the key to his theory of intentionality, and his notion of motivation is key to his account of horizon.

In the first part (§2) of the paper I explain why horizon is the key to intentionality. For Husserl, the intentionality of experience is grounded in its having a certain structure. His concept of horizon denotes this structure. The next part of the paper (§§2.1-2.2) goes on to argue that this intentionality-bestowing structure, however, is a structure of *experience* only insofar as it is grounded in a specific form of phenomenal character—which I describe as

¹ See the papers collected in (Kriegel 2013a) for a comprehensive introduction to the phenomenal intentionality research program (PIRP), which has its origins in (Horgan and Tienson 2002) and (Loar 2003).

the “motivational” character of experience. Attending to the motivational character of experience reveals the inherently processive and subjective ontology of consciousness (§3). It is possible to understand the horizon-structure of experience in non-phenomenal terms, and thus to conceive of a “motivational zombie”, i.e., a being that is one’s phenomenal duplicate in all respects except for the motivational character of experience. Conceiving such a being is exceedingly difficult since the motivational character of experience is subtle yet pervasive. In the penultimate section of the paper (§4) I flesh this out in more detail. The difference between you and your motivational zombie duplicate can be summarized as the difference between your experience *having* a horizon-structure and your duplicate’s experience *being* so structured. Grasping this distinction leads to an appreciation of Husserl’s systematicity: understanding the intentionality of consciousness requires an integrated account of the ontological structure and phenomenal character of experience.

2 The Horizon-Structure and Husserl’s Theory of Intentionality

Though the term ‘horizon’ starts appearing regularly in some of Husserl’s early work, it is widely agreed that Husserl works out his mature theory of horizon later in his career.² In a footnote in *Formal and Transcendental Logic*, he remarks that “In the *Logical Investigations* I still lacked the theory of horizon-intentionality, the all-determining role of which was first brought out in the *Ideas*” (Husserl 1969, 199 fn. 1). To use one of Husserl’s primary examples in *Ideas I*, suppose you are visually attending to a blossoming apple tree as you stroll through a garden (Husserl 2014, §88). If you reflect on this experience, you find that the whole tree is never visually available to you all at once. Rather, a specific profile of the tree is all that is ever visually available. Furthermore, the way you experience the sequence of profiles that visually present the tree is highly structured. As you walk around the tree and bring new profiles into view, these profiles fulfill your anticipations of how the tree will

² See (Yoshimi 2016) for a quantitative analysis of key “term families” across Husserl’s corpus. His analysis shows “peak usage [of the term ‘horizon’ and its variants] between 1930 and Husserl’s death in 1938” (*ibid.*, 53).

continue to appear. If, as you walked, you had suddenly realized that the “tree” was a very convincing façade, you would have been surprised insofar as your perceptual anticipations were frustrated. The “horizon” of experience is this structure of anticipations. What Husserl calls the “sense” [*Sinn*] or “noema” of an experience is the rule governing the structure of its horizon.³

Phenomenology proceeds through reflective exercises such as this in order to arrive at the most general structures of consciousness. Reflecting on the way one experiences “this blossoming tree here in space” allows one to abstract from the particularities of this specific tree and this specific experience and discern an essential structure of visual perception in general: that perception of physical objects in space is essentially “one-sided” – i.e., it is an essential structure of perceptual experience that objects are given to us through a series of profiles and never all at once. Upon further reflection, we find that the horizon-structure is not just found in perceptual experience, but is an essential feature of experience in general. This means that insofar as experience is intentionally directed at some object (in the broad sense of ‘object’), it essentially includes the possibility of exploring further properties and relations of that object. This paper will remain focused on perceptual experience since it is the paradigmatic site of Husserl’s investigations into the horizon-structure of intentionality.

Following Brentano, Husserl held intentionality to be the defining characteristic of conscious experience.⁴ Thus, we practice “intentional analysis” of experience by providing precise descriptions of its content, or “sense”, i.e. the *specific manner* or *way* in which the experience is an experience *of* a specific object. As you walk through the garden looking at the blossoming apple tree, the content of your perceptual experience is something like “this tree” or “this apple tree” or “this blossoming apple tree”. The possibility of these dif-

³ This characterization follows Dagfinn Føllesdal (2006). There, Føllesdal refers to the “structure that is associated with each act, corresponding to all the ‘anticipations’ we have about the act’s object” as the “noema” of an experience (*ibid.*, 107). Though I am referring to this structure as “horizon” rather than “noema”, I do not take myself to be saying something different.

⁴ I say “defining characteristic” here rather than “essence” since, although Husserl often speaks of “consciousness as intentional experience,” he also speaks of consciousness as non-intentional at various points, e.g. in the case of hyletic data (Husserl 2001a vol. 2, Fifth Investigation, Ch. 2).

ferent descriptions is a virtue of Husserl's theory of intentionality, and is due to his notion of horizon. For what Husserl (1960, 46) found is that the way objects show up to us depends on the specific way that experience blends together "explicit" and "implicit" contents:

Intentional analysis is guided by the fundamental cognition that, as a consciousness, every cogito is indeed (in the broadest sense) a meaning of its meant, but that, at any moment, this something meant is more – something meant with something more – than what is meant at that moment "explicitly" ... This *intending-beyond-itself*, which is implicit in any consciousness, must be considered an essential moment of it.

Individuating the "explicit" content of perceptual experience, or that which is "explicitly meant" in a perceptual experience, depends on how finely grained we make our descriptions. Standing fifty meters away, I see "that tree" on the other side of the garden. My thematic focus is directed at that specific tree. As I approach the tree, I recognize it to be an apple tree, and upon closer inspection I see that it is currently in bloom. We can isolate any given timeslice of this continuous perceptual episode and individuate an explicit content based on the structure of anticipations delineated at that moment. For example, when I only saw the tree as "that tree" from afar, the structure of my anticipations regarding how the tree will continue to appear, what further features I could bring into view, and so forth, was much more open-ended than when I saw "this blossoming apple tree". At this later phase of the episode the structure of my anticipations is much narrower and specific to what I know about blossoming apple trees.

Thus, for each way we individuate the explicit content of the experience there will be a resultant structure of anticipations – the "horizon" of the experience. Furthermore, this horizon-structure is not a merely supplemental feature that enriches a self-standing, discreetly individuated intentional content. Rather, the horizon is constitutive of the content. To individuate an explicit content of experience just is to *situate* it within a horizon of further possible experience. The horizon-structure can thus be thought of in terms of coherence. Experience has content insofar as whatever particular moment of it we isolate coheres with its temporal neighbors.

Intentional analysis of experience is, therefore, necessarily horizon analysis. The horizon in which a particular moment of experience is situated is a "fundamental trait [*Grundzug*] of intentionality" (Husserl 1960, 44). The phe-

nomenological analysis of the intentionality of experience is to “explicate” what is implicit in it (*Ibid.*, 45):

We can ask any horizon what ‘lies in it’, we can *explicate* or unfold it, and ‘uncover’ the potentialities of conscious life at a particular time. Precisely thereby we uncover the *objective sense meant implicitly* in the actual cogito....

In their influential book on Husserl’s theory of intentionality, David Woodruff Smith and Ronald McIntyre (1982) use the idiom of possible-world semantics developed by Jaakko Hintikka (1969) to offer a precise way of understanding what it is to “explicate” or “unfold” what is implicit in experience. On their analysis, the horizon of a perceptual experience A, with explicit content C, is to be understood as the set of possible worlds compatible with A’s being veridical. These are all of the possible scenarios, or further possible perceptual acts, in which C remains constant and is subject to further property determinations and relations to other objects (Smith and McIntyre 1982, Ch. 6). One may “explicate”, or “unfold”, the intentional content of an experience by describing the total set of further possible experiences compatible with what is explicit in a particular moment of experience (Husserl 1960, 45).

Smith and McIntyre’s account is a prescient reminder that phenomenology is not simply the practice of cataloguing the “what it’s like” of experience. All too often in contemporary philosophy of mind the term “phenomenology” is used synonymously with “qualia”, as in “the experience had a reddish phenomenology” or a “squarish phenomenology”.⁵ More recently, A.D. Smith (2008, 324) has echoed Smith and McIntyre on the significance of Husserl’s notion of horizon with regard to this impoverished understanding of phenomenology:

Phenomenology is not, as certain analytical philosophers seem to think, just a matter of cataloguing how things seem to you. Phenomenological research is *difficult* because it is, in large part, a matter of “uncovering ... implicit intentionality”, of “uncovering pre-delineated horizons” (Husserl 1960, 64). It is this above all, Husserl stresses, that is distinctive of

⁵ See, e.g., (Schwitzgebel 2008) and (Kriegel 2013b) for this kind of usage.

the ‘analysis’ of experience that phenomenology involves: *intentional analysis* (*ibid.*, 46).⁶

The promise of Husserlian phenomenology as a theory of meaning is that horizon analysis is a way of analyzing the intentionality of experience that captures far more nuance than “purely semantic” theories (Smith and McIntyre 1982, 220). The set of possible worlds that constitutes the horizon of a given experience is generated on the basis of “a principle of production grounded in the knowing subject,” and this gives us something “which possible-worlds semantics does not supply” (Hintikka and Harvey 1984, 205). That is, the set of possible worlds that constitute the horizon of an experience is not simply the set of worlds *logically* compatible with the experience, but rather the set of “motivated” possibilities. A possibility is “motivated” in this sense insofar as it is predelineated by the subject’s background experiences, beliefs, and conceptual framework. To use another famous example from *Ideas I*, as I regard this table top, with its legs hidden from me, the explicit content of my perception motivates a specific structure of anticipations based on the the table having four legs and not ten legs. Its having ten legs is logically possible, but not a motivated possibility given my background beliefs, experiences, and concepts regarding tables (Husserl 2014, §140).

Importantly, the notion of motivated possibilities operative in Smith and McIntyre’s explication of Husserl’s notion of horizon belongs to *intentional* analyses of experience, and not to analyses of the phenomenal features of experience. That is, the horizon of motivated possibilities—i.e., possible worlds compatible with the explicit content of the experience—is available upon reflection, upon analysis of an experience’s meaning, and not a part of the explicit, or strictly “self-evident” content of the experience (Smith and McIntyre 1982, 303 & 304):

We should not think of completely determined possible worlds, or possible individuals completely determined in possible worlds, as themselves being given in consciousness or as being a part of the phenomenological content of an act. They are not, so to speak, right there on the

⁶ Citations within this quotation are modified to match existing references to Husserl’s *Cartesian Meditations* in the rest of this paper.

subject's mind awaiting phenomenological description. Indeed, they could not be.

... [T]he possible worlds and possible objects correlated with an act or its Sinn constitute only a structure of ideal limits or boundaries that demarcate the intentional content of the act.

Working in the “west-coast” phenomenological tradition of Smith and McIntyre,⁷ Yoshimi (2009, 124–125) provides a succinct explanation of what it means for the motivated horizon of an experience to be “implicit”:

[H]orizon expectations or intentions are not explicit: they do not involve actively thinking “here is what I expect.” Rather, they correspond to a kind of counter-factual or dispositional relationship between possible actions, perceptions, and degrees of fulfillment or frustration.... All my tacit expectation amounts to is a relationship between what happens and the degree to which I am surprised or not.

In other words, the horizon-structure constitutive of the intentional content of an experience is an implicit feature of experience insofar as it is not a phenomenal feature. The “explicit” content of an experience is that content which is “right there on the subject's mind awaiting phenomenological description” (Smith and McIntyre 1982, 303), while the intentionality-constituting implicit horizon of the experience is only accessible upon further theoretical consideration.

2.1 *Horizon as Non-Phenomenal Structure of Experience*

Understanding Husserl's doctrine of horizon in this way results in a theory of phenomenal intentionality that has been developed more recently by Katalin Farkas (2013). For Farkas, the phenomenal character constitutive of any given

⁷ “West-coast” or “California” phenomenology is a more-or-less coherent school of thought originating in Føllesdal's “Fregean” interpretation of Husserl's notion of noema (Føllesdal 1969), and prominently elaborated in (Dreyfus 1982) and (Smith and McIntyre 1982). See (Yoshimi, Tolley, and D.W. Smith forthcoming) for a history of California phenomenology.

moment of experience does not, in and of itself, present us with a mind-independent world. That is, the sensory phenomenology of what we have been referring to as the “explicit” content of a perceptual experience – that specific visual profile as it is visually manifest to me in a specific moment of my experience – does not yield intentional content. Rather, perceptual intentionality obtains “when these sensory features are received by the subject in a highly organized and predictable structure, one that responds to actions and further inquiry in a systematic way” (Farkas 2013, 100). Phenomenal intentionality is not a matter of the sensory phenomenal character of experience being intrinsically intentional. It is a matter of “the way these features hang together and respond to movement and inquiry” (*ibid.*).

The advantage of this view is that it allows us to retain a notion of “sensation”, or “qualia”, or what Husserl called “*hyle*”. Intentionality is not injected into the world on the basis of these “raw” sensations alone, but rather in virtue of how they are structured. This is advantageous because it lets us make sense of the possibility of two experiences having overlapping or identical sensory phenomenal character but different intentional content. Kenneth Williford (2013) makes the same point in his defense of Husserl’s notion of *hyle*. Many Husserl scholars have argued that Husserl abandoned his early view of raw sensory matter being animated by some kind of intentionality-bestowing interpretative activity.⁸ The worry is that “Husserl is committed to something like an utterly amorphous given,” and thus that the sense-bestowing interpretive activity of the subject is completely unconstrained (Williford 2013, 509). But even if we maintain a “holistic ontology of sensory qualities,” as Gurwitsch did, we still need some sort of notion of *hyle* or raw sensory data in order to ground our ability to discern qualitative similarities and differences across a diverse range of perceptual experiences (*ibid.*). Thus, even though “hyletic data come to us in the context of a pregiven order and are, as it were, primed for intentional animation,” the fact that these “animations sometimes do fluctuate while the hyletic data remain type (and sometimes token) identical is sufficient to ground the distinction” between raw sensory features lacking intentional content and sensory features possessing

⁸ See, e.g., (Sokolowski 1964); (Gallagher 2003); (Zahavi 2005); (Dahlstrom 2007); and (Crowell 2013).

intentionality in virtue of occurring within a coherent structure (*ibid.*, 508-509).

Consider an illustrative example noted by Farkas (2013, 113):

Sensory substitution systems provide another example of how the structure of sensory features creates an object for the senses. Tactile-visual sensory substitution systems (originally described by Paul Bach-Y-Rita) convert visual stimuli to tactile stimuli. The subject has a camera mounted on his forehead, which records a black-and-white image of an object in front of him. The image is converted into tactile stimulus (for example pressure or vibration) on a plate which is in contact with the subject's back or tongue. After some practice, subjects learn to locate the position of things recorded by the camera (Bach-Y-Rita *et al.* 1969). There must be some difference between random twinges on the back and the stimulus provided by the plate converting the camera's image. The suggestion is that the orderly structure of the latter is responsible for the presentation of a new object.

This example makes the same point intended by Husserl through his notion of *hyle* and defended by Williford: "The same sensational feature can be a mere sensation on one occasion, and a presentation of an external object on the other" (Farkas 2013, 113). Thus, we can understand the horizon-structure of experience, and therefore the intentionality of experience, as a non-phenomenal structure. The phenomenal character of perceptual experience consists of complex sensory arrays. These sensory arrays are not intrinsically intentional. Intentionality is injected into the world in virtue of these sensory arrays being temporally ordered in a highly structured way. This structure itself is not a phenomenal feature of experience. The distinction, introduced in the introduction of this paper, between experience *having* a horizon-structure and experience *being* so structured is the difference between the horizon-structure inhering in experience as a phenomenal feature versus the phenomenal features of experience occurring within a certain formal structure that is not itself a phenomenal feature. As our explication of Husserl's notion of horizon stands thus far, the intentionality of perceptual experience obtains in virtue of the latter.

2.2 *Phenomenal Horizons*

At this point we are ready to assess the exegetical difficulty surrounding Husserl's notion of horizon mentioned in the introduction. Experience has intentional content in virtue of its horizon-structure. The horizon-structure is the structure of further possible experiences compatible with the explicit content of a particular moment of an experience. But, as we have just seen, the horizon of any given experiential moment is too robust to plausibly be understood as being (or corresponding to) a phenomenal feature (or set of phenomenal features) of that moment. On the picture that emerges from Smith and McIntyre (1982), only the "explicit" content that is "right there" before the mind is plausibly understood as being (or corresponding to) a phenomenal feature (or set of phenomenal features) of the experience. The horizon-structure is "implicit" in the experience, and thus while essential to the intentionality of the experience, is not essential to its phenomenal character.

How, then, are we really making any progress on a Husserlian theory of phenomenal intentionality? Recall, phenomenal intentionality is a form of intentionality identical to or grounded in a specific form of phenomenal character. We are seeking "the kind of phenomenal character whose appearance injects intentionality into the world" (Kriegel 2013, 17). Therefore, if Husserl's notion of horizon is essential to his theory of intentionality, but the horizon-structure of an experience is non-phenomenal, then Husserl does not appear to offer a theory of phenomenal intentionality. It could be said that this is still a theory of phenomenal intentionality along the lines developed by Farkas (2013), but it still does not give us an account of the *phenomenal signature* of intentionality.

We would be overly hasty, however, to conclude that Husserl does not locate intentionality in the phenomenal character of experience. For Husserl's notion of horizon does, in fact, have an experiential correlate. Although the set of possible experiences that constitute the horizon of an experience is far too robust to literally "appear" explicitly in the experience, there is a distinct aspect of the phenomenal character of experience that corresponds to its horizon-structure. Husserl located this unique form of phenomenal character early in his career in his discussion of "motivation" in the first chapter of the First Investigation of his *Logical Investigations*. Roughly characterized, "motivation", for Husserl, denotes the phenomenal character constitutive of awareness of indication relations. X indicates Y insofar as a subject's awareness of X *motivates* an awareness of Y. The phenomenal character in question is an *affective* "felt-belonging" between discreet contents of experience that

can be parsed upon reflection. One's perception of smoke on the horizon motivates one's judgment that there is fire. But on a much more basic and pervasive level, within any given experiential moment of a perceptual episode, the currently visible explicit profile of the object motivates a felt awareness of the immanent horizon of subsequent profiles likely to ensue. In other words, the occurrently available perceptual profile of an object is *experienced as belonging* to the profiles that immediately preceded it and are likely to immediately follow. More needs to be said to clarify Husserl's concept of motivation, but as an initial characterization it suffices to understand it as designating the phenomenal character constitutive of one's lived experience of indication relations. And most importantly for our discussion here, the horizon-structure of experience *as it is lived through* is ultimately a structure of indication relations.

There is an apparent tension, therefore, in Husserl's concept of horizon insofar as there is an apparent tension in his concept of motivation. The intentional content of an experience that obtains in virtue of its motivated horizon of possibility obviously exceeds its phenomenal content, i.e., there is no corresponding phenomenal property for each of the motivated possibilities that constitute the horizon of the experience's explicit content. But the felt associative pull of motivation is a phenomenal property of experience, as Husserl argued in his early studies of indication.

This tension, however, is only apparent. Husserl understood from an early point in his career that any attempt to individuate the explicit content of experience is ultimately an abstraction from the lived reality of the stream or flux of consciousness. The implicit horizon of an experience is "contained in" its explicit content. Experience blends the implicit with the explicit. Husserl found this to be an essential aspect of experience, even when examining very basic perceptual experience in its most reduced form.

We practice phenomenology by performing the "phenomenological reduction," which involves "bracketing" or "putting out of action" the guiding assumption of the natural attitude, namely that the world that appears in experience is a mind-independent reality. We do not actively doubt that this is so, we simply acknowledge that we cannot but perceive it this way. After placing all existential and theoretical assumptions out of play, we inquire after the "perceived as such" – i.e., what is "purely immanent to the experience" – what remains as the "phenomenological residue" (Husserl 2014, §97). We can then carefully analyze what remains in "pure givenness". So, to take our previous example of a visual experience of an apple tree, we can notice

that a specific momentary visual profile of the tree is “given” insofar as a specific array of shape and color is visually manifest. Contemporary philosophers of mind unacquainted with Husserl usually take “phenomenological analysis” to end here, with the cataloguing of the visual (and other) “qualia” that are found in an experience.

But Husserl found more. The horizon of an experience is not simply a network of counterfactual *dispositions* governing the degree to which I would be surprised if my experience did not proceed according to certain (non-phenomenal, dispositional) anticipations. Rather, Husserl found that the horizon-structure is phenomenally manifest, somehow, within the pure givenness of the phenomenological reduction. As early as 1907 in *The Idea of Phenomenology*, Husserl reports being “taken aback” with the realization that “*in the midst of pure givenness*” (i.e., reduced experience) all sorts of transcendencies lie hidden (1964, 8). These “transcendencies” are the motivated possibilities co-intended by what is explicitly presented. This is *not* a matter of forming beliefs (dispositions) or making explicit judgments about what is likely to follow on the basis of a certain perceptual profile being visually manifest. The structure of anticipations that constitutes the horizon of an experience is found *within* the phenomenological reduction, and thus cannot be a product of forming further beliefs or thoughts. Rather, objects *appear as being more* than what is visually available at a given moment. To say that this “apparent more” is an *implicit* aspect of what is *explicitly* visually manifest is *not* to say that it is not constitutive of the experience’s phenomenal character.

All of this is to say that Husserl’s “discovery” of the horizon-structure of experience occurs within the phenomenological reduction, and thus is a phenomenal feature of experience. The non-phenomenal sense of motivation in Smith and McIntyre’s (1982) explication of the horizon-structure of experience derives from a more basic phenomenal sense of motivation. As I have argued elsewhere, Husserl’s understanding of motivation in this phenomenal sense evolved throughout his career (Walsh 2017). He initially seems to understand it as the “phenomenal glue” that binds discreet contents of experience that are lived-through in a unitary way, and can be analytically parsed upon reflection. Later, he discusses motivation as a pervasive affective force that orients the flow of experience.

In what follows I argue that Husserl’s notion of motivation designates the “phenomenal bedrock” of consciousness. Husserl’s characterizations of the deepest microstructure of experience – *internal time-consciousness* – are ul-

timately reflections on its motivational character. At this level of phenomenological analysis we find that the horizon-structure of experience – and thus the intentionality of experience – inheres in experience as a phenomenal feature. The horizon-structure of experience is *lived* in the form of felt-belonging of the content of one experiential moment to its temporal neighbors, and his concept of motivation is meant to designate the phenomenal character of this felt-belonging. *Pace* the account developed above through our discussion of Smith and McIntyre (1982) and Farkas (2013), experience does not merely occur within the confines of a non-phenomenal horizon-structure; rather, experience, as it is lived through, *has* a horizon-structure. The way experience hangs together is itself a phenomenal feature of experience.

3 Reaching Phenomenological Bedrock

Husserl calls motivation “the fundamental law of the spiritual [as opposed to natural] world” in *Ideas II* (Husserl 1989, 223). At various places throughout his corpus he characterizes forms of experience such as thought, perception, and empathy as “web[s] of immanent motivations” (*ibid.*, 238).⁹ Even more impressively, at one point Husserl claims that the temporal unity of consciousness is a unity of motivation (*ibid.*, 239). Though he does not provide a straightforward argument, we can reconstruct an account of how motivation operates at this deepest level of consciousness. On the picture that emerges, the motivational character of experience depends on the essentially subjective and processive nature of consciousness. That is, conscious experience is necessarily *had* or *owned* by a subject, and any attempt to isolate a discreet temporal moment is necessarily an abstraction from its more basic mode of existence.

3.1 *Motivation and the Processive Nature of Consciousness*

Husserl’s account of the deep microstructure of experience takes the form of investigations into its temporal structure and, later, into what he called its “laws of genesis”. Laws of genesis are the regularities that govern “the se-

⁹ See (Walsh 2013; Walsh 2017) for extensive discussion.

quence of particular events in the lived stream of experience,” and in turn, “the formation of apperceptions” (Husserl 2001b, 624). “Apperception” is simply Husserl’s term for the feature of experience, discussed above, whereby explicitly given profiles implicitly point beyond themselves. Beginning with mundane experiences of perceptual objects, Husserl digs deeper and deeper into the basic laws of experiential becoming by isolating temporal moments of finer and finer grain. Just as a specific occurrent visual profile of an object points beyond itself toward a horizon of further profiles, any moment of experience we isolate points beyond itself toward a possible continuation. In other words, it is not actually possible to consider a “now point” of experience in isolation (Husserl 2001b, 626):

[W]e cannot even conceive of a consciousness that would not go beyond the strict present in its essential flux from presence to new presences; consciousness is inconceivable without retentional and protentional horizons, without a co-consciousness (although a necessarily non-intuitive one) of the past of consciousness and an anticipation of an approaching consciousness (no matter how indeterminate it may be). Thus if something “arises out of something” at all in the stream of consciousness, then apperceptions necessarily arise from apperceptions.

This may seem too strong. Surely a temporal moment of experience is *conceivable* as independent from a certain temporal sequence to which it belongs. As we analyzed our visual experience of the apple tree we spoke of explicit profiles that visually present the tree in a given instant of an overall experiential episode. Husserl’s point here, however, is that when we speak of temporally isolated moments of consciousness with discreetly individuated contents, we are speaking at a formal level of abstraction that is not faithful to experience as it is experienced, as it is lived through.

At this formal level we can formulate the most basic genetic laws that regulate the flow of experience: simultaneity and succession. When we seek the most basic building blocks of conscious experience, “the sensuous data, on which we can always turn our regard,” we realize that “[t]he result of temporal constitution is only a universal form of order of succession and a form of co-existence of all immanent data. But form is nothing without content” (Husserl 1973, §16). In other words, yes, we can conceive of an isolated now-point of consciousness just as we can conceive of the “universal form” of con-

consciousness, i.e., its most basic laws of genesis, in terms “immanent data” that “co-exist” (simultaneity) or occur in an “order of succession”. Our ability to discern these most basic laws, however, is grounded in what we actually intuit within the phenomenological reduction. We do not intuit the “pure form” of consciousness, but rather the way this form manifests through the immanent content available to phenomenological description. Thus, “form is nothing without content.”

The phenomenology of internal time consciousness, therefore, turns out to be an analysis of how motivation functions at the deepest level of experiential genesis, since motivation operates at the level of content whereas the thin formal notions of simultaneity and succession only operate at the level of form. This is what Husserl is getting at when he says things like: “[T]he stream of consciousness is a stream of a constant genesis; it is not a mere series, but a development” (Husserl 2001b, 628), and “Consciousness is an incessant process of becoming. But it is not a mere succession of lived-experiences” (*ibid.*, 270). The genesis of sense in the flow of lived experience (i.e., the manner in which a temporal phase of experience yields intentional content) requires more than a series or succession of data. As Farkas (2013) points out, the data must “hang together” a certain way. For Husserl, this “hanging together” is a phenomenologically palpable aspect of experience. It is the motivational character of experience whereby any temporal moment we isolate is always experienced as belonging to a past and being-toward a future. The “alteration of the Now into a Now that is just past” is “the necessary transition from impression into retention,” and is experienced as “the relation of conditionality obtaining between the motivating and the motivated” (Husserl 2001b, 644).

Husserl’s “discovery” of the horizon-structure of experience, therefore, occurs when zooming in on the temporal structure of experience within the phenomenological reduction. We can *infer* that the most basic laws of genesis are simultaneity and succession, but we do not *find* these formal features of experience within the immanent data laid bare by the reduction. What we find are contents that always-already belong to preceding and subsequent contents. This is what it means to say that apperception “encompasses every self-giving, and thus every intuitive consciousness” (Husserl 2001b, 625) and that “every motivation is apperception” (*ibid.*, fn. 98). Conscious experience, at its deepest and most basic level is not the mere succession of contents. Rather, experience *transcends* its immanent content in that the concrete “what” of any given time-slice is always experienced as belonging to or coher-

ing with its temporal neighbors. In other words, we arrive at the most basic laws of time-consciousness by way of attending to the motivational character of the most reduced experiences.¹⁰

3.2 *Motivation and the Subjective Nature of Consciousness*

A mere succession of experiential episodes would constitute a processive stream of consciousness, but would not suffice for consciousness to be a “becoming” or a “history” in Husserl’s sense. The processive nature of experience alone cannot account for the unique “felt-belonging” phenomenal character of motivation. Motivation, it turns out, is a function of both the processive nature of consciousness and the inherent subjectivity of consciousness (Husserl 2001b, 626):

If we consider here that every present consciousness (every expanse of presence belonging to the stream of lived-experience) not only is, but is “perceived,” that is, is present now to consciousness in an impressional manner, then we also mean that an “apperception” lies in every present consciousness.

This characterization adds another component to the account we have been reconstructing. As we have already noted, any given experiential time-slice that we isolate essentially includes an implicit pointing beyond itself in the form of its felt motivational character – i.e., every “expanse of presence” is an apperception. But here Husserl tells us that this is just another way of saying that any given experiential moment that we isolate “not only is,” but “is perceived.” That is, consciousness is not only consciousness *of* something, but is also consciousness *for* someone.¹¹

To understand this correlation we must examine the ontological structure of experience using the mereology that Husserl discusses in the Third Investigation of his *Logical Investigations*. Mereology is important for phenomeno-

¹⁰ While I have focused primarily on the relation of motivation and temporality in (Husserl 2001b), Izchak Miller (1984) provides a valuable discussion of Husserl’s theory of time-consciousness and perceptual experience as discussed in (Husserl 1991).

¹¹ Several have argued that phenomenally conscious episodes instantiate a three-place relation: *x* represents *y* to *z* (Horgan and Kriegel 2008; Georgalis 2006; Kriegel 2003).

logical analysis because when we analyze the contents and structure of experience, we speak of its parts and how they inhere in a whole. “Independent” contents are those that can be presented to consciousness separately from what happens to be co-occurring in a given experience. We can conceive of a unicorn, for example, since the body of a horse and a horn are “*intuitively ‘separated’* contents, contents [which may be] *relieved from* or *cut apart from* associated contents” (Husserl 2001a vol. 2, 14). An independent content is “separable” insofar as it can “make itself count on its own, and stand forth independently” (*ibid.*). “Dependent” contents, on the other hand, cannot be experienced independently of the complex in which they inhere. Such contents are those “which *blend* with their associates, or which *flow undividedly over* into them” (*ibid.*).¹²

Using Husserl’s notions of “separability” and “blendedness” to analyze inner-time consciousness can help us understand why the motivational character of consciousness implicates its subjective structure. That is, properly understanding the motivational character of the temporal structure of experience requires understanding experience as owned by a subject. As our analysis will show, any given time-slice of experience can be treated as a separable, independent piece that includes a “point of difference” from its temporal neighbors and thus can “count on its own, and stand forth independently”. It is equally true, however, that any given time-slice of experience is *necessarily inseparable* – i.e., “blended” – with its temporal neighbors. Understanding this essential blendedness, as it turns out, just is to understand the sense in which the motivational character of consciousness depends on the essential subjectivity of consciousness.

In order to elucidate this abstract discussion of separability and blendedness, imagine two artificially austere examples of possible conscious experience:

Change:

You are seated in a brightly lit room staring forward at a uniformly white wall. Your visual field is a completely uniform white expanse.

¹² Husserl distinguishes between independent and dependent parts in different ways in the Third Investigation. For the purpose of this paper, we focus on making the distinction in terms of “separability” versus “blendedness”.

Suddenly all of the lights go out and your visual field instantly changes from uniform whiteness to uniform blackness.

Continuity:

You are seated in the same room, this time with your eyes closed. The room is completely silent but for a steady tone (say, middle C) that perdures indefinitely.

These two examples are limit cases for Husserl's theses about separability and blendedness.

Let us first consider *Change*, and focus solely on the visual aspect of this experiential episode. This is our limit case for the claim that any given time-slice we isolate is essentially blended with its temporal neighbors. That is, we have a case in which it seems possible to isolate two time-slices that are completely separable, there is no overlap in their experiential contents – remember, we are only considering the visual aspect of the experience. When the lights go out, we go from time-slice t_1 , at which the visual field is completely and uniformly white, to time-slice t_2 , at which the visual field is completely and uniformly black.

Now, when we consider *Continuity*, and focus solely on the auditory aspect of the experience, we find a limit case for separability, i.e. the claim that any given time-slice we isolate can be made to stand forth as a separable piece on the basis of some point of difference with its temporal neighbors. *Continuity* seems to give us a case in which there are no points of difference between any two moments, t_1 and t_2 . Any characterization we give of t_1 will be identical to our characterization of t_2 (remember, we are focused solely on the auditory aspect of this experiential episode).

As it turns out, however, *Change* includes an ineliminable aspect of blendedness, and *Continuity* includes an ineliminable aspect of separability. In the case of *Change*, our characterization of the visual field at t_1 (uniformly white) completely differs from our characterization of the visual field at t_2 (uniformly black). Our characterization of the black visual expanse at t_2 , however, will include at least one common element with our characterization of t_1 insofar as my experiencing of the change was an experience of a *self-same visual expanse* at one moment being white and at the next moment being black. In other words, no matter how radical a change in the experiential field I conceive, it is always a change in *the same* experiential field, and thus an element of continuity, and thereby a residue of blendedness, re-

mains. As Husserl puts it, “*An individual item already lacks separation from all other items if there is a single item from which it does not stand forth in relief*” (Husserl 2001a vol. 2, 15). In other words, for any experiential time-slice we isolate, there will be at least one way in which it does not stand forth in relief from its temporal neighbors. Even the most sudden and radically distinct changes in the field of consciousness are experienced as changes in a self-same field of experience – i.e., are *motivated*. This obtains in virtue of experience being temporally blended all the way down, which is possible if experience is experience *for* a subject.

In the case of *Continuity*, on the other hand, our characterization of the auditory field at any two discreet time-slices t_1 and t_2 would seem to be identical. As Husserl puts it, “*The case of exact likeness of any such corresponding moments shall here count as a legitimate limiting case of continuity, i.e. as a continuous ‘passing over into self’*” (Husserl 2001a vol. 2, 14). T_1 and t_2 are, however, separable. There will be the slightest difference in the characterization of these two time-slices insofar as our description of t_2 will include a “thicker” retentive profile than t_1 . That is, our characterization of the auditory field at t_1 will be “middle C” whereas at t_2 it will be “middle C that has perdured for t_{1+n} ” where n stands for however much time has elapsed between t_1 and t_2 . Thus there is an identifiable point of difference that makes t_2 stand forth as separable from t_1 , however insignificant and difficult to notice. And even if this point of difference is not noticeable to naïve introspection, it still stands, ontologically, as a point of difference that can be invoked in order to count t_1 and t_2 as separable.

The point holds in virtue of the same feature that makes any two time-slices of experience necessarily blended: the subjective structure of experience. The fact that experience is always experience within a self-same field guarantees that any temporal moment we isolate will be, in principle, both separable from and blended with its subsequent neighbor. They will be separable since there will always be a “point of difference” that makes the subsequent moment “stand forth in relief”: that the subsequent temporal moment includes a thicker retentive profile in virtue of both moments belonging to the same ongoing experiential field. The subsequent temporal moment, however, will always be blended with its predecessor since there will necessarily be “*a single item from which it does not stand forth in relief,*” namely, its belonging to that self-same experiential field. All of this is to explicate Husserl’s claim that consciousness is “not a mere series,” but a “history” or a “becoming” (Husserl 2001b, 270).

Continuity and *Change* illustrate the point that attending to the most basic microstructure of consciousness is to attend to its motivational character. Even in these cases of consciousness in its most phenomenologically reduced form, we find that any time-slice of experience that we isolate not only succeeds and precedes its temporal neighbors, but is *experienced as cohering* with them in virtue of belonging to a self-same experiential field. Motivation is the form of phenomenal character, utterly pervasive in experience, on the basis of which we infer the most basic structural features of consciousness: the genetic laws of simultaneity and succession and the subjective structure of experience. These structural features are not *revealed* to us within the reduction *qua* unique phenomenal features waiting to be introspected. Rather, we reach phenomenal bedrock at the motivational character of experience, and from here attempt to theorize the structural conditions of possibility for experience to show up to us this way. In other words, phenomenology becomes transcendental philosophy.

4 The Motivational Zombie

Thus far I have argued that Husserl's notion of horizon is essential to his theory of intentionality, and that it can be understood as either a non-phenomenal structure of experience, or as a phenomenal feature of experience. Understood as a non-phenomenal structure in which experiential moments are temporally ordered, experience does not *have* a horizon-structure; rather experience simply *is* so structured. If this were the case, isolating and examining a distinct moment of experience would reveal nothing about its occurring within a horizon-structure. But as we have seen, when Husserl focused on the microstructure of consciousness within the phenomenological reduction, he found the horizon-structure of experience therein. Experience *has* a horizon-structure insofar as it is ultimately impossible to isolate discreet "now-points" that are not blended with their temporal neighbors. His concept of motivation designates the form of phenomenal character that allows us to attend to this fact. Experience *has* a horizon-structure, and the motivational character of experience is the phenomenal signature of this property.

What would it be for the non-phenomenal interpretation of the horizon-structure to be true? It is difficult to even conceive. The phenomenal feature of experience that the concept of motivation is meant to designate seems to

be both utterly pervasive and particularly subtle. Your motivational zombie would share all of the “explicit” content of any given experiential episode time-slice, but would lack the palpable sense in which this content “transcends” itself and orients the subject toward possible continuations of the episode. We can begin to imagine this by starting with more overt cases of motivation, and then gradually stripping away the connectedness of experience.

4.1 *Case 1: Smoke Means Fire*

Husserl introduces the concept of motivation when distinguishing indication from expression in the First Investigation of the *Logical Investigations*. Motivation is the phenomenal character constitutive of one’s awareness of indication relations. For example, when you see smoke on the horizon, it indicates fire. You see the smoke as *meaning* that there is fire over yonder. You may actually take the time to puzzle over what the smoke might mean, but that would not be a case of indication in Husserl’s sense. Most of the time you simply see the smoke as meaning fire. Some explicit sensory array of shape and color presents smoke, but the phenomenology of the experience includes more than this explicit aspect. It also includes the implicit, but still phenomenal, sense that there is fire over yonder.

In this case we can imagine your motivational zombie as having the exact same sensory phenomenal experience presenting smoke, and still forming the belief or even explicitly judging that there is fire, but lacking the phenomenal character of felt-belonging between these mental states. The smoke is not experienced as meaning anything more. It does not indicate fire. The type-identical sensory state presenting the smoke is *succeeded* by a type-identical cognitive state of judging that there is fire, but as Husserl (2001a vol. 1, 187) argued, in the case of indicatory meaning:

[When] *A* summons *B* into consciousness, we are not merely simultaneously or successively conscious of both *A* and *B*, but we usually *feel* their connection forcing itself upon us, a connection in which the one points to the other and seems to belong to it.

Now suppose the motivational zombie in this case is a California firefighter, responsible for deploying personnel and resources on the basis of how the smoke on the horizon looks. As we have stipulated, his judgments are identical to his non-zombie twin’s, but in the zombie’s case his judgments do not

“belong” to his perception of the smoke in the sense described by Husserl. We might try to imagine this case by picturing the firefighter consulting a rule or following some sort of procedure for issuing judgments based on how the smoke looks. But this would alter the experiential episode that we are trying to hold constant but for its motivational character. The best we can do to hold the experience constant and strip away its motivational character is to imagine that the zombie firefighter has an identical sequence of experiential moments, but that his judgments simply “pop” into his mind following his smoke perceptions. That is, his judgments issue forth on the basis of a Humean causal triggering of one impression by another rather than by being grounded in the motivational character of his perceptual experience of the smoke.¹³ When asked to explain his judgments, he is (by stipulation) disposed to report the same perceptual evidence as his non-zombie counterpart, but clearly there is a difference in the cases. The zombie firefighter simply does not experience the world in the same way.

4.2 Case 2: *Perceptual Objectivity*

By the time of *Ideas I* and *Ideas II*, Husserl’s concept of motivation is central to his development of the notion of horizon. The explicitly given profile of an object that is sensorily manifest in a given time-slice of experience points beyond itself and coheres with a motivated horizon of further possible profiles of the object. Perceptual experience is always one-sided in this sense; importantly, however, perception does not present us with a world of profiles. Perceptual experience presents us with whole objects, unseen sides included. It is in virtue of the motivational character of experience that our phenomenological descriptions of perception include the sense that the objects presented to us necessarily *exceed* what is given in the strict or explicit sense.

Absent this motivational character, one’s perceptual zombie would still *represent* objects as having more properties than are presented in a particular sensory snapshot. By stipulation, his sensory phenomenology would be identical, as would any concomitant cognitive states (dispositional or occurrent). So in some sense your zombie twin is still seeing the sides and surfaces of objects *as* the sides and surfaces of whole objects with more

¹³ This example is adapted from (Nes 2016). See (Walsh 2017) for discussion.

properties than are sensorily manifest. In lacking motivational character, however, what your zombie twin's perceptual experience lacks is the subtle and unique *affective* phenomenology characteristic of temporally extended experiential episodes.

Husserl increasingly discussed motivation in terms of the affective character of perceptual experience later in his career (Husserl 1973, §17). The sensory field includes an "affective power" that directs our attention (*ibid.*). Different aspects of the field are revealed as more or less "prominent" on the basis of "an affective tendency" that orients the subject's interest (*ibid.*). This "affect schema" that accompanies perceptual experience "maintain[s] the felt continuity of the process and its felt trajectory," and "pushes it in one direction or another, [thereby] signal[ing] whether things are going well or badly" (Bower 2014, 236, 240). The phenomenal field solicits us to engage it in different ways, focuses our attention on certain aspects, orienting our ongoing perceptual activities. Absent the motivational character of experience, one's zombie twin would not experience the phenomenal field in this way. Perhaps we can think of this via an analogue with practical reasoning. One might have a good reason to act, but that reason is "inert" if it lacks any motivational force. One knows one has a good reason yet feels no compulsion to act on it. Likewise, at the perceptual level, a motivational zombie is presented with an ongoing flux of sensory profiles, yet these profiles remain "inert" in that they lack the subtle yet pervasive affective force that *provokes, solicits, directs, or orients* his perceptual engagement with the world.

4.3 Case 3: Digital Time-Consciousness

As discussed in the previous section, the motivational character of experience is the phenomenal signature of its essentially processive and subjective nature. Within the phenomenological reduction we reach bedrock when we attend to the manner in which experience is a continuous *modification* or *development* of what is already given. Husserl found the idea of consciousness that does not "go beyond the strict present in its essential flux" – that does not include "retentional and protentional horizons," that lacks "a co-consciousness" of the immediate past and future – to be *inconceivable* (Husserl 2001b, 626). Thus, we may have reached our limit in attempting to conceive of a form of experience lacking motivational character. To conceive of such a zombie is to conceive of a being who does not experience the passage of time as a flow, but rather as a "flip-book" of successive snapshots. But as we have seen through our analysis of *Change* above, the flowing processive na-

ture of experience implicates its subjective structure. There is always an essential blendedness of experiential moments in virtue of there always being a “a single item from which [they do] not stand forth in relief” from their temporal neighbors: their belonging to a self-same experiential field.

Attempting to conceive of a motivational zombie, therefore, is ultimately an attempt to conceive of the dissolution of the world. At one point Husserl (2014, 88) suggests that this is still conceivable, if only barely:

In sum, it is conceivable that the connectedness of experience loses the fixed, regulated order of profiles, construals, appearances—that there is no longer a world. It may be the case thereby that rough formations of unity would still come to be constituted to some extent—fleeting stop-overs for intuitions that would be mere analogues of intuitions of a thing, since such analogues are entirely incapable of constituting sustained “realities,” enduring unities that “exist in themselves, whether they are perceived or not.”

But this is not really a “world” in any recognizable sense. The “entire *spatio-temporal* world,” Husserl continues, “*in terms of its sense ... [is] a being that is in principle only capable of being intuited and determined as something identical on the basis of motivated manifolds of appearance—but beyond this is a nothing*” (Husserl 2014, 90). The dissolution of the world, furthermore, is also the dissolution of the ego, in its recognizably human form. The world and the “ego” or “self”, from a phenomenological perspective, are co-dependent and co-emergent phenomena. “What could the ego be which has no nature facing it[?]” Husserl asks (Ms. K IV 2: 14; as cited by Mensch 1988, 120).¹⁴ Absent its unity-bestowing motivational character, experience becomes “a mere tumult of sensations” (*ibid.*). To experience the world as a chaotic tumult, Husserl writes, “is equivalent to the dissolution of the ego” (*ibid.*).

¹⁴ See also (A. D. Smith 2008, 318) for discussion.

5 Conclusion: Intentionality, Horizon, and Phenomenal Character

Experience is intentional insofar as it presents a mind-independent, objective world. Its doing so is a matter of the way it hangs together, its having a certain structure. But in order for the intentionality in question to be *experiential*, this structure must inhere in experience as a phenomenal feature. Husserl's concept of horizon designates this intentionality-bestowing experiential structure, while his concept of motivation designates the unique phenomenal character of this structure in its "live functioning" (Husserl 2001a vol. 1, 184). This paper has argued for a "consciousness first" approach to Husserl's account of intentionality: the genesis of his account of the horizon-structure lies in what he already began to notice by attending to the motivational character of experience.

This is not to say, however, that we should totally eschew any non-phenomenal understanding of the horizon-structure (as found in, e.g., (Smith and McIntyre 1982)). On the contrary, a Husserlian theory of phenomenal intentionality gives us the resources to understand both the phenomenal-intentional core of experience as well as its more robust non-phenomenal intentionality. In its non-phenomenal form, the maximal horizon of an experience demarcates an ideal space of (phenomenological) possibility within which the affective, orienting force of motivation operates. The total intentional content of an experience extends outward from an experiential core of what is most "phenomenally proximal" within this space of possibility. An upshot of this account is that it reminds us that talk of phenomenal character in terms of neatly individuated mental states with discreet contents operates at a level of abstraction removed from the concrete reality of experience in its processive, motivated flow.

This "snapshot" picture of consciousness invites a version of PIRP that seeks a one-to-one correspondence between the properties represented in experience and the "bits" of phenomenal character that do the representing. We error in thinking of experience this way, as we seek to make our account of phenomenal character fit a presupposed picture of how intentionality works. Such errors were precisely what Husserl set out to avoid in his quest to practice phenomenology, and so philosophy, without presupposition.

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