

# Seeing Ghosts. Apperception, Accordance and the Mode of Living Presence in Perception<sup>1</sup>

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

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

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

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

(Michel de Montaigne 1849, 304)

## 1 Introduction

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

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

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

## 2 Mode of Living Presence vs. Belief Mode of Certainty

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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<sup>9</sup> The following translations of Herbart, Lazarus and Holenstein are mine.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## 5 Belief Mode of Certainty and Global Accordance in Perceptual Apprehension

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## 7 Seeing Ghosts: Closing Remarks

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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