

On the Temporality of Images according to Husserl

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Ever since the distinction between temporal and spatial arts became current in philosophical discourse, attempts have been made to refine the characterization of plastic arts as non-temporal. In an obvious sense we know what this characterization refers to. The Mona Lisa does not move: she remains still. Her smile seems about to broaden, but it will not broaden. The poplar panel on which Da Vinci executed the famous portrait may bear the passing of centuries, but the Mona Lisa *qua* depicted has not born the passing of an instant. For Edmund Husserl, however, it would be a mistake to conclude that the image, however ‘static’ [*ruhendes*] has nothing to do with time, as if the image could accomplish the miracle of presenting an object in an abstract now-point. On the basis of Husserlian accounts of image-consciousness and time-consciousness one can show that *not even* what appears in an image is beyond the pale of time.

The argument in favor of this thesis begins by delineating the sort of consciousness that, according to Husserl, can see something ‘in’ an image. We then proceed to discern the different senses of temporality with regards to images, clarifying in what way image-consciousness can be understood as consciousness of an event rather than of an isolated time-point. This clarification in turn allows us to articulate the suspected atemporality of images in terms of the omnitemporality of certain ideal objects.

§1. The Consciousness of Images

We are well acquainted with images, but for the founder of phenomenology, after millennia of philosophizing about them, we are still confused and perhaps altogether mistaken about *what* they are. Already in the *Logical Investigations*¹ Husserl parts ways in no uncertain terms with traditional, psychological approaches to images that invariably proffer – to use a term from Jean-Paul Sartre – a ‘naïve ontology’ of images.² These approaches suggest that an image can be

- a) either something real in the world – such as a painting or photograph – which, as a matter of course, depicts something else on the basis of some inherent resemblance,
- b) or something really existing in the mind and which represents something else that may or may not exist outside the mind.

These approaches suggest that, without the existence of an image in the world (=a) or of a phantasm or content in the mind (=b) one could not become conscious of the absent, depicted object.

But consciousness, Husserl protests, is not a container either of things, or of images of things, or of remnants of things. None of these immanently dwell in

¹ Edmund Husserl, *Logische Untersuchungen*, ed. Ursula Panzer, Husserliana XIX/1 and XIX/2 (The Hague/Boston/Lancaster, Martinus Nijhoff, 1984). Henceforth cited as *Hua* XIX/1 and *Hua* XIX/2 respectively. Cf. *Hua* XIX/1 436-440, especially 439.

² Although Husserl does not discuss in detail the different schools of psychology on images, he had one excellent assessment of it at hand, namely, the one proffered by Franz Brentano in his lecture course entitled “Selected Questions in Psychology and Aesthetics” which Husserl attended. See Franz Brentano, *Grundzüge der Ästhetik*, ed. Franziska Mayer-Hillebrand (Bern, Francke, 1959). See also the editor’s „Einleitung“ to Edmund Husserl, *Phantasie, Bildbewusstsein, Erinnerung: Zur Phänomenologie der Anschaulichen Vergegenwärtigung. Texte aus dem Nachlass (1891-1925)*, ed. Eduard Marbach, Husserliana XXIII (Den Haag/Boston/London, Martinus Nijhoff, 1980); English translation: *Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory (1898-1925)*, trans. John Brough, Edmund Husserl Collected Works XI (Dordrecht, Springer, 2005). Henceforth cited as *Hua* XXIII, with German and English page references, respectively; and for material exclusively found in the translation, *CW* XI, with page reference. Cf. *Hua* XXIII, xlv–xlvi. For an explicit critique of these psychological approaches to images from a phenomenological standpoint see Jean-Paul Sartre, *L’Imagination*, ed. Arlette Elkaim-Sartre (Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 2003).

consciousness, because consciousness is neither a *thing* nor a bundle of *things* that could enwrap or be added onto some *thing* or some *datum* in the first place.³ Moreover, the supposition that an absent person or thing is depicted by a present object because they happen to resemble fails to capture the unique way in which an image refers me to an object. Two twins may resemble, but neither is a picture of the other. Likewise, my photo ID depicts me, whether faithfully or poorly, but I certainly do not depict my photo ID. Finally, nothing is gained by supposing that something exists *in* an image or *as* an image, because nothing actually and corporeally existing before oneself can force itself into consciousness as something *else*, something that does not actually and presently exist.

What these psychological and ontological approaches miss, of course, is that all talk of an image and of what is imaged presupposes from the start an *intentional relation*, in virtue of which one is ‘conscious of’ an object ‘in’ an image. Consequently, the phenomenological approach to images is indissolubly married to the analysis of a distinctive form of intentionality called *image-consciousness*.⁴

According to Husserl, image-consciousness involves not one but three distinct objects [*Objekte*].⁵ Insofar as an image is always an image of something, a distinction arises between the image [*Bild*] and *what* appears in image. For example, we distinguish the portrait and the sitter that appears portrayed. The latter is the “subject” of the image, or 1) *image-subject* [*Bildsujet*]. However, in speaking about images one

³ Cf. Edmund Husserl, *Einleitung in die Logik und Erkenntnistheorie. Vorlesungen 1906/07*, ed. Ullrich Melle, Husserliana XXIV (Dordrecht/Boston/Lancaster, Kluwer, 1984). English translation: *Introduction to Logic and the Theory of Knowledge*, trans. Claire Ortiz Hill, Edmund Husserl Collected Works XIII (Dordrecht, Springer, 2008). Henceforth cited as *Hua* XXIV with German and English page references, respectively. For this reference see *Hua* XXIV 262 n/259n.

⁴ To anticipate matters somewhat, an offspring of this marriage is the groundbreaking realization that ‘imagination’ (*Phantasie*) – e.g., dreaming of the Mona Lisa – does not at all operate in a fashion analogous to image-consciousness – e.g., beholding the Mona Lisa during a visit to the Louvre. *There are no images in the imagination*, which is why, on pain of redundancy, *Phantasie* is best rendered in English as “phantasy” and not as “imagination.”

⁵ Cf. *Hua* XXIII, 18-20/20-22 (N. 1 §9)

must further distinguish 2) *the image-thing* [*Bildding*], i.e., the paint-stained and framed poplar panel, which bears physical qualities, and finally 3) *the image-object* [*das Bildobjekt*], that which serves as the representative [*Repräsentant*] of the image-subject (=1).⁶

The phenomenologist, however, does not sit content with distinguishing objects, but turns to consciousness as the ground for articulating their interweaving. According to the apprehension schema presented by Husserl in his *Logical Investigations*,⁷ the appearing of an object in intentional acts is produced by the conscious apprehension or interpretation [*Auffassung*] of sensuous contents. The apprehension confers on the content a relation to something objective independently of whether the existence of the appearing object is believed or disbelieved, doubted, etc. Many different consciousnesses of something objective can therefore have the same form of apprehension in common. For example, perceptual, hallucinatory, illusory and dream appearances arguably share in the same perceptual apprehension responsible for producing the appearing of an object as itself present.⁸ In contrast, in

⁶ One could say that these distinctions are *already* implicit in the very manner in which we normally refer to images. However much one speaks of images as selfsame with their underlying physical objects, we never confuse the image-thing with the image-object: if the poplar panel (=2) of the Mona Lisa hangs crooked, we do not say that the image (=3) was painted as slanted or that the Mona Lisa (=1) is not sitting upright. Again, we never confuse the image-thing with the image-subject: the poplar panel as poplar (=2) has no resemblance whatsoever to the Mona Lisa (=1); only the image (=3) does. Finally, we do not confuse the image-object (=3) with the subject (=1): no one looking at the famous portrait by Leonardo (=3) will take the Mona Lisa (=1) to be a real person actually “sitting” there behind the frame.

⁷ Cf. *Hua* XIX/2, 623.

⁸ “If we abstract from the characteristic of quality and even from meaning in the case of perception (the word taken in the customary sense), we then acquire the *perceptual apprehension*. And if we restrict ourselves to what is essential, then this concept extends as far as the prominent phenomenon of *appearing as present itself* extends. This distinctive trait yields an essentially unitary and phenomenologically realized concept. Different intentional characteristics – believing, doubting, desiring, and so on – can then be combined with this apprehension. Complex phenomena arise, which, however, are connected, owing to the fact that one and the same sort of presentation, ‘perceptual presentation’ or ‘perceptual apprehension’ underlies them. We again find such presentations in so-called hallucinations, illusions, just as we find them in cases of physical and natural semblance.” („*Abstrahieren wir bei den Wahrnehmung (das Wort im gewöhnlichen Sinn genommen) vom Charakter der Qualität und selbst Meinung, so gewinnen wir die Wahrnehmungsauffassung, und halten wir uns an das Wesentliche, dann reicht dieser Begriff so weit, als das markante Phänomen des als selbst gegenwärtig Erscheinens reicht. Dieses Merkmal gibt einen wesentlich einheitlichen und*

image-consciousness, however much an object genuinely and intuitively appears, it appears not as itself present but as absent, i.e., it appears in image. Therefore, image-consciousness does not share in the same form of apprehension as perception.

What may strike one at first as a very trivial observation acquires decisive importance for understanding images, insofar as the appearing of an object in an image, and the appearing of an object as itself present, correspond to fundamentally different forms of apprehension. No perceptual apprehension can produce the appearance of a subject in an image. In other words, *to see something in an image is not a way of perceiving something*. The reason for this is that while the perceptual appearing gives the object itself in a pregnant sense, the appearing of an image irremediably implicates that something else, a *subject*, appears *in it*. But in order to account for these two interrelated objects, image-consciousness needs to be described as a double – as opposed to a simple – apprehension. On the one hand a (α) *subject-apprehension* produces the appearance of the image-subject (=1) in the image-object (=3). On the other hand, an (β) *image-apprehension* produces the appearing of an image-object (=3).⁹

Let us first unfold the *subject-apprehension* (=a). The key to being able to apprehend the subject in the image is the fact that no image depicts its subject perfectly, that is, without awakening a consciousness of conflict. Even when an image renders its subject with very high fidelity, the image still does not give itself *wholly and seamlessly* as the subject. Proof of this fact is that one does not take even a perfect portrait for an actual person because “an actual person moves, speaks, and so

phänomenologisch realisierten Begriff. Mit dieser Auffassung können sich dann verschiedene intentionale Charaktere verbinden, ein Glauben, Zweifeln, Begehren, usw., es entstehen komplexe Phänomene, die aber verknüpft sind dadurch, dass ihnen eine und dieselbe Vorstellungsart, die ‚Wahrnehmungsvorstellung‘ oder ‚Wahrnehmungsauffassung‘ zugrunde liegt. Solche Vorstellungen finden wir aber bei den sogenannten Halluzinationen und Illusionen, ebenso wie bei den Fällen des physisch-natürlichen Scheins.“ (Hua XXIII, 5-6/5-6)

⁹ The main textual reference for the following account is *Hua XXIII*, 28-34/30-35 (§14).

on” while “the picture person is a *motionless*, mute figure.”¹⁰ What Husserl seeks to highlight is the requirement for the subject to *give itself* as otherwise than the image-object, lest the subject be taken not as something portrayed but as something originally present. The upshot of this requirement is that images cannot present their subject by duping us the way illusory figments do; for, in that case, the ‘image’ posing as the subject could not be taken as the representation of a subject, but as the presentation of an object itself. An illusion thus not only operates differently from an image, but also *makes the attempt to see something depicted in it redundant*. For this very reason, too, it follows that image-object and image-subject can be neither reduced to one another nor confused with one another.

Furthermore, the consciousness of the image-subject has to be essentially different from the consciousness of the image-object. But what this means is that image-consciousness as a whole is possible only as a willful *doubling* [*Verdoppelung*] of consciousness into image- *and* subject-consciousness.¹¹ Only in virtue of this willful doubling of consciousness can the marvel of seeing something in an image happen in the first place.

At the same time, this radical differentiation of the consciousness of an image from the consciousness of an imaged subject does not separate the image from its subject such that the image-subject is necessarily referred to by the image-object in

¹⁰ “In the case of a perfect portrait that perfectly presents the person with respect to all of his moments (all that can possibly be distinctive traits), indeed, even in a portrait that does this in a most unsatisfactory way, it feels to us as if the person were there himself. The person himself, however, belongs to a nexus different from that of the image-object. The actual person moves, speaks, and so on; the picture person is a motionless, mute figure.” („Bei einem vollkommenen Porträt, das die Person nach allen Momenten (die irgend Merkmale sein können) vollkommen darstellt, ja schon bei einem Porträt, das dies in sehr ungenügender Weise tut, ist uns so zumute, als wäre die Person selbst da. Aber die Person selbst gehört einem anderen Zusammenhang an wie das Bildobjekt. Die wirkliche Person bewegt sich, spricht usw., die Bildperson ist eine starre, stumme Figur.“) (Hua XXIII, 32/33).

¹¹ Cf. Hua XXIII, 32/33.

the way that the symbolized is referred to by the symbol.¹² Moreover, in image-consciousness we do not experience two appearances, whether simultaneously or successively, as if image and subject appeared juxtaposed or superimposed. On the contrary, the subject appears *in* the image-appearing. Ostensibly, only the image-object appears; but *what* appears, *what we see in* the image [*hineinschauen; im Bild sehen*] is the image-subject. This is the pillar of image-consciousness. Whenever we turn to the Mona Lisa, we do not see *some thing* that neatly resembles a historical person by the name of Lisa Gherardini. We do not see *some thing!* Rather, we *already see her*, the Mona Lisa herself, *in image*.¹³

Let us now unfold the other apprehension mentioned above (=β) which produces the image-object and which is also situated in the midst of conflict or opposition. We mentioned that in speaking about images we must distinguish the image-thing, for example, the poplar panel with oil stains hanging in the Louvre (=2) from the image-object, the Mona Lisa portrait (=3). It seems obvious that the sensuous contents in the apprehension of an image could be taken up in the apprehension of the physical thing – i.e., the apprehension of the poplar panel with oil stains *as such*. And yet, just as we said earlier that we do not have an image-appearance next to a subject-appearance, so also we do not have an appearance of a poplar panel next to an image-appearance. In the course of image-consciousness, in fact, we do not quite ‘perceive’ the panel,¹⁴ and

¹² Husserl does consider the case of symbolic consciousness, where the inner imaging function – the seeing of the subject in image – is taken up as the basis of a signitive intention in virtue of which what is intended is no longer to be seen in image but is to be made present in a new presentation. Cf. *Hua XXIII*, 52-53/56.

¹³ According to Husserl, the basic condition for there being a portrait or a depiction is to be able to see a subject *in* image. Whether the Mona Lisa in fact resembles Giocondo’s wife; whether the Mona Lisa is the portrait of an actual or of an imaginary person is of no relevance here: “An actual depicting presents itself in the case of a portrait, which, moreover, can just as well be the portrait of an imaginary person as of an actual person.” („*Ein wirkliches Abbilden liegt vorbei einem Porträt, das übrigens ebensowohl das einer wirklichen oder das einer fingierten Person sein kann.*“) (*Hua XXIII*, 515/617).

¹⁴ “Indeed, even if I wanted to, I could by no means just push aside the appearance belonging to the image-object and then see *only* the lines and shadows on the card. At most I could do this with respect to particular spots that I pick out.” („*Ich kann ja gar nicht einmal, wenn ich auch wollte, die*

neither is it the artist's intention that we do so.¹⁵ The image-apprehension thus dislocates [*verdrängt*] the perceptual apprehension of the physical thing and deprives it of its sensuous contents. In this sense, then, images steal their materials outright from reality. In another sense, however, they are always nabbed in the act. For no matter how attentively we behold the image, our field of perception does not disappear: we do, after all, perceive the *passee partout*, the frame, the wall, etc. The role of these elements which least interest us in encountering an image is by no means negligible because their perceptual apprehension conflicts with the image-apprehension, denouncing the image as a perceptual 'nothing,' that is, as a figment. *Without the passee partout, the frame, and the wall, I would have to take the image appearing as something appearing there itself.* To be sure, this conflict with its perceptual surroundings does not undo our experience of an image: we do not stop seeing the Mona Lisa herself, and are not surprised at learning that as far as reality goes, the Mona Lisa is just a poplar panel. And yet conflict is precisely *what* characterizes our consciousness of an image as otherwise than a perceptual apprehension. The image of the Mona Lisa is nothing that belongs to reality and yet it is nothing illusory precisely because it lacks the characteristic of reality:¹⁶ "however much it appears, it is *a nothing*."¹⁷

Due to this twofold apprehension, and especially due to the way that the pair of conflicts unfolds (between image-object and image-subject [=α], on the one hand, and between image-object and image-thing [=β] on the other) image-consciousness can

Erscheinung des Bildobjekts beiseite schieben und nun bloss die Linien und Schatten auf dem Kartenblatt sehen. Höchstens einzelne Stellen, die ich heraushebe.“) (Hua XXIII, 488/583).

¹⁵ Cf. Hua XXIII, 45/49 and 492/586-587.

¹⁶ Cf. Hua XXIII, 489-90/584.

¹⁷ „[D]as Bild erscheint, aber es streitet mit der wirklichen Gegenwart, es ist also bloss ‚Bild‘, es ist, wie sehr es erscheint, ein Nichts.“ (Hua XXIII, 46/50).

also be described as “the appearance of a not now *in the now*.”¹⁸ The image appears in the midst of the field of perception, in the midst of all that is now present – but what appears in the image cannot be intended as something actually present, something veritably perceived, since the image is in conflict with its real surroundings. And yet this conflict does not destroy the consciousness of the image; image-consciousness does not dissolve into a perceptual apprehension of something as present, but continues to intend its object as absent. Thus, image-consciousness implicates a doubling of time,¹⁹ in the sense that what appears in image is necessarily intended as belonging to a different temporal nexus from that of things that appear perceptually: “this exhibited something can never exhibit the now with which it conflicts; hence, it can only exhibit something else, something not present” (ibid.). To be sure, what is exhibited as ‘not present’ remains under siege by the present time – but the image subsists, and that is the point: the time of the image never gives in to the present time.

¹⁸ „So haben wir hier Erscheinung, sinnliche Anschauung und Vergegenständlichung, aber in Widerstreit mit einer erlebten Gegenwart; wir haben Erscheinung eines Nicht-Jetzt im Jetzt. Im Jetzt, sofern das Bildobjekt inmitten der Wahrnehmungswirklichkeit erscheint und den Anspruch gleichsam erhebt, mitten dazwischen objektive Wirklichkeit zu haben. Im Jetzt auch insofern, als das Bildauffassen ein Zeitlich-Jetzt ist. Andererseits aber ein ‚Nicht-Jetzt‘, sofern der Widerstreit das Bildobjekt zu einem Nichtigen macht, das zwar erscheint, aber nichts ist, und das nur dazu dienen mag, ein Seiendes darzustellen. Dies Dargestellte aber kann evidenterweise niemals das Jetzt, mit dem es streitet, darstellen, es kann also nur ein anderes, ein Nichtgegenwärtiges darstellen. Doch könnte dies allenfalls im Blickfeld, nur ausserhalb des Bildgebietes liegen.“ (Hua XXIII, 47-48/51). See also: Edmund Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins (1893-1917)* ed. Rudolph Boehm, Husserliana X (Den Haag, Martinus Nijhoff, 1969). English translation: *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time (1893-1917)* trans. John Brough, Edmund Husserl Collected Works IV (Dordrecht/Boston/London, Kluwer, 1991). Henceforth cited as *Hua X* with German and English page references, respectively. For this reference 288/298.

¹⁹ It might be objected that while up until now ‘the present’ has meant ‘what is *hic et nunc*,’ and ‘the absence of the image subject’ has meant ‘what is not *hic*,’ that alone does not imply temporal absence in the sense of ‘what is not *nunc*.’ Indeed, in the previously referred text (Cf. *Hua XXIII*, 47-48/51) Husserl emphasizes ‘absence’ in terms of ‘what is not *hic*’ but he expressly states – at least once – that ‘in the now’ also means a temporal now (‘*ein Zeitlich-Jetzt*’) – and this reference is in tandem with Husserl subsequent use of the term ‘now’ in the last part (on ‘Time-Consciousness’) of the same lecture course from WS ’04-’05 to which the text now under discussion also belongs.

§2. The Time of Images

What does it mean for there to be time ‘in’ image? But first: *what* do we mean by time? Just as Husserl elucidates the basic question of how something appears in image by analyzing the specific intentionality that lets something appear in such way, so also Husserl addresses the basic question of temporal appearance by analyzing the consciousness to which duration and succession appear. *The question of time is also the question of time-consciousness*. But, at least *prima facie*, what falls under the purview of time-consciousness is not real or transcendent time, but the time of phenomena, a time that “cannot be measured; there is no clock and no other chronometer for it. Here one can only say: now, before, and further before, changing or not changing in the duration, etc.”²⁰ Indeed, when enquiring about the temporality of what appears in an image, we are not interested in the temporal duration of the image-thing (which is *de facto* limited, and on account of which images “have been engaged in an irresistible process of perishing”²¹). Neither do we ask whether it takes time to see something in an image (for it *does*, even when the image is small and appears all at once²²). Our enquiry, rather, plainly asks whether and how one becomes conscious of duration or change *in* an unchanging image.

For the phenomenologist, the temporal awareness of any object (be it a spatio-temporal or purely temporal) is always already threefold in character. We are aware

²⁰ „Die Zeit, die da auftritt, ist keine objektive und keine bestimmbare Zeit. Die läßt sich nicht messen, für, die gibt es keine Uhr und keine sonstigen Chronometer. Da kann man nur sagen: Jetzt, vorher, und weiter vorher [...].“ (*Hua X*, 339/351, emphasis in the original).

²¹ Roman Ingarden, *Ontology of the Work of Art*, trans. by Raymond Meyer with John T. Goldthwait (Athens, Ohio University Press, 1989), 223.

²² See John Brough, “Plastic Time: Time and the Visual Arts.” In *The Many Faces of Time*, ed. John Brough and Lester Embree (Dordrecht/Boston/London, Kluwer, 2000), 223-244. Henceforth cited as “Plastic Time” with page reference. For this reference see 226. See also Robert Wood, *Placing Aesthetics: Reflections on the Philosophic Tradition* (Athens, Ohio University Press, 1999), 27: “In terms of actual viewing, the arts of the two-dimensional surface approach a certain abstraction from time, since everything is present at once to the viewer. However, one must at least move one’s eyes from point to point in order to enrich one’s perception of the overall gestalt, and thus time necessarily enters in, not as simple endurance in the Now, but as continual change of focus.”

of an object as temporally present because we experience the object (a) in one of its phases as ‘now;’ (b) after the initial phase, in one or more of its phases as ‘just having been now;’ and (c) if not in the final phase, then in forthcoming phases as ‘not yet now.’ But to be aware of anything temporal does not mean that one has to constantly perform a trio of distinct ‘apprehensions’ as if temporal awareness had to piece itself together. On the contrary, Husserl discovers that consciousness *always already* manifests a temporal structuring, from boot up so to speak: the now phase is ‘intended’ in *primal impression or primal sensation*; the elapsed phases, in *retentions*; and the forthcoming phases in *protentions*.²³

Because time-consciousness is always threefold, we can never experience an object in a now-phase without being conscious of it in those phases that are *in sensu strictu* not now. What this means is that the ‘now’ is but “a relative concept and refers to a ‘past,’ just as ‘past’ refers to the ‘now.’”²⁴ And in fact, this reference is so fundamental, that without it “the now would not be now – that is, for the perceiving consciousness in question – if it did not stand before me *in that consciousness* as the *limit of a past being*.”²⁵ It is thus not possible to become conscious of anything in a pure ‘now,’ or in an abstract now-point that is not already, not only in principle and by definition but in fact *temporal*.²⁶

²³ This is a non-objectifying intending, hence the inverted commas. Cf. *Hua* XXIV, 243-252/241-250 (§42). See also Dan Zahavi, “Inner Time-Consciousness and Pre-Reflective Self-Awareness,” ed. Rudolf Bernet, Donn Welton, and Gina Zavota, *Edmund Husserl: Critical Assessments of Leading Philosophers* III (Routledge, London/New York, 2006). Henceforth cited as “Pre-reflective” with page reference), 299-324.

²⁴ „Der ganze Zeitpunkt nun, die ganze originäre Impression erfährt die Vergangenheitsmodifikation, und erst durch sie haben wir den ganzen Jetztbegriff erschöpft, sofern er ein relativer ist und auf ein ‚vergangen‘ hinweist, wie ‚vergangen‘ auf das ‚jetzt.‘“ (*Hua* X, 68/70).

²⁵ „Das Vergangene wäre für das Bewußtsein des Jetzt nichts, wenn es sich nicht im Jetzt repräsentierte, und das Jetzt wäre nicht Jetzt, nämlich, für das wahrnehmende Bewußtsein des betreffenden Moments, wenn es in ihm nicht als Grenze eines vergangenen Seins dastünde.“ (*Hua* X, 280/290).

²⁶ Cf *Hua* X, 226-227/234

Thus, both in image-consciousness and in time-consciousness we find a necessary relationship between the not-now and the now and for a short while Husserl thought that these relationships were analogous, i.e., that the “past now” was a “not now in the now,” much in the manner of an image. However, he swiftly abandoned this position, and for a good reason, namely, that retention is not carried out in the manner of an image of the past, for in that case it would require displaced sensuous materials. In other words, the past made available in retention never quarries its ‘materials’ from ‘the now,’ and retention never employs actual sensuous materials, never ‘materializes’ the past. The same holds for the reproductive consciousness of the past which Husserl calls recollection [*Wiedererinnerung*]. When we recollect, e.g., a past journey, it is not as if we held, successively in the present, a series of ‘mental photographs’ representing each phase of the past journey.²⁷

That we cannot account for our consciousness of the past in terms of one or another kind of image-apprehension does not mean, however, that we cannot have a consciousness of the past and of the present with regard to what appears in an image. The depicted ‘not now’ is ‘of time’ because no consciousness whatsoever of the object in the now-phase (in this case, the *consciousness of the image-subject*) can in principle be extricated from the consciousness of it as ‘just having been present’ and/or as ‘not yet present.’²⁸ As John Brough indicates, when seeing an image-subject in an image-object

²⁷ Cf. *Hua X*, 180/185-186.

²⁸ “Foreground is nothing without background. The appearing side is nothing without the nonappearing side. So too in the unity of time-consciousness: the reproduced duration is the foreground; the intentions directed towards the insertion [of the duration into time] make conscious a background, a temporal background.” („*Vordergrund ist nichts ohne Hintergrund. Die erscheinende Seite ist nichts ohne <die> nicht erscheinende. Ebenso in der Einheit des Zeitbewußtseins: Die reproduzierte Dauer ist Vordergrund, die Einordnungsententionen machen einen Hintergrund, einen zeitlichen, bewußt.*“) (*Hua X*, 304/316). In *Hua XXIV*, 255/252 Husserl claims (without developing) that the same insertion into a temporal background should also be possible for image apprehensions.

[w]e may not see a *succession* of moments or events, but we do see a single *moment*. And it appears as a moment only insofar as it appears to us as part of a temporal context, a temporal succession. If one says that it appears to us as a depicted now-moment, then, in common with every now, it appears with a halo of past and future. It cannot be snatched cleanly from its context with all of its temporal references scrubbed away.²⁹

But how does the Mona Lisa appear in a temporal context? Wherefrom comes her past and future ‘halo’? In response to this question, Husserl’s texts suggest the following two alternatives (§§3 and 4).

§3. The Now in Image Enshrouded in Phantasy Time.

In light of the fact that we do not perceive the preceding or successive phases of the image-subject *in* the image-object, one could suggest that the temporal context of the image’s “not now *in the now*” is supplied by pure phantasy. The main argument in favor of this thesis is that pure phantasy and image-consciousness satisfy the minimal conditions for a temporal continuum, since (i.) there are no differences of *kind* between each point of the temporal continuum, and since (ii.) the relation between each point is established by a time-constituting consciousness.

Ad (i). Phantasy, like recollection, is not a form of being conscious of something in image.³⁰ Phantasy and image-consciousness, however, do belong to the same *kind*

²⁹ “Plastic Time,” 236. Already on p. 224, after introducing Husserl’s distinction between ‘physical image,’ ‘image or image-object,’ and ‘image-subject’ Brough claims that “[...] because the pictorial image [=image-object] is not a real object in the world, it can become the vessel of everything that can make itself available to visual contemplation [...] pictorial images are as open to the inclusion of time as they are to the inclusion of space” (224-225).

³⁰ Like the consciousness of the past, phantasy cannot be conscious of something that is *absent* by at the same time apprehending a *present* phantasm and this for the same reason that the consciousness of the whole object as *absent* would be made redundant by the consciousness of the phantasm as a really [*reell*] *present* component of consciousness. In fact, memory and phantasy are forms of pure, non-

of consciousness: they are equally forms of intuitive presentification [*Vergegenwärtigung*] – a term by which Husserl designates an intentional consciousness of something that is *intuitively* given, but not as actually, originally or corporeally before oneself.³¹ Under the title of presentification Husserl lists acts as diverse as memory, phantasy, co-presentation, image-consciousness, and the experience of others. In each case presentification is, in the words of R. Bernet, “an intentional act that reveals a double presence” because in every presentification “I live simultaneously in two presents.”³² We have seen that image-consciousness indeed reveals a double presence of image-object and image-subject. However, Husserl decisively realizes that not image-consciousness, but recollection, is paradigmatic of all acts that reveal a double presence. How is recollection revealing of a double presence? In recollecting a past object I reproduce and live in a past present, while at the same time living in the actual present (lest the past present be not *past* but *present*, and I hallucinate!). In recollection, then, consciousness reveals both a *present* reproducing consciousness *and* a reproduced consciousness of a past *present*. Now, recollection serves as a paradigm for phantasy, because phantasy, too, is an actual consciousness of something absent which reproduces and modifies a perception (except that the reproduced perception is not a past perception belonging to an actual nexus of experience, but, rather, is a fictive perception belonging to a phantasy nexus). Phantasy and memory are thus *pure* presentifications where the presentified object floats before oneself [*schwebt vor*]. Image-consciousness, in contrast, is a form of perceptual [*perzeptive*] phantasy, a presentification mediated by the perception of

depictive presentification because sensation (the consciousness of a tone- or color-now) is lacking in them. Cf. *Hua* XXIII, 265-69/323-327 (Nr. 8).

³¹ For a lengthier exposition of this term see my “Vergegenwärtigung” in *Husserl-Lexikon*, ed. H.H. Gander (Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, forthcoming 2009).

³² Rudolf Bernet. “Framing the past: Memory in Husserl, Proust, and Barthes.” In *The Husserlian Foundations of Phenomenological Psychology: The tenth Annual Symposium of the Simon Silverman Phenomenology Centre*, 1993, 1-20. Henceforth cited as “Framing the Past.” For this citation, 3.

an object.³³ In this way Husserl shows that phantasy and image-consciousness belong to the same kind of act and can therefore constitute a temporal continuum.³⁴

Incidentally, the claim that recollection is the paradigm of presentification enhances our understanding of image-consciousness. Whereas Husserl's earlier analysis of image-consciousness laid the emphasis nearly exclusively on its 'depictability' [*Abbildlichkeit*] – i.e., on the seeing of the subject *in* image – the analysis of image-consciousness as perceptual phantasy lays the stress on the appurtenance of the phantasy object to a phantasy temporal nexus. It is thus that Husserl can sever image-consciousness from its depictive worth and claim that certain images, such as artistic images, are first of all concerned with transplanting us into the phantasy nexus of artistic illusion, and only marginally concerned with faithfully rendering a subject.³⁵

Ad (ii.). Each presentification is not only a temporal consciousness but also constitutes a temporal nexus of consciousness by replicating an original time-consciousness. Thus pure phantasy "is a flow of experiences that is structured in precisely the way in which any time-constituting flow of experiences is structured, and which is therefore a time-constituting flow itself".³⁶ When I phantasy a tone, a given tone-phase is intended as (quasi-) now; as it elapses, it is still intended as (quasi) past, while a new (quasi-) tone-now is intended, and so on. Even though phantasy replicates original time-consciousness, substantial differences remain

³³ Cf. *Hua* XXIII, 464-466/ 553-555.

³⁴ One of the reasons why Husserl objects to the Brentanian claim that an original temporal consciousness already involves the *phantasy* of the just elapsed phases of an object's duration is that, while the difference between a more distant and a more recent past turns out to be a matter of degrees of phantasy, the difference between any tone-past and the actual tone-now turns out to be a difference in kind; only the tone-now, as a matter of perception, would be real, while the tone-pasts, themselves a matter of phantasy, would be unreal – thereby making the possibility of a temporal continuum redundant. Cf. *Hua* X, 9-19/11-20 (§3-6).

³⁵ Cf. *Hua* XXIII, 514-516/616-617.

³⁶ „Der Vergegenwärtigungsfluß ist ein Fluß von Erlebnissen, der genau so wie jeder zeitkonstituierende Fluß von Erlebnissen gebaut, also selbst ein zeitkonstituierender ist.“ (*Hua* X, 299/311).

between these two, not the least of which is that phantasy consciousness is something itself temporal while original time-consciousness is nothing constituted in time.³⁷ However, retention and presentification can be compared:³⁸ just as one presentifies an object by reproducing the original consciousness of the object, so also the tone pasts are intended because retention is retention of the corresponding, non-actual phases of the flow.³⁹ While recollection and retention cannot be confused, their being analogous can persuade us of the fact that the past phases of a phantasy duration can still be intended as (quasi-) elapsing.

Image-consciousness, then, does not just give us access to an image-subject, or to an image-space, but also – in light of pure phantasy intentions directed to the image-subject's temporal context – to an image-time, an image-world.⁴⁰

There is, however, a major objection to this suggestion which casts a shadow on our present understanding of temporality in image and which cannot be avoided. When I see something in image, *I do not necessarily phantasy the foregoing or subsequent phases of the depicted duration. Hence, the filling of this temporal halo is entirely voluntary*, while this is not at all the case with an original consciousness of time. The continuous, originary process of temporal individuation of immanent and transcendent objects is neither active nor willful in either of its three moments; primal impression or, primal sensation is a moment of utter passivity; the recuperation of what is originally sensed in retention is a moment of conscious activity, but this is not a voluntary accomplishment. In other words, original time-consciousness cannot be tampered with. And on this score phantasy temporality is the complete opposite of temporality in the usual sense. To begin with, the now-moment, the 'not-now' in the

³⁷ Cf. *Hua X*, 297/309.

³⁸ Husserl compares them in various places. Cf. for example *Hua XXIV*, 258-261/256-258 and notes; *Hua X*, 280-284/290-294 and notes.

³⁹ Cf. *Hua X*, 377/388.

⁴⁰ Cf. *Hua XXIII*, 450/533 and *passim*.

image-now, is not a moment of utter passivity since one cannot see an object in an image without the conscious doubling and displacement of consciousness.⁴¹ Furthermore, I can willfully ‘fill in’ the Mona Lisa’s past and future halo in whatever way I please with the sole limitation that I do not violate the laws of logic in the process.⁴² The fact that the determination of this temporal halo depends on my whims, however, is what makes the freedom of phantasy rather redundant in comparison with the involuntary preserving of the past in retention. To understand this paradox, consider the following example: since Leonardo indicates neither that the Mona Lisa appears as her smile is about to broaden, nor that her smile is the aftermath of her fading laughter, then insisting on the one interpretation as opposed to the other, or on both as equally valid, is a matter that cannot in principle be settled.⁴³ In contrast, in original time-consciousness, our consciousness of the past is ever *determinate*: “[t]he memorial consciousness that I now have of the beginning point t_0 [of a tonal process]

⁴¹ There is still a core of passivity here, though, in the sense that I cannot see the Mona Lisa in image entirely as I please but in fact only as the poplar panel instigates it.

⁴² “The world of actual experience: This designates a limitless system of actual experiences with experiential horizons that must again be made explicit by means of actual experiences. Moreover, it designates a fixed system, constantly expanding automatically, though in a *prescribed* way.” („*Die Welt der Erfahrung: Das bezeichnet ein grenzenloses System von aktuellen Erfahrungen, mit Erfahrungshorizonten, die wieder zu explizieren sind durch Erfahrungen, und dabei ein festes, sich immerfort von selbst, aber in gebundener Weise erweiterndes System.*“); (*Hua XXIII*, 534-535/641); “It is otherwise with respect to a world installed in fiction. Within the boundaries set by the coherent unity of empirical experiences, there is objective truth as quasi-truth, which is nevertheless binding truth. However, it extends only as far as the coherent fiction has produced predelineation (eidetically and according to the logic of experience) by means of what is actually brought to intuition and by means of what is implied according to logical <laws>. Beyond this, every statement is completely indefinite.” („*Anders hinsichtlich einer in Fiktion installierten Welt. Im Rahmen, den die zusammenhängende Einheit von Erfahrungen gesteckt hat, gibt es objektive Wahrheit als quasi-Wahrheit, aber doch als bindende Wahrheit. Aber sie reicht nur so weit, <als> die zusammenhängende Fiktion durch das aktuell zur Anschauung Gebrachte und durch das nach logischen <Gesetzen> darin Beshlossene (eidetisch und erfahrungslologisch) Vorzeichnung geleistet hat.*“) (*Hua XXIII*, 523/624).

⁴³ This is not to say that the temporal halo remains necessarily indeterminate: A form of predelineation [*Berichtigung*] is available, but only if the depicted moment can be inscribed in a temporal nexus that can be made hermeneutically explicit. Cf. *Hua XXIII*, 514/615. Michelangelo’s *David*, for example, is rendered at a moment that is easily identifiable on the basis of a Biblical narrative – namely, the moment where he believes the prophecy that he will prevail over Goliath (and become king of Israel, and become the forefather of the Messiah, and so on).

shows me that point in a certain past.”⁴⁴ Is not the possibility of a freely determinable past in blatant contradiction with the eidetic feature of determinacy proper to our consciousness of the past? And is not for this reason that the Mona Lisa does not truly *have* a past?

But above all, talk of temporality in images is made doubtful by the simple fact that the ‘not now’ in image is not subjected to the universal law of modification of a now into a no longer now. While the ‘now’ phase of an original duration is the source-point of new temporal phases and of new temporal points, the ‘now’ in an image produces neither. The ‘now’ of the subject of which we are conscious in an image is not at all fleeting: it is a fish out of water.

In sum, while in original time-consciousness the past is determinate and the now is the point of origin and of temporal order, the ‘temporality’ of the image-world is nearly the reverse: the past and the future are merely tentatively determinable, and the object in the now is over-determinate. The now in the image does not pass into the not-now: we are glugged with it. As our act of meaning (*Meinung*) and our aesthetic interest are continuously drawn towards, e.g., the Mona Lisa and the way (*Wie*) in which she has been rendered,⁴⁵ the ‘not now’ in image rather compares to the mythical Chronos: engendering phantasies of pasts and futures in the image-world, only in turn to be swallowed by the recurrent Mona Lisa in the now.

§4. The ‘Static’ Depiction of Movement

We have seen the pros and cons of the attempt to fill in the temporal halo of the image with reproductive phantasy. But is it always necessarily the case that in order

⁴⁴ „Das Bewußtsein der Erinnerung, das ich jetzt von dem Einsatzpunkt t_0 habe, zeigt mir ihn in einer gewissen Vergangenheit (ein gewisses ‚Vorhin‘) [...]“ (Hua X, 329/341).

⁴⁵ Cf. Hua XXIII 24/25; 37/40; 538/647.

for an image to depict an event [*Vorgangen*], one has to let oneself be drawn into phantasying the depicted movement? Could it not be the case that, as soon as I see something in a ‘static’ image, I *already* see movement? At one point Husserl answers, surprisingly, that this is a possibility:

Note. It is important to discuss the following. Rest or change appears in the image. In the ordinary resting image, which depicts by means of an unchanging image-object, a movement might appear – a rider galloping away in a painting, for example. In the mutoscope,⁴⁶ however, an image-object that is itself moving appears; and in that case movement is presented by means of movement, and so on.⁴⁷

One could draw the following parallel to understand why Husserl considers it an important matter to discuss. It is a well known fact that, in the development of his thought, Husserl abandoned his earlier doctrine of the *Logische Untersuchungen* according to which the perception of a transcendent thing is a case of mixed representation, in the sense that the unseen ‘backside’ of an object needs to be signified or phantasied in addition to the perceiving of the originally given ‘front’ side.⁴⁸ Husserl abandoned this position by suggesting that the empty intending of the backside of the perceived object is *always already* a part of the perception of something transcendent.⁴⁹ Analogously, one could say that movement *always already*

⁴⁶ A mutoscope is an early motion picture device, similar to the kinoscope, operating on the basis of the principle of the ‘flip book’ rather than projecting onto a screen. Commercialized as a coin-in-the-slot machine, it allowed viewing to only one person at a time.

⁴⁷ „Nota. Wichtig zu besprechen ist noch folgendes. Im Bild erscheint Ruhe oder Veränderung. Im gewöhnlichen ruhenden Bild, das durch ein unveränderliches Bild-objekt abbildet, erscheint evtl. eine Bewegung, etwa im Gemälde ein dahinsprengender Reiter. Im Mutoskop erscheint aber ein sich bewegendes Bildobjekt, und es wird Bewegung durch Bewegung dargestellt usw.“ (Hua XXIII, 489 n.).

⁴⁸ Cf. Hua XIX/2 610-614; Hua XXIII, 304.

⁴⁹ Cf. Edmund Husserl, *Ding und Raum: Vorlesungen 1907*, ed by Ulrich Claesges, Husserliana XVI (Den Haag, Martinus Nijhoff, 1973). English translation: *Thing and Space: Lectures of 1907*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz, Edmund Husserl Collected Works VII, (Dordrecht/Boston/London, Kluwer, 1997). Henceforth cited as *Hua* XVI with German and English page references, respectively. Cf. *Hua* XVI 186-190/157-159 (§54).

appears *in* the consciousness of something in an image, *in* the perceptual phantasy, without the pure phantasy supplementation of the just past phases and/or of phases still to come.⁵⁰ Of course, just as “not every painting represents a [historical] time,”⁵¹ so also not every painting actually depicts a movement, but it is enough to show that this is an ideal possibility for a static painting. Indeed some artworks apparently fulfill this possibility. Take, for example, Pierre-Auguste Renoir’s *The Gust of Wind* [*Le grand vent*]. To say that one *already sees* movement, that in this artwork change *already appears* as change, amounts to an appropriate description of this artistic accomplishment.⁵²

However, this suggestion loses momentum if one wants to conceptualize this appearing of movement in image as a *depiction*. For in a qualified sense a depiction offers a ‘perception’ [*Perzeption*]⁵³ of the depicted subject. Of course, it still holds what we have said earlier, namely, that to see a subject in an image is not a way of perceiving [*wahrnehmen*] something; but once one takes into account the conflict between the image-thing and the image-object, one can treat the image appearance as a ‘perceptual’ (i.e., intuitive) appearance (even though nothing corporeal actually appears). And here the crucial question becomes whether any ‘static’ image offers a ‘perception’ of a temporal succession. Now, if an image were to offer such a ‘perception,’ it would need to accomplish the successive ‘perception’ of each phase of

⁵⁰ I owe Prof. Dr. Rudolf Bernet at the Husserl Archives of Leuven for this insight.

⁵¹ „Freilich, nicht jedes Gemälde repräsentiert eine Zeit [...]“ (*Hua* X, 184/190).

⁵² As Sister Wendy Beckett indicates in connection to this painting, “It is because of Renoir that grass will always quiver and the tree will always sway. The gust of wind (by its very nature passing and uncontrollable) has been miraculously held, not statically, but in motion – the most challenging of art’s possibilities.” Wendy Beckett with Patricia Wright, *Sister Wendy’s 1000 Masterpieces* (London/New York/Sydney/Moscow, Dorling Kindersley, 1999), 386.

⁵³ By no means is Husserl saying that image-consciousness is a mode of perception [*Wahrnehmung*]. Regarding the distinction between *Wahrnehmung* and *Perzeption* the translator of *Hua* XXIII offers the following clarification: “Husserl sometimes uses *Wahrnehmung* and its derivatives in contrast to *Perzeption* and its derivatives to indicate the difference between ordinary perceptual experience with its belief in empirical reality (*Wahrnehmung*) and the unique kind of perception involved in the experience of an image (*Perzeption*)” (*CW* XI, 556n.).

a temporal duration – and only cinematic or mutoscopic images fulfill the latter condition. The wonderfully depicted landscape of Renoir's *Le grand vent* in contrast does not yet appear in a manifold of phases.

[T]o what extent is this [i.e., the seeing of a leap *in* an image] the perception [Perzeption] of a leap (only perceptual [*perzeptives*] appearance, of course; that which makes possible the full perception is annulled)? This is something to ponder.⁵⁴

However much one would like to say that movement or change *already* appears in certain 'static' images, one cannot say that one is conscious of temporality in image in a manner analogous to the perception of time. This is, however, not a denial of the fact that some images truly convey movement, but only of the assumption that the consciousness of this movement in image must be of a depictive sort.⁵⁵

§5. The Ideality of Images.

The foregoing suggestions have signaled that the temporality of images is a rather perplexing matter. Arguments have been given as to why an image does not depict a

⁵⁴ „Wie steht es da mit der Abbildung? Doch zunächst muss man hier fragen, wie steht es mit der Perzeption? Ist das Perzeption eines Sprunges, als Bild dienend für einen Sprung? Und inwiefern ist das Perzeption eines Sprunges (natürlich nur perzeptive Erscheinung, aufgehoben das, was volle Wahrnehmung ermöglicht)? Da gibt es nachzudenken“ (Hua XXIII, 493/588).

⁵⁵ The impossibility to depict temporality may be another reason behind Husserl's aforementioned realization that art does not move solely within the constraints of depictability. Cf. *Hua* XXIII, 514-524/616-625 (No. 18b). And although Husserl does not return to the question of the imaging of time beyond depictability, this is what Brough does in "Plastic Time" with a view to specific artworks and artistic techniques. Additionally, one could consider the following. While Husserl does not discuss icons as understood in the Eastern iconographic tradition (even though he often uses religious images as examples, without dwelling on their religious significance) icons also illustrate a *movement* that cannot be comprehended within the constraints of depictability. The holy person appears rigidly or motionlessly: there is no attempt in its rendition to convey the illusion of movement (even if a theme, like Elijah's being taken into heaven, calls for it). However, icons are deliberately rich in anachronisms, such that we suspend our concern for the image as reporting a purely historical event, and instead heed to the *movement* of transfiguration, the way an event shines in light of divine glory. The same holds for iconic space. Cf. Leonid Ouspenski, "The Meaning and Language of Icons," ed. Leonid Ouspenski and Vladimir Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons* (New York, St. Vladimir's Press, 1982), 25-49.

temporal point abstracted from a temporal context. But neither does the image depict the temporal context or time span as such. Since we now know that the kind of *consciousness* that sees something in an image is necessarily a time-constituting consciousness, the question arises whether the oddity of this temporality has anything to do with the kind of ‘*being*’ that an image is.

We recall that Husserl dismissed the naïve ontology of images that would proffer that the image is some *thing* really existing ‘in the mind’ or ‘in the world’ [*real*]. Husserl tells us that an image is a *nothing* [*ein Nichts*], in the sense that it is not something real, something that could be perceived. But to say that an image is a perceptual nothing does not mean that the image is nothing at all: the Mona Lisa ‘is’ there and comes into view when I visit the first floor of the Denon wing of the Louvre. In fact, she ‘appears’ the *same*, again and again in the same phase, no matter how often I turn to see her. One is compelled to admit, then, that the repeated consciousness of the Mona Lisa in image would not be possible if the image as such did not have “a ‘being’ [*Sein*] that persists and abides.”⁵⁶ But by this ‘being’ Husserl does not mean the image-thing (even though it is also true that without the poplar panel and stains I could not repeatedly view the Mona Lisa). In fact Husserl means no real being, nothing that could be perceived. By putting ‘being’ between inverted commas Husserl signals that the ‘being’ of an image is to be understood only in a derivative sense, since, strictly speaking, when an image ‘appears,’ *nothing real* appears.⁵⁷ And again, when we ‘see’ a thing, an event, or a temporal being ‘in’ an image, *nothing real* appears: for the image is nothing presently temporal. However

⁵⁶ „Zu einem Bild gehört, dass das Abbild als Bildobjekt verstanden ein verharrendes, ein bleibendes ‚Sein‘ hat.“ (*Hua* XXIII, 536/645).

⁵⁷ Cf. Edmund Husserl, *Die Lebenswelt: Auslegungen der vorgegebenen Welt und ihrer Konstitution. Texte aus dem Nachlass (1916-1937)*, ed. Rochus Sowa, Husserliana XXXIX (Dordrecht, Springer, 2008). Henceforth cited as *Hua* XXXIX with page reference. For this reference see 298. Note that Husserl does not speak of the *Erscheinen*, but of the *Auftreten* of an image.

much the image ‘persists’ and ‘abides,’ neither the image-object nor the image-subject is something enduring in the objective time measured by clocks. Images are not temporal beings but ‘beings’ in the sense of “nontemporal transcendencies”⁵⁸ or, as Husserl calls them, “ideal objectivities.”⁵⁹ Along with all other cultural productions, images, as ideal objects, belong to the region of spirit and not to nature.

To call an image a nontemporal transcendency would seem to decisively undercut our efforts to circumscribe the temporality of images. And yet, *to say that an image is a nontemporal transcendency does not mean that it has nothing to do with time.* The already mentioned cinematic or mutoscopic images obviously employ a temporal succession to depict, e.g., a movement or an event. And yet, they are still ideal objectivities, for a movie can be viewed repeatedly, in principle presenting exactly the same succession of phases with every screening.

Static images, too, are ideal objects related to time. In a manner that is reminiscent of Alexius Meinong’s undistributed objects, the ‘resting’ image can in principle “fill any temporal extent whatever.”⁶⁰ just as it ‘covers over’ [*bedeckt*] a given perceptual space, so also it covers over the temporal duration that would have

⁵⁸ Cf. *Hua X*, 96/101.

⁵⁹ Cf. *Hua XXIII*, 537/646.

⁶⁰ „Indistribuierte Gegenstände sind Zeitmaterien und können jede beliebige Zeitstrecke erfüllen.“ (*Hua X*, 228/235). However, an image is not a species or concept (Cf. *Hua XXIII*, 537/646; 543n/655n). Unlike e.g., a state of affairs, the image is localized or “embodied” by the physical image-thing, and cannot *in fact* be repeated in adequate identity. Husserl claims, however, that at least in principle a painting like the Mona Lisa could be as repeatable as a literary work of art, e.g., Faust. Cf. *Hua XXXIX*, 299; Edmund Husserl, *Erfahrung und Urteil: Untersuchungen zur Genealogie der Logik*, ed. Ludwig Landgrebe (Hamburg, Felix Meiner, 1972). English translation: *Experience and Judgment: Investigations in a Genealogy of Logic*, trans. James S. Churchill and Karl Ameriks (Evanston, Northwestern, 1973). Henceforth cited as *EU* with German and English page references, respectively. For this reference see 317-325/264-269 (§65). There are problems with this position: “Picasso’s *Guernica* and a perfect forgery of it are different works because they are different bits of painted canvas” but a poem, like Wordsworth’s “Tintern Abbey,” is not identical with any printed copy of it: “destroying a copy of ‘Tintern Abbey’ does not destroy the poem” while the destruction of Picasso’s *Guernica* is such that it cannot be redressed or substituted by the forgery (Cf. *Philosophy of Literature: Contemporary and Classic Readings*, ed. Eileen John and Dominic McIver Lopes (Oxford, Blackwell, 2004), 75. In his description of the ideality of works of art, Husserl may have been singularly guided by the archetype of the literary work of art, as Samuel Dubosson suggests in “L’ontologie des objets culturels selon Husserl: L’exemplarité de l’objet littéraire” *Studia Phänomenologica* VIII (2008), 65-81.

been filled by the changing or enduring physical thing. Hence Husserl speaks of images as having “the temporal being of supertemporality, of *omnitemporality*, which, *nevertheless, is a mode of temporality.*”⁶¹

That the image-object is an ideal objectivity, something mental and not ‘natural,’ is plain; but what of the image-subject? Is there not an implicit contradiction in that, on the one hand, an image brings something of *nature* to appearance, and on the other hand, the image-subject is already something *spiritual* and not belonging to nature? Is the image-subject temporally individualized or not?

Fortunately Husserl offers us an important clue to think through this dilemma – namely, by drawing a parallel to recollection. Indeed, recollection is an intentionality that brings to appearance a thing, an event, a temporal being.⁶² However, in a manifold of recollections one can recollect one and the same past object, one and the same *unity in a manifold of temporal phases*. Moreover, one can recollect *one and the same manifold of objective phases* as such, one and the same duration in which the phases follow one another in fixed succession. What holds for the manifold of phases also holds for each phase individually: in principle, I can remember, again and again, the *same* object as it is intended in *one and the same* phase of its duration. For example, I can repeatedly recollect not just the sunrise this morning, but also, I can repeatedly recollect a specific phase of this sunrise and identify it as such.⁶³ “[A]s often as I return to the same past and to the same phase of the past, I find *the* same phase again and again, numerically identical.”⁶⁴ As an identity in a manifold of recollections, the past phase can serve as the basis for the ‘idealization’ of objective

⁶¹ Cf. *EU* 314-317/261-264 (§64d).

⁶² Cf. *Hua* X, 96-98/101-103 (§45).

⁶³ It is precisely on the basis of this identification that, according to Husserl, objective time is constituted in the first place. Cf. *Hua* X, 107-109/113-114 (Beilage IV).

⁶⁴ „Es ist wie bei der Wiedererinnerungs—Vergegenwärtigung, wo ich, sooft ich wiedererinnernd auf dieselbe Vergangenheit und Vergangenheitsphase zurückkomme, immer wieder dieselbe vorfinde, numerisch identisch [...]“ (*Hua* XXIII, 537/646).

time.⁶⁵ Now, the past phase is certainly not a present phase, therefore it cannot be an enduring phase, but it is still a phase *of time* insofar as the past objective phase always appears in a temporal nexus – which in fact is the same temporal nexus as that of the recollecting consciousness. Similarly with the depicted phase in image: it pretends to give a report of the appearance of the Mona Lisa at a certain phase in objective time, although this phase does not abide in time and is not an actually enduring phase.

But there is a substantial contrast between recollection and image-consciousness that decides the extent to which one can speak about temporality in ‘resting’ images. According to Husserl, it is not just the case that the phase that appears in image is not abiding or enduring in time: in point of fact it is “‘presented’ as detached”⁶⁶ in the sense that its

[m]odes of givenness, the modes of appearance, are firmly shut off [*abgeschlossen*], no matter how they may run over into continuations by means of phantasy: as when I let myself be drawn into the phantasying of the running [i.e. in the small sculptural figure representing a runner] or of the orating [in the full-figure sculpture of a Demosthenes].⁶⁷

To be sure, the modes of appearance of cinematic images are also firmly shut off in the sense that they follow one another in strict succession and can be repeated as the same in multiple screenings. However, no mode of appearance of a cinematic image appears detached from the other modes, and in this particular sense cinematic image-

⁶⁵ To be sure, recollection no less than perception refer to ‘real’ objective givens in time; to be an identity in a manifold of acts is not a sufficient criterion for ideality, although for the idealization of objective time identity in a manifold of acts is a necessary condition.

⁶⁶ „Aber die Phase der Zeit, der er [der abgebildete Läufer] angehört, ist allein ‚dargestellt‘, und die verharrt nicht in der Zeit und ist keine real dauernde, sondern eben nur eine Phase und immer wieder dieselbe Phase, wie oft ich sie ansehe.“ (Hua XXIII, 537/646).

⁶⁷ „Wir müssen aber beachten, dass die Gegebenheitsweisen, Erscheinungsweisen fest abgeschlossen sind, mögen sie ihrerseits auch überlaufen in Fortführungen durch Phantasie: wie wenn ich mich hineinziehen lasse in das Phantasieren des Laufens oder des die Rede Haltens etc.“ (Hua XXIII, 537/646)

consciousness is closer to recollection than to static image-consciousness:⁶⁸ for the recollected phase obviously belongs to a temporal nexus, namely, the temporal nexus to which the act of recollection itself belongs. In contrast to these, ‘resting’ images are doubly detached and closed-off: from the present temporality (since the depicted objective phase does not belong to the nexus of perceptual time) and from the phantasy temporality (since indeed *only* the depicted ‘now’ phase appears the same again and again).

The exclusion of the phantasy continuations from the ‘being’ of the depiction, however, calls for phenomenological clarification. Why don’t they have the same “abiding and enduring ‘being’” if both a reproductive phantasy (e.g., recollection) and a perceptual phantasy (e.g., image-consciousness) can in principle serve as the basis for the consciousness of an identity? The answer lies with the distinct forms of unity between, on the one hand, perception and perceptual phantasy, and on the other hand, perception and reproductive phantasy. Let us recall that the depicted ‘now’ is set in conflict with the perceptual ‘now’ in such a way that a veritable ‘image now’ appears but is denounced by its perceptual surroundings and hence is “a not now *in the now*.” The ‘now’ in image and the perceptual ‘now,’ however, enter into conflict because they essentially belong together in the field of perception. In contrast, pure phantasy time and perceptual time cannot co-exist, in the sense that as soon as one lives in perception, phantasy becomes suppressed [*hinuntergedrückt*],⁶⁹ and vice versa. The suppression is indicative of the fact that pure phantasy and perception do not essentially form a unity on the level of appearances: their togetherness in the life of the subject is only possible on the basis of inner absolute time-consciousness.

⁶⁸ One could even go one step further and claim that a cinematic image cannot be reduced to, e.g., the manifold of slides on the corresponding film strip because cinematic time and movement do not appear with the manifold of slides as such.

⁶⁹ Cf. *Hua* XXIII, 75/82.

Consequently, as long as one lives repeatedly in the imaged now, the phantasy time befitting that phantasy world remains uncultivated [*unbebaut*]. Or: it can *only* be cultivated if the imaged now becomes suppressed (the imaged ‘now’ cannot become ‘past’). Hence: regardless of whether the ‘now’ in image is or is not continued by phantasies of what went before and of what happens afterwards, the now in an image and the temporal modes of phantasy do not essentially belong together and do not amount to the consciousness of a temporal succession. Whether image-consciousness is consciousness of temporality in this manner becomes an empirical question.

§6. Concluding Remarks: Transitional Temporality

At the onset of our exploration we cited the traditional characterization of plastic arts as purely spatial or non-temporal. In the course of our exploration this ‘non-temporality’ has been understood in the sense that an image is not an intra-temporal object. It has also been shown that image-consciousness, rather than being one more manner of being conscious of time, is rather, to quote Levinas, “a unique way for time to temporalize.”⁷⁰

While the bulk of Husserl’s analyses are mostly concerned with depictability in image-consciousness, and only tangentially concerned with an imaging that is not a depicting, nevertheless they offer us a point of entrance into the imaging of time. More specifically, these analyses unveil the tension between the depiction of an objective “now” phase of duration and the continuations of this duration in phantasy. Since they do not essentially constitute a unity, the appearance of time in a static

⁷⁰ “[...]il est une façon unique pour que le temps de se temporaliser” Emanuel Levinas, “La réalité et son ombre” *Le Temps Modernes* 38 (1948) 771-789; English translation: “Reality and its Shadow.” In *The Levinas Reader*, Ed. Sean Hand, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Oxford, Blackwell, 1989), 130-143. Henceforth cited as *RO* with French and English page reference, respectively. For this reference *RO* 783/139.

image must be situated in the *transition* from image-consciousness to pure phantasy. While Husserl does not explicitly introduce this transition, we can find a foreshadowing of it in the distinction that he draws between two kinds of imaging [*Bildlichkeit*], namely, inner and outer imaging.

We have already and extensively treated inner imaging: it is the seeing of the subject *in* an image. Outer imaging, in contrast, is a form of symbolic consciousness in the sense that it charges image-consciousness with a signitive function. A readily graspable example of outer imaging are conventional signs, for example, lavatory signs: these are not pure signs insofar as there is still a depictive function at play – e.g., the rough profile of a man or of a woman. However, if these symbols can successfully direct us to lavatories in public places, they do so not by depicting a person but by signifying, e.g., a lavatory. Not all cases of outer imaging, however, entail that the inner imaging function is on the verge of collapsing into a sign. Husserl describes, for example, the following situation:

A photograph, when it is particularly good, presentifies a person to us. We immerse ourselves visually in the photograph. A photograph, however, can also *bring to mind* [*erinnern*] a person in a manner similar to that in which a sign brings to mind something signified.⁷¹

And what the sign brings to mind appears in a new presentation. But while, in the case of conventional symbols, our interest is almost immediately turned away from the image towards what is referred in the manner of a sign, in the aforementioned example of the photograph the turning away from the depiction and towards the person brought to mind in a new presentation can be a *deliberate* transition. The same holds if the image is not a photograph but a painting, and if what is brought to mind is

⁷¹ „Eine Photographie, wenn sie zumal sehr gut ist, vergegenwärtigt uns eine Person. Wir schauen uns in die Photographie hinein. Eine Photographie kann aber auch an die Person in ähnlicher Weise erinnern wie ein Zeichen an das Bezeichnete.“ (Hua XXIII, 52/56 [trans. slightly altered]).

a phantasy event. The depicted ‘now’ phase thus becomes *at the same time* a symbol for an absent event in a phantasy time. However,

“At the same time” naturally does not signify “at the same time” in a temporal sense [*zeitlich Zugleich*]. For the two functions [i.e., inner and outer imaging] are built on one another *in succession*, while in coexistence they check one another. Whoever sees-in does not see beyond; whoever seeks and sees the subject *in the image* cannot, while doing this, at the same time see and seek outwardly.⁷²

The time of images begins with both feet in the imaged now, but drifts into the time that is called to mind, for “the life of consciousness flows continuously and does not merely piece itself together link by link into a chain.”⁷³ By the hand of the image we enter into a veritable *time* and movement – one that is promptly held back, however, by the reappearance of the same now in image. Hence, one can say that the temporality within a plastic artwork is surely not, as Gotthold Lessing understood it, something merely indicated; but neither is this temporality, as Baroque aestheticians would proffer, something successfully realized and completed in the imagination.

⁷² „Das Abbild ist nicht Veranschaulich oder nicht allein Veranschaulichung, sondern ist wesentlich oder ist zugleich Zeichen, Symbol, des Urbildes. ‚Zugleich‘, das darf natürlich nicht ‚zeitlich zugleich‘ bedeuten. Denn die beiden Funktionen sind im Nacheinander aufeinandergebaut, während sie in der Koexistenz sich hemmen. Wer hineinschaut, schaut nicht hinaus, wer das Sujet im Bilde sucht und sieht, der kann, während er dies tut, nicht zugleich es auswärts sehen und suchen.“ (Hua XXIII, 53/57).

⁷³ „Die Erinnerung ist in einem beständigen Fluß, weil das Bewußtseinsleben in beständigem Fluß ist, und nicht nur Glied an Glied in der Kette sich fügt.“ (Hua X, 303/315).