Seeing-in an image: Husserl and Wollheim on pictorial representation revisited

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This paper proposes a parallel between the theories of pictorial representation put forward by Edmund Husserl and Richard Wollheim. By doing so, it aims at facilitating a dialogue that can provide some new elements for an appropriate understanding of threefold seeing-in. The first section offers a comprehensive interpretation of Husserl's theory of image-consciousness. This experience is considered a threefold perceptual phantasy, different from perception and sign-consciousness. The second section presents a review of Wollheim's theory of twofold seeing-in and addresses a possible ambiguity in his notion of 'thing represented'. Finally, the third section discusses two topics that result from this parallel: first, the characteristics of the configurational and recognitional folds in seeing-in experience, and second, the possibility of their 'mixture' with phantasy. As a result, I propose a different account of threefold seeing-in: I suggest that the configurational and the recognitional folds should be taken as 'aspects' or 'intentions' of seeing-in, and that the configurational aspect corresponds to the intention to the image-object.

1. Edmund Husserl's image-consciousness theory: threefold perceptual phantasy

'Image-consciousness' (*Bildbewusstsein*) is the term that the German philosopher Edmund Husserl used to describe the experience that one has in front of pictures. Even though this was not a central topic of Husserl's philosophy, which was more concerned from the beginning with epistemological issues, it appeared recurrently as he was considering other problems, such as the phenomenological method,[1] the structure of the acts of memory,[2] or the nature of intentionality.[3] Regarding this last topic, the discussion of image-consciousness determined the methodological parameters for an analysis of pictorial representations starting from defining the kind of experience that renders it possible. I will begin by briefly referring to this.

1.1 Intentionality first

Husserl's professor Franz Brentano proposed that mental experiences are characterised by being intentional, i.e. being directed towards an object. Because of intentionality, mental phenomena, such as the acts of perceiving, judging, or valuing, are always the experience *of something*, they are presentations (*Vorstellungen*).[4] However, this definition caused some problems when considering experiences that address contradictory objects (*a priori* or *a posteriori*), for example, when we assume that there cannot be square circles, or when we imagine the appearance of a golden mountain. If representations are representations of something, how can there be acts involving imaginary or impossible 'objects'? Addressing this problem, Kasimir Twardowski proposed a differentiation of the components of the act.

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[1] E. Husserl, Husserl an von Hofmannsthal, 12. I. 1907. – Briefwechsel. Band 7 Wissenschaftlerkorrespondenz. Dordrecht, Boston, London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1994, pp. 133–136.

[2] E. Husserl, On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time (1893–1917). Trans. J.B. Brough. Dordrecht, Boston, London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1991, pp. 107–109.

[3] E. Husserl, Intentional Objects. Trans. R. Rollinger. – Husserl's Position in the School of Brentano. R. Rollinger. Dordrecht: Springer, 1999, pp. 251–284.

[4] F. Brentano, Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint. Trans. A. Rancurello, D. B. Terrell & L. McAlister. London and New York: Routledge, p. 68.

He claimed that mental phenomena are composed of a content and an intentional object. While the content is internal to the mind, the intentional object, when real, is external.[5] Within this framework, he referred to a longstanding metaphor by claiming that the content of the act is similar to an image of the intended object.[6] Thus, mental phenomena addressing contradictory objects would still be intentional, as long as they have a content, even though their object is non-existent.[7]

In other words, Twardowski's metaphor posited a 'mental image' as the condition of the possibility of intentionality. However, he did not provide a detailed account of the experience that one has in front of pictures, thus ambiguously conflating presentations in general with pictorial and signitive representations. Husserl reacted to this view, and by doing so, he stated some basic features of image-consciousness for the first time. First, he distinguished the direct, immediate intentionality that grounds presentations in general. Then, he analysed image-consciousness as a mediated experience of its own sort. Finally, he argued that it is because of the character of this mental act (image-consciousness), and not a property of an object (such as resemblance), that something can appear as an image:

> The similarity between two objects, however great it may be, is not sufficient to make one the picture of the other. A presenting entity's ability [*die Fähigkeit eines vorstellenden Wesens*] to use something as a representative [*Repräsentanten*] for something similar to it, to have only one of these consciously present [*gegenwärtig*] and to mean not this one, but the other one – in a word, the ability to present [*die Fähigkeit des Vorstellens*] – is the only means whereby the picture becomes a picture.[8]

This quotation illustrates the relevance that the technical term 'image-consciousness' would acquire later. Husserl used it to stress that the philosophical thematization of images must have a kind of intentionality (a certain 'presenting ability') as its starting point. This argument also implies that image-consciousness is a mediated kind of intentionality. It is a representation (*Repräsentation*) and not a simple intuition because it takes something present to represent something else: 'the present content represents [*repräsentiere*] something; it is not that which we intent; by means of it we present [*vorstellen*] a certain object.'[9] Although this description does not reveal yet what the structure of this mediated representation is, it establishes the basics of Husserl's methodological approach.

1.2 Seeing-in as threefold intentionality

A decade later, Husserl arrived at a more detailed account of this mediated intentionality in 1904–05 in his lectures about the 'Principal Parts of the Phenomenology and Theory of Knowledge'.[10] In these lectures, he perceived seeing-in as a threefold structure of intertwined intentions that determined an immanent way of intuitively referring to something.

In Husserl's view, the intentions toward three different objectivities are at play when we behold a picture, conforming to one unique, complex experience. Using his own terminology,

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[5] K. Twardowski, On the Content and Object of Presentations. A Psychological Investigation. Trans. R. Grossmann. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1977, p. 2.
[6] K. Twardowski, On the Content and Object of Presentations, p. 16.
[7] K. Twardowski, On the Content and Object of Presentations, p. 22.
[8] E. Husserl, Intentional Objects, p. 280. Years later, Husserl partially repeated this argument when denying that pictoriality is a 'real property' in the 5th Logical Investigation. See, E. Husserl, Logical Investigations. Volume II. Trans. J.N. Findlay. New York: Routledge, 2001, p. 125.
[9] E. Husserl, Intentional Objects, p. 254. Transl. mod.
[10] E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory (1898–1925). Trans. J. Brough. Dordrecht: Springer, 2005, pp. 1–115.

we can claim that each of the intentions in this threefold experience is a 'moment' of image-consciousness, a part that cannot stand on its own since it is dependent on the whole it belongs to and co-dependent upon the other moments that belong to that whole as well.[11] One intention addresses the picture or image-thing (*Bildding*), another the image-object (*Bildobjekt*), and a third the image-subject (*Bildsujet*).[12] Since these intentions are already intertwined during the act of image-consciousness on which they depend, only a reflective act can lead us to analyse its constitutive moments. Also, paying attention to each of these intentions *independently* depends on a changing of experience.

For example, a picture can always be perceived as an ordinary thing, and this possibility makes manifest the intention to the image-thing involved in image-consciousness. The picture can be experienced, for example, as a particular object hanging on the wall, situated in the field of perception in a way similar to the bookshelf or the desk next to it. This takes place, for instance, when we are looking for the appropriate hook to hang a picture on the wall. This is not a case of image-consciousness since the perceived object does not have a representational function in this act. Also, for the image consciousness to occur, the weight and length of the physical picture thing have no importance.[13]

The image-thing is relevant for the analysis of image-consciousness only because it 'carries' a figure that appears on it, the image-object. For instance, as I see Artemisia Gentileschi's *Judith Beheading Holofernes*,[14] the lines and colours on the canvas conform to an appearing three-dimensional scene. This image-object holds a middle status. Although it is not to be confused with the image-thing, it is fixed to it: in the case of a painting, for example, the interaction of the pigments with the porous surface of the canvas gives rise to something beyond this simple physical structure.[15] Given this relation, it appears perceptually as being intersubjective and stable in a way that daydreams or visions do not. In other words, following some conventions, the configuration can be seen by any of us, and it would disappear if the image-thing were to be destroyed. But the image-object cannot be taken for an image-thing nor confused with it. For Husserl, it is clear that the image-object is 'a nothing'; it does not exist.[16]

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[11] 'Each part that is independent relatively to a whole W we call a Piece (Portion), each part that is non-independent relatively to W we call a Moment (an abstract part) of this same whole W. [---] An abstractum simpliciter is therefore an object, in relation to which there is some whole of which it is a non-independent part'. E. Husserl, Logical Investigations. Volume II, p. 29. See also pp. 6, 9–10, and 22.

[12] 'We have three objects [*Objekte*]: 1) the physical image [*physische Bild*], the physical thing made from canvas, marble, and so on; 2) the representing [*repräsentierende*] or depicting [*abbildende*] object; and 3) the represented or depicted object. For the latter, we prefer to say simply "image subject"; for the first object, we prefer "physical image"; for the second, "representing image" or "image object."' E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, p. 21. Notice that 'object' must be carefully interpreted here, as I will propose in the next paragraphs. To avoid misinterpretations, I will mostly refer to 'moments'.

[13] E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, p. 20.

[14] A. Gentileschi, Judith Beheading Holofernes (1620 c., oil on canvas, 146.5 x 108 cm.). Florence: Le Gallerie Degli Uffizi.

[15] The image-object 'is obviously not a part or aspect of the physical image thing. To be sure, the colored pigments spread on the surface of the canvas and the lines of the drawing laid on the paper are parts of the physical image thing. But these colors, lines, and so on, are not the representing image, the true image of the imagination, the semblance thing, which makes its appearance to us on the basis of color sensations, form sensations, and so forth.' E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, p. 21.

[16] 'The image object truly does not exist, which means not only that it has no existence outside my consciousness, but also that it has no existence inside my consciousness; it has no existence at all.' E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, p. 23.

In the figurative pictures Husserl was thinking of, the image-object is in relation with something else *that does not appear*—the image-subject.[17] This 'moment', and the threefoldness of image-consciousness that follows from it, is crucial for Husserl. There is image-consciousness only because of the intertwinement of intentions that includes the image-subject.[18] For the sake of the analysis, when considered as an element by itself, this third object can either be fictional or real; while I, as a real person, would be the 'independent' image-subject of my portrait, the biblical legend of Judith, as a fictional person, is the image-subject of Gentileschi's painting. From this it follows that the pictorial relation does not depend on the actual independent existence of its subject. What matters is the kind of experience that the beholder has, which always entails seeing the image-subject in the image-object. This is expressed by the concept of 'seeing-in'.

'Seeing-in' refers to the fact that image-consciousness is a kind of mediated experience where an object (the image-object) appears and represents something else which is seen in it. The relation between image-object and image-subject is expressed in the following quotation, where Husserl is concerned with the analogous experience of phantasy presentation:

> In phantasy presentation an object also appears, but this object appearing in the primary and proper sense is not the presented [*vorgestellte*] object. Phantasy presents an object above all by making another object resembling it appear and by taking it as the representative [*Stellvertreter*] or, better, the image [*Bild*] […] for the object genuinely meant. It looks at the image [*blickt auf das Bild hin*], but in the image sees the subject [*schaut aber im Bild die Sache*] or by means of the image grasps the subject.[19]

That the image-subject is seen in the image-object means, for Husserl, that image-consciousness is an intuitive act. The image-subject 'is' *in* the image object, as opposed to being referred from the distance. It could be said that, differently to the referent of a sign, the image-subject is not completely 'absent':

> We see the meant object in the image, or it is picked out for us from the image intuitively. [---] [The image object] refers to the object properly meant not simply at a distance from the content of what appears, but in it [*in ihn hineinweist*], or refers to the object properly meant through this content. What functions representatively [*repräsentativ*] in the content of the image object is conspicuous in a specific way: it exhibits [*stellt dar*], it re-presents [*vergegenwärtigt*], pictorializes [*verbildlicht*], makes intuitable [*veranschaulicht*].[20]

Even though Husserl did not attribute to the concept of 'seeing-in' the explicit central role that it has been accorded in Richard Wollheim's oeuvre, it translates well his recurrent German terms of '*hineinsehen*', '*hineinschauen*' and '*hineinblicken*'.[21] And this is fundamental in distinguishing the specificity of image-consciousness as a mediated but intuitive act.

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[17] E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, p. 25.

[18] 'Only these moments produce an image consciousness. If the conscious relation to something depicted is not given with the image, then we certainly do not have an image.' E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, p. 32.

[19] E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, p. 26. Regarding the intricated history of Husserl's concepts of 'phantasy' and 'image-consciousness', I will briefly address the problem in section 1.4. It suffices to keep in mind here that in this quotation Husserl is pondering phantasy as having an almost identic structure than image-consciousness.

[20] E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image-Consciousness, and Memory, p. 31.

[21] John Brough made evident the importance of a parallel between Husserl and Wollheim in J. Brough, Something that is Nothing but can be Anything: The Image and Our Consciousness of It. – The Oxford Handbook of Contemporary Phenomenology. Ed. D. Zahavi. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, pp. 545–563, p. 550. See also R-N. Mion (née Kurg), Seeing-in as Three-fold Experience. – Postgraduate Journal of Aesthetics 2014, vol. 2, pp. 18–26.

Therefore, an adequate comprehension of Husserl's theory of image-consciousness entails conserving the main idea that the image-subject is *seen in* the image-object. However, the emphasis on the concept of seeing-in can be misleading. Despite the use of the word 'seeing', image-consciousness should not be understood as a kind of perception, as some interpretations could lead to assume.[22] This does not make it the experience of a sign, either. Clarifying this will serve us in reaching a better understanding of seeing-in.

1.3 Other than perception and sign-consciousness

For Husserl, perception is essentially a direct intuitive experience of something 'in person' or 'in the flesh'; in other words, the self-exhibition (*Selbstdarstellung*) of the intentional object. The object exhibits itself to the perceiver in perception through syntheses of the identity of partial intentions, without the mediation of a representant.[23] This Husserl's basic claim is fundamental for his epistemological theory where intuition plays the role of fulfilling empty intentions.

Now, sign-consciousness is the reference to something by means of something else. The referent (R) is not self-exhibited, but some other object, the signifier (S), functions as the representant of it. While the identity of the self-exhibited object is fundamental for perception, the difference between R and S is crucial for sign-consciousness. However, it is not that sign-consciousness is such because of the difference between R and S, but rather, what characterises sign-consciousness is the aiming beyond what is given (S) at something else (R).[24] That R and S are different, then, follows from this condition of pointing-away (*hinwegweisen*) from the perceptually given sign.[25] Sign-consciousness is therefore a mediated experience that, through the presentation of an object (the sign), points beyond what is intuitively given to something else.

Image-consciousness is not the self-exhibition of an object as perception is; it is a mediated experience similar in this respect to sign-consciousness. However, Husserl considered that the best way of describing the experience of image-consciousness was by claiming that the image-subject is seen in the image-object and not merely meant. Nevertheless, even if the

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[22] In his otherwise excellent essay, John Brough claimed that image-consciousness 'is a kind of perception' (J. Brough, Something that is Nothing but can be Anything, p. 545). Some pages later, he confusingly asserted that 'image consciousness […] is a mode of awareness fundamentally different from perception or phantasy' (p. 546). Brough's argument seems to be that the image-object is present 'actually there', 'in person', and since this is the defining characteristic of perception, image-consciousness has to be a kind of perception (p. 548). However, this can be misleading. Being there 'in person' is a property of self-exhibition, not of pictorial exhibition. Moreover, since image-consciousness is a non-positing experience, as Husserl demonstrated when using it as an example of the modification of neutrality (E. Husserl, Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy. First Book: General Introduction to a Pure Phenomenology. Trans. F. Kersten. The Hague, Boston, Lancaster: Martinus Nijhoff, 1983, pp. 260–262), and the idea of a neutral perception is, at least, dubious for Husserl (E. Husserl, Logical Investigations. Volume II, p. 166), he used two different terms *Wahrnehmung* and *Perzeption* to refer to the essential change provided by the neutralization of a 'perception' (E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image-Consciousness, and Memory, p. 558), as Brough clarifies somewhere else (J. Brough, Translator's Introduction, p. XLVII). I will come back to this in the end of this first section.
[23] Perception fulfills itself 'through the synthesis of identical thinghood [*sachlichen Identität*]. The thing establishes itself through its very self, in so far as it shows itself from varying sides while remaining one and the same.' E. Husserl, Logical Investigations, Volume II, p. 220. See also, p. 221.
[24] E. Husserl, Logical Investigations, Volume II, p. 219.
[25] '[The] symbolic apprehension and, in addition, the signitive apprehension point beyond to an object foreign to what appears internally. In any case, they point outward [*sie weist nach aussen*]. [---] In symbolic presentation, the meaning regard is pointed away [*hinweggewiesen*] from the symbol.' E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, p. 37.

image-subject is seen in the image-object, it does not appear.[26] The only appearance belongs to the image-object. This calls for further elaboration.

First of all, it must be kept in mind that even if the analysis of the act of image-consciousness let us decompose the act into the intentions that constitute its threefoldness, it would be a methodological mistake to define the image-thing, the image-object or the image-subject separately from the whole act of image consciousness. As indicated earlier, each intention is a moment of the act. As such, a correct account of the image-subject must consider it as the non-appearing moment seen in the appearing image-object by means of the act of image-consciousness.

Thus, seeing-in entails that there are not two objects considered, one of which would be the copy of the other. In other words, the image-object in the act directed to the snapshot of my cat is not a configuration that relates by means of resemblance to another possible act, where my actual cat appears. As claimed before, image-consciousness is a relationship between an appearance and a non-appearance *in one and the same act*. To quote Husserl:

> an appearing objectivity [*erscheinende Gegenständlichkeit*] [is] always taken not for itself but for another, nonappearing objectivity represented in image [*nichterscheinende bildmässig repräsentierte*]. [---] But this landscape [the nonappearing image-subject] does not appear as a second thing in addition to the image landscape [image-object]. The available material of sensation, which could possibly function as contents for apprehension, is completely used up. No new appearance can become constituted: the appearance has no apprehension contents at its disposal. [---] We have only *one appearance*, the appearance belonging to the *image object*. But we have more than the one apprehension [*Auffassung*] […] in which this image object becomes constituted for us. [---] The new apprehension permeates [*durchdringt*] the old and has absorbed it into itself.[27]

Two objectifying apprehensions are thus fused, where one, the intention to the image-object, constitutes an appearance by means of which the image-subject is seen-in. Nicolas De Warren, one of the few who have tried to maintain this Husserlian insight, claims that by means of this structure of seeing-in, 'something other than appearance is presented in an appearance'.[28] This claim might seem contradictory from a perceptual perspective (among regular perceptual objects, nothing that does not appear can be seen); however, seeing-in is not a kind of seeing. The threefoldness of image-consciousness expresses its internal conflict: in one singular act, what appears is not what is seen, what is seen is not what appears.

This can be better explained as a consciousness of resemblance and difference within the same act, by referring to an interpretation of the consciousness of conflict based on Husserl's sixth *Logical Investigation*.[29][A1] After claiming that the relationship between empty intentions

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[26] 'This conscious relation, however, is given through that specific consciousness belonging to the re-presentation of what does not appear in what does appear, according to which what does appear, by virtue of certain of its intuitive properties, gives itself as if it were the other.' E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, p. 32

[27] E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, p. 30f.

[28] N. De Warren, Tamino's Eyes, Pamina's Gaze: Husserl's Phenomenology of Image-Consciousness Refashioned. – Philosophy, Phenomenology, Sciences. Essays in Commemoration of Edmund Husserl. Eds. C. Ierna, H. Jacobs & F. Mattens. Dordrecht: Springer, 2010, pp. 303–332, p. 331. See also, p. 315.

[29] The idea that a consciousness of resemblance and difference is constitutive of image-consciousness (contrary to the overlapping [*Deckung*] that characterizes the synthesis of perception) is briefly mentioned by De Warren, who ultimately calls image-consciousness 'a consciousness of "otherness" (*Bewußtsein des "Andersseins"*)' based on the consciousness of conflict (*Widerstreit*) (N. De Warren, Tamino's Eyes, Pamina's Gaze, pp. 321–326. Cf. Logical Investigations, Volume II, p. 212 where Husserl claims that the outcome of the conflict is the object appearing as other, *als anders*). Christian Ferencz-Flatz is the one who has most emphatically argued that

and fulfillment takes place *within* intuitive presentations[A2][A3] too, Husserl acknowledges that every perception and imagination is 'a web of partial intentions, fused together in the unity of a single total intention'.[30] Thus, while the correlate of the whole intention is the thing, the correlates of the partial intentions are the parts and the moments of that thing, implicitly given in any sensible intuition.[31] Husserl's argument is then that, excepting the limit case of a *pure* perception, this web includes partial (empty) intentions that are yet to be fulfilled with the variation of our perspective and the revealing of the other aspects or adumbrations of the intended thing. Partial intentions in perception must be synthesized as appertaining to the same intentional object. Thus, if I see an incomplete pattern in the carpet covered by the sofa—using Husserl's example—partial unfulfilled intentions aim at the completion of that pattern. When, by means of a change of perspective, I gain a fuller partial intention of it, then the new intention must be synthesized, and the thing confirmed as being 'the same', it undergoes a synthesis of identification as being the same.[32]

If[A4][A5] the syntheses of the identity of partial intentions are characteristic of perception, a synthesis of difference or conflict of its partial intentions is distinctive of image-consciousness. The partial intentions stemming from the image-object towards its surroundings are 'frustrated' (*enttäuscht*) by an environment that rather confirms the image-thing than the image-object.[33] The characteristic of the synthesis of conflict is that instead of giving something as 'same', it is conscious as 'other': 'the object of the frustrating act appears as "not-the-same", [but] as "different" from the object of the intending act'.[34] This synthesis of intentions as different or in conflict entails also a partial coincidence, otherwise the distinction would not be possible.[35] The confluence of intentions that results in the seeing of a non-appearing image-subject in an appearing image-object is thus the extraneous convergence

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the concept of conflict must be strictly interpreted in the sense stated by the sixth *Logical Investigation*, even when dealing with image-consciousness (Ch. Ferencz-Flatz, Sehen als-ob: Husserls Bildlehre zwischen Ästhetik und Pragmatik. Nordhausen: Traugott Bautz, 2016, pp. 34–57, p. 37). Given the equivocality that permeates the concept of conflict in the lessons of 1904–1905 (Brough, Translator's Introduction. – E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, pp. XXIX–LXVIII, p. XLVIIf), I have chosen to follow Ferencz-Flatz' interpretation to give a more definite shape to De Warren's idea of image-consciousness as a consciousness of 'otherness'.

[30] E. Husserl, Logical Investigations, Volume II, p. 211. Regarding the mixed composition of intuitive presentations, see also pp. 235–236.

[31] See E. Husserl, Logical Investigations, Volume II, p. 286. This reasoning goes hand in hand with Husserl's idea of the parallel between perception and imagination, particularly, that both kinds of acts give their objects by sides, in adumbrations. See for example E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, p. 17.

[32] E. Husserl, Logical Investigations, Volume II, p. 212. See also See E. Husserl, Logical Investigations, Volume II, pp. 283–286.

[33] Ch. Ferencz-Flatz, Sehen als-ob, p. 38. Cf. E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, pp. 54–55. In Ferencz-Flatz keen description: 'The complementary intentions towards the surroundings of the picture that find their fulfillment in the image-thing are frustrated by the appearance of an image-object, that cannot attach the experiential [*erfahrungsmäßige*] surroundings without conflict. [---] The space of the image[-object] [*Bildraum*] does not continue without conflict outside the picture and precisely because of this its complementary intentions are frustrated as soon as the frame of the picture is crossed.' Ch. Ferencz-Flatz, Sehen als-ob, p. 39.

[34] E. Husserl, Logical Investigations, Volume II, p. 212.

[35] 'All conflict pointed to the fact that the frustrated intention in question was part of a more comprehensive intention, which partially fulfilled itself (i.e. in the supplementary parts) while the original part was estranged. In every conflict there is, accordingly, in a certain fashion, both partial agreement and partial conflict.' E. Husserl, Logical Investigations, Volume II, p. 213.

of the non-coinciding intentions stemming from the different apprehensions.[36] The paradoxical resemblance of something with itself entails a 'splitting' of intentions, the difference between image-object and image-subject.

I stress this interpretation since the differences in the construal of the relationship between these intentions results in contestant image theories. Among them, Lambert Wiesing's stands out by claiming that the image-subject is relevant only when the image-object is used as its signifier. Normally, we are perceptually aware of the image-object, and the image-subject is merely meant when the image-object functions as its representant in an act of sign-consciousness. In other words, only the use of images as pictorial signs, following a certain rule of application, prompts the reference to the image-subject, which, properly speaking, is the *meaning* of the perceived image-object.[37] Mistakenly, Bence Nanay has recently understood Wiesing's position as the standard Husserlian perspective.[38]

Seeing-in means, for Husserl, that the intention to the image-subject belongs to an experience of 'living in the image' and not of pointing-away. This remark aims at the difference between sign-consciousness and image-consciousness. The sign does not stand for itself, for it 'possesses the tendency to push the meaning away from itself and towards what is signified',[39] what is pointed to does not lie within the sign. Husserl opposed this sign consciousness to the 'living in the image', that is, proper image-consciousness. The experience of living in the image is immersive;[40] by means of it 'we live in it [the image-object] in such a way that we experience the resembling traits as resembling, as exhibiting, and see the subject [the image-subject] in them'.[41] Therefore, the opposition between sign-consciousness and image-consciousness is better understood with respect to the kind of intentionality as the condition for these experiences. The difference between sign-consciousness and image-consciousness is the difference between an internal exhibition or immanent image-consciousness and an external or transcendent symbolic consciousness.[42]

In summary, there are three different structures. The first is perception, characterised by self-givenness or self-exhibition. Here, the multiple aspects of the object are the exhibition of the object itself. Due to self-givenness, it can be said of the object that it is present (*gegenwärtig*). The second is sign-consciousness, which is a mediated experience where the sign points

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[36] For example, with regard to the conflict between the image-thing intention and the image-object intention, Husserl claimed that 'we have a unity of perception that fills out the whole visual field, the whole perceptual field of regard. [---] And there coincides with it, with regard to a part, a second perception, or rather only a perceptual apprehension. It erases the genuineness of a corresponding part of the now-perception; it coincides, therefore, with a part of that perception that offers only nongenuine appearance. So we have appearance here, sensuous intuition and objectification, but in conflict with an experienced present'. E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, p. 51.

[37] L. Wiesing, When Images Are Signs: The Image Object as Signifier. – Artificial Presence. Philosophical Studies in Image Theory. Trans. N.F. Schott. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010, pp. 24–59. See also p. 17.

[38] 'A straightforward alternative to my view would be to say that C [the image-subject] merely shows up in our judgment—neither perceptually nor quasi-perceptually. This is Edmund Husserl's and Lambert Wiesing's view'. B. Nanay, Threefoldness. – Philosophical Studies 2018, vol. 175, pp. 163–182, p. 175.

[39] E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, p. 185.

[40] E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, p. 186.

[41] E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, p. 187. See also, N. De Warren, Tamino's Eyes, Pamina's Gaze, p. 323. De Warren opposes the 'referring into itself' (*Hineinweisen*) of the image with a 'referring beyond' (*Hinwegweisen*) of the symbol.

[42] E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, pp. 54 and 89–90.

beyond itself. This pointing beyond itself is the opposite of the self-exhibition of perception. As such, it is an *empty* experience of the intentional object. Instead of being present 'in the flesh', the object of a signitive act is *merely meant*. The third is image-consciousness, which is a mediated experience as well, but instead of pointing beyond itself, the image-subject is seen *in* the image-object. This concept describes for Husserl the experience of seeing something in an image. An image is an object constituted in a particular intentional act, where something that does not appear (the image-subject) is seen in the appearance of something else (the image-object). As moments of the act of image-consciousness, the image-object and image-subject are interdependent. The image-object is, precisely, the image *of something*, and the image-subject is that something *as seen in the image-object*. However, the difference between both must be conserved in order to distinguish perception from image-consciousness. Perceptual self-exhibition occurs through appearances (the multiple aspects of the perceived thing) concurring through a progressive synthesis of identity, since the appearances are *of* the perceived thing itself. In terms of image-consciousness, on the other hand, the partial intentions stemming from the different apprehensions do not form an identity synthesis but a synthesis of conflict between the split intentions to image-object, image-subject and their surroundings. This difference is expressed in the *Logical Investigations* as the difference between self-exhibition (*Selbstdarstellung*) and pictorial exhibition (*bildliche Darstellung*).[43]

This comparison defines the structure of seeing-in as a threefold mediated intentionality. So far, we have undertaken an analysis of the moments of the act. However, despite this, the intentional description of image-consciousness is incomplete. A broader perspective, which considers the relation of this act within the nexus of different experiences, must also be considered.

1.4 Image-consciousness as a perceptual phantasy

Husserl's theory of image-consciousness does not seem to vary too much along the years during which his phenomenology evolved. The mediated threefold structure of image-consciousness remained as such despite the changes that affected the concepts of phantasy, presentification, and neutralisation.[44] However, even though it may seem that the variations of the concept of phantasy would not affect the general concept of image-consciousness, they did, in at least one relevant aspect. Since 1912, Husserl started to consider that both phantasies (such as daydreams) and image-consciousness are cases of imagination [*Imagination*]. As Husserl emphasizes: 'This must *never* be forgotten and is absolutely *certain*'.[45] Better terminology developed around the same years classified these experiences as *reproductive phantasies* and *perceptual (perzeptive) phantasies*.[46]

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[43] E. Husserl, Logical Investigations, Volume II, p. 221.

[44] Phantasy was first understood as an imagination (*Einbildung*) with an intentionality operating through 'mental images' (E. Husserl, Logical Investigations, Volume II, p. 165). Then under the name of 'phantasy' (*Phantasie*) it was taken in the broader sense as another term for presentifications in general (E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, p. 565), or, in the strict sense, for the neutralized version of these (E. Husserl, Ideas I, p. 260). Finally, it was restricted to the as-if modality, dependent on a mode of performance or attitude (E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, p. 693).

[45] E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, p. 570.

[46] E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, p. 565. The choice of the German adjective '*perzeptive*' is relevant. Husserl found it important to distinguish, terminologically, between perception (*Wahrnehmung*) and perceptual phantasy (*perzeptive Phantasie*). While Wahrnehmung is marked by its actual

Husserl's ultimate reason for grouping reproductive phantasies and image-consciousness together was their relationship with regular experience:

> In the case of the normal image […], I have no consciousness of reality [*Wirklichkeitsbewusstsein*] at all […]. I have no inclination whatsoever to take the image object as real […]. I take it in a manner similar to that in which I take a reproductive phantasy image that I project—quite vivaciously, perhaps—into reality [*ziemlich lebendig hineinphantasiere in die Wirklichkeit*] […]. The phantasy image 'appears', then, among things and in the same space, and yet not in the manner of something real [*einer Wirklichkeit*].[47]

One way of understanding this, in line with Husserl's concerns, is through the question why is the image *not* an illusion? In other words, why do we 'tolerate' the appearance of something which we recognise as not being actual? For example, when I am waiting for the tram at night and see some lights in the distance, I can see that the tram is arriving. A mixture of shapes and colours as well as my impatience for the tram to arrive and the darkness of Cologne's streets would prompt me to see the approaching tram. After a couple of minutes, I realize that the lights I am seeing remain suspiciously static. I sharpen my vision as much as possible and start to realize other details: the lights' change of colour every minute. Also, what I saw previously as the contours of the tram seem now more like cables, and so on. I end up realizing that what I was seeing were the traffic lights at the next intersection. The previous appearance is replaced by this new one; instead of 'seeing' the tram, I now see the traffic lights and the cables where they are suspended, the tram being a mere illusion.

In the Husserlian framework, perceptual errors or visual illusions as the one in the example prompt the question about the experienced difference between perceiving something and an act of image-consciousness. The threefold structure alone does not fully reveal the character of image-consciousness, specifically in what refers to its modalized being-character. This can lead to understanding images as 'illusions', deceiving perceptions nurtured by phantasy. In other words, threefoldness is not enough to account for the experiential difference between seeing something and seeing an image-subject in the appearance of an image-object. My claim is that there is a sense in which the latter experience is closer to daydreaming than to perception. To understand this, I suggest complementing the analytical perspective regarding the structure of the act by providing a 'synthetic' account that considers its relationship within the nexus of experience.

The opposition between acts of regular experience (*erfahrende Akte*) and acts of quasi-experience (*quasi erfahrende Akte*) serves Husserl in this purpose.[48] The latter are also called phantasying acts, and as an example of perceptual phantasies, he had in mind image-consciousness.[49] He claimed that in the acts of phantasy, objects are not intuited as actual (*als Wirklichkeit*) but only as actual-as-if. In other words, the act is modified in the mode of quasi-experience, and its object is also modified, in the mode of as-if.[50]

Husserl discovered that there is a difference between seeing an image as if it belongs to the nexus of actual reality (in which case it would be an illusion, like a trompe-l'oeil picture *when*

positing, the as-if character of a *Perzeption* makes of it, strictly speaking, another kind of experience E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image-Consciousness, and Memory, pp. 558 and 584.

[47] E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, p. 571.
[48] E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, p. 605.
[49] E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, pp. 605 and 607.
[50] E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, p. 606.

it deceives us) and seeing something in an image in proper image-consciousness (in which case it is a fiction, *Fiktum*[51]). This is possible only by means of a new attitude, the attitude of quasi-experience.[52] In this attitude, the apprehension that could dispute the fiction and cancel it as an illusion is inhibited. This is the basic character of phantasy understood as a change of attitude:

> The change of attitude [*Änderung der Einstellung*] […] is precisely the shift from actual experience [*Erfahrung*], or, as the case may be, from the negation of actual experience, into *phantasy*, into the peculiar consciousness of the as-if [*Bewusstsein des Als-ob*] […]. We submit to what appears as if it were reality [*als ob es Wirklichkeit wäre*]. […] We are, of course, experiencing, but we are not in the attitude of regular experience [*Erfahrung*]; we do not actually join in the experiential positing [*Erfahrungssetzung*]. The reality [*Wirklichkeit*] changes into reality-as-if [*Wirklichkeit als ob*] for us, changes into 'play' […].[53]

Thus, phantasy in the strict sense is a mode of performing acts.[54] This modalization does not concern the mode of givenness of the intentional object (like the reproductive modification does[55]), rather its being or positing character. If we follow this interpretation, any act can be performed with a modalized positing character, in the mode of phantasy (although it generally undergoes other parallel modifications at the same time).[56] Non-reproductive acts, like depictions, can be performed in the mode of phantasy as well: this is the case of perceptual (*perzeptive*) phantasies for Husserl.[57]

This variation in the mode of performance is necessary to account for the differences in positing (*Setzung*) in perception and in perceptual phantasies. Regular experience (*Erfahrung*) would contest the apprehended objectivity of image-consciousness. As in the example of the tram, our belief in the actuality of the world is determined by consistency and 'realistic' resolutions of conflicts between the perceived object, its surroundings, our previous experiences, our expectations, and communications with other people, etc. Since it does not 'fit' with its surroundings, the object apprehended in image-consciousness would be taken as an illusion trying to deceive us under the attitude of regular experience. However, we are not deceived by images because we do not usually mistake images for actual things. I do not confuse the photograph of my brothers with my actual brothers, or the decapitation of Holofernes in Gentileschi's painting with an actual event. In this sense, images are not illusions. But I keep seeing both, my brothers and Holofernes' beheading, without correcting

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[51] I use *Fiktum* in the sense of E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, pp. 585 and 608 (translated "figment" by Brough).

[52] I consider important to keep this sense of an attitudinal change distinct from the notion of 'aesthetic attitude', occasionally used by Husserl with a similar meaning (as a 'neutralizing' modification, broadly speaking) but too embedded in parallel problems which impede its clear distinction (E. Husserl, Husserl an von Hofmannsthal, pp. 133–134. See also E. Husserl, Ideas I, p. 262. For an extensive account regarding its relationship with image-consciousness, see Ch. Ferencz-Flatz, The Neutrality of Images and Husserlian Aesthetics. – Studia Phaenomenologica 2009, vol. 9, pp. 477–493). I also distinguish between phantasy as an attitude and neutralization, following Husserl's remarks in E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image-Consciousness, and Memory, pp. 709–10. About phantasy as a change of attitude, see p. 614f. About phantasy as a mode of performing with a playful character see p. 693ff. With this interpretation (despite considerable nuances) concur C. Rozzoni, From Abbild to Bild? Depiction and Resemblance in Husserl's Phenomenology. – Aisthesis 2017, vol. 1, pp. 117–130; P. Eldridge, Depicting and seeing-in. The '*Sujet*' in Husserl's phenomenology of images. – Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences 2018, vol. 17, pp. 555–578; and Ch. Ferencz-Flatz, Sehen als ob, p. 51f.

[53] E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, p. 614–615. Transl. mod.

[54] E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, p. 693.

[55] E. Husserl, Ideas I, p. 243f.

[56] Regarding the universal applicability of the phantasy modification, see E. Husserl, Ideas I, p. 260.

[57] E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, p. 607.

the experiences as I do in the example of the tram. This can occur because phantasy is a mode of performing or attitude, the playful character of which allows us to experience the object *as-if* without erasing it from our experience. In other words, the person in the attitude of phantasy is indifferent to the connection of the object with the realm of the natural or real world as well as with upcoming and previous experiences. The fantasied object 'soars' beyond the actual world.[58] This entails a different kind of interest, unlike the regular interest in 'testing the "reality" of appearances'.[59] Thus, while regular experience is the characteristic of an unmodified natural attitude, quasi-experience is that of fantasy.

Instead of understanding pictures as phenomena proximate to illusions, applying the concept of perceptual phantasies allowed Husserl to understand them as fictions (*Fikta*), which are not in conflict with the nexus of regular experience, but happen, as it were, in another world. Pictures, sculptures, movies, and theatre representations are cases of the species of 'perceptual phantasy' (*perzeptive Phantasie*). Even though the structure of each of these acts varies, all of them are characterised by being fixed to an object that can be reached by a normal perception: the photographic film, canvas, piece of marble, or actor. Seeing-in, as a threefold perceptual phantasy, is perceptual since it comprehends an intention addressing an image-thing (as opposed to daydreaming). It is nevertheless phantasy since the object of the full experience has the positing character of *as-if*. It does not 'fit' with reality as a regular object would. As a 'piece' of phantasy, it soars or hovers above the actual world. Thus, I see the beheading of Holofernes as it were, in a quasi-experience. With this, we have reached a fuller account of Husserl's idea of seeing-in.

2. Richard Wollheim's twofold seeing-in theory

2.1 The methodological starting point

Since the most important part of Edmund Husserl's writings on images remained unpublished until 1980, the expression 'seeing-in' was first popularised by Richard Wollheim's theory of art.[60] Wollheim was not aware of the Husserlian theory of image-consciousness; thus he considered Albert Einstein to be the only one to use this concept in a similar manner before him,[61] despite its rudimentary recognition in antiquity and the Renaissance.[62] Wollheim's theory emerged in a particular context of image studies. In his time, the extended influence of Nelson Goodman's critique against resemblance as a sufficient and/or necessary condition for pictorial representation drove art theorists and semioticians to treat pictorial representation as a kind of denotation and pictures as signs.[63] The modern strength of resemblance theories of representation was mostly derived from the Renaissance idea of the application of geometry in the reproduction of perspective. The idea was that optics and geometry could analyse and then replicate the bundle of light rays, in principle, by perfectly matching the light rays delivered by the object and those delivered by the picture. However, this ideal matching includes several abnormal conditions that contradict the common experience of beholding

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[58] E. Husserl, Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory, p. 610.
[59] P. Eldridge, Depicting and seeing-in, p. 565.
[60] R. Wollheim, Art and its Objects. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980, pp. 137–151. Wollheim's. In the first edition of *Art and its Objects* (1968), Wollheim analysed pictorial representation in terms of a seeing-as.
[61] R. Wollheim, A Note on 'Mimesis as Make-Believe'. – Philosophy and Phenomenological Research 1991, vol. 51 (2), pp. 401–406, p. 403.
[62] R. Wollheim, Painting as an Art. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987, p. 54.
[63] N. Goodman, Languages of Art. An Approach to a Theory of Symbols. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merril, 1968.

pictures: to match the perspective in the picture, the original object would have to be seen through a pinhole, from a certain angle, and with a fixed, motionless eye. Moreover, even if this were possible, Goodman pointed out that geometrical laws (which were considered to be the guarantee of objective resemblance) were defied by artists looking to achieve what is usually called a 'faithful', 'realist' representation.[64] Thus, Goodman's relativization of pictorial realism confronted the longstanding view that pictures are like mirrors or windows, a metaphor that heavily relied on objective resemblance. Instead, he replaced the model of seeing with the model of reading, giving a decisive turn to image studies. By claiming that images are read and not seen, he overcame the idea of art as mimesis as well as the possibility of a 'neutral' realism in plastic arts, strengthening a 'semiotic' account of pictorial representation.[65]

All through his writings about art and depiction, from the seventies until the year of his death, Richard Wollheim assumed a different perspective as a starting point. He axiomatically claimed that the definition of pictorial representation should take into consideration the kind of experience that makes it possible. He called this the 'phenomenological' character of pictorial representations,[66] in the sense of the first-person perspective that is able to answer to the question about the nature of the experience that we have in front of pictures.[67] From this perspective, Wollheim argued that in pictorial representations, the 'representation is perceptual',[68] a 'kind of seeing'.[69] And so he opposed the 'semiotic' views to his own 'psychological' account.[70]

2.2 Pictorial representation as a visual phenomenon

Although Wollheim accepted Goodman's argument against objective resemblance, his psychological account prompted him to defend the idea that the condition for experiencing pictures is not reading but rather a kind of seeing. In other words, he considered that Goodman was committed to a category mistake that missed the necessary conditions of the experience one has in front of a picture. We indeed learn how to see something in an image, and it is not an easy task to instruct someone completely ignorant of our representational practices to experience the resemblance between a depiction and its depicted object.

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[64] '[The] ways of making it "look right" are not reducible to fixed and universal rules; for how an object looks depends not only upon its orientation, distance, and lighting, but upon all we know of it and upon our training, habits, and concerns.' N. Goodman, Languages of Art, p. 20.

[65] I understand 'semiotic' theories, following Wollheim, in a broad manner, as the group of theories 'which have in common that they ground representation in a system of rules or conventions that link the pictorial surface, or parts of it, with things in the world'. R. Wollheim, On Pictorial Representation. – The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism 1998, vol. 56 (3), pp. 217–226, p. 218.

[66] R. Wollheim, On Pictorial Representation, p. 221. To avoid confusions with the Husserlian perspective, I prefer to refer to this as the 'psychological character' of pictorial representation. When the term 'phenomenology' cannot be avoided, I use the quotation marks.

[67] 'the way to understand pictorial representation is through what we see […]. It holds on a more general level in that what it is for a picture to represent something is to be explained by reference to the general nature of the experience to be had in front of it, and it holds on a more particular level in that what a given picture actually represents is to be explained by reference to the specific content of the experience to which it gives rise.' R. Wollheim, What Makes Representational Painting Truly Visual? I. – Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volumes 2003, vol. 77, pp. 131–147, p. 132.

[68] R. Wollheim, On Pictorial Representation, p. 226.

[69] R. Wollheim, Art and its Objects, p. 11; R. Wollheim, Painting as an Art, p. 46.

[70] R. Wollheim, Painting as an Art, p. 44.

Wollheim agreed in this respect with Goodman's argument against an 'innocent eye'.[71] But this does not mean that images are signs or that pictorial seeing is like reading. It does not follow, from Goodman's argument against objective resemblance, that pictorial seeing cannot be analysed from its perceptual conditions. Not every theory acknowledging conventionalism in pictorial seeing leads to a semiotic approach.

Following his own methodological constraint, Wollheim identified the subsequent conditions or 'minimal requirements' for an appropriate experience of a representational picture:

> (One) if a picture represents something, there will be a visual experience of it, called the appropriate experience that determines that it does so; (two) if a suitable spectator looks at the picture, he will, other things being equal, have this experience; and (three) this experience will be, or include, a visual awareness of the thing represented.[72]

The first condition establishes the very possibility of having the experience of beholding a picture. Even though it refers to a perceptual experience of visual nature, it does not preclude—at least not in a sufficiently explicit manner—for example, the possibility of interpreting it as a perception followed by an act of reading. Letters and other visual signs are also seen before being read, there being 'a visual experience' of them. Even if this clause states that the appropriate experience of a pictorial representation is a visual experience, the claim is completed only by recourse to the third condition: this experience must include the visual awareness of the 'thing represented'.[73] In this manner, Wollheim's claim is sharper in its rejection of a semiotic account of pictorial seeing. Not only are we visually aware of the 'surface' (e.g. the stained canvas) but also 'the thing represented' (e.g. Judith slaying Holofernes). I will return to this in more detail in the next subsection as it constitutes the essential determination of Wollheim's theory of seeing-in as a twofold experience.

By mentioning the suitability of the spectator, the second condition does not refer to a fixed motionless eye receiving through a pinhole a bundle of light rays, as in the implicit stipulation that Goodman discovered in objective resemblance theories. This does not imply, however, the irrelevance of the physical space between the beholder and the picture. It actually sets more than the necessary physical disposition of the person in front of the picture; by referring to a *suitable* spectator, Wollheim addresses Goodman's argument against the innocent eye and enables the accomplishment of the third condition. According to Wollheim, suitable spectators are informed by concepts and beliefs (and, optimally, by the artist's intention), and their visual experience is permeated by these. Concepts 'provide the descriptions under which he perceives what he sees in the picture'.[74] Beliefs, at the same time, 'justify his perceiving what he sees in the picture under the concepts that he does'.[75] If concepts and beliefs were not permeating the experience of seeing something in a picture, then either the represented thing would be impoverished, or we would not be 'visually aware' of it as such. For how else would

[71] R. Wollheim, Nelson Goodman's Languages of Art. – The Journal of Philosophy 1970, vol. 67, pp. 531–539, p. 538.

[72] R. Wollheim, On Pictorial Representation, p. 219.

[73] I am aware of the ambiguity behind terms such as 'marked surface' or 'medium' on the one side, and 'object' or 'thing represented' on the other. I use in this section Wollheim's own 'familiar' expressions. In the section that follows, I will problematize an aspect of this ambiguity.

[74] R. Wollheim. Imagination and Pictorial Understanding. – Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volumes 1986, vol. 60, pp. 45–60, p. 48.

[75] R. Wollheim, Imagination and Pictorial Understanding, pp. 48–9.

we be able to *see* a Jewish woman beheading a drunk general to free her people from the rule of Nebuchadnezzar?

Wollheim coined the concept of 'seeing-in' to define a theory satisfying these three conditions. He called 'twofoldness' the distinctive trait of seeing-in, a perceptual skill by means of which 'Looking at a suitably marked surface, we are visually aware at once of the marked surface and of something in front or behind something else.'[76] I will elaborate on this in the following subsection.

2.3 Seeing-in as a twofold experience

Seeing-in is, for Wollheim, an experience with two aspects: configurational and recognitional:

> I understand it [twofoldness] in terms of a single experience with two aspects, which I call configurational and recognitional. Of these two aspects I have claimed that they are phenomenologically incommensurate with the experiences or perceptions […] from which they derive […].[77]

In this excerpt, Wollheim's purpose is to discard an interpretation of twofoldness as a composition of two different experiences. If one interprets Wollheim's demand to see a 'marked surface' and something 'in front or behind' it as an alternation of experiences, then this would give rise to a duck/rabbit scenario, where something can be seen either as *x* or as *y* but not as *x* and *y* simultaneously. Wollheim, on the contrary, argued that 'if I look at a representation as a representation, then it is not just permitted to, but required of, me that I attend simultaneously to object and medium.'[78] Therefore, these are not two alternatives or disjunctive experiences, as if one would see either the 'medium' or the 'object'. However, it is not the case of two simultaneous but different experiences either, as if one would see the medium but imagine or infer the object. Wollheim claimed that we are visually aware of both the medium and the depicted object at the same time, in one single experience of seeing-in. Both, the awareness of medium and represented object are kept in an 'intimate rapport'[79] (the object is seen *in* the medium), but this cannot be conflated with the reduction of one to the other. A certain 'dissociation' between both aspects is a necessary condition for their simultaneity. Thus, this fundamental characteristic of twofoldness served Wollheim in having his theory oppose to seeing-as theories (according to which two experiences of the same kind—e.g. perceptions—can alternate) and theories that explain pictorial representations with recourse to imagination (where the two experiences, alternating or simultaneous, are of different kinds, such as a perception supplemented by an imagination).[80]

As stated by Wollheim, twofoldness is the ground for near-complete absence of distortion in depictions, when the position of the spectator changes. For example, when a picture is seen

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[76] R. Wollheim, On Pictorial Representation, p. 221.
[77] R. Wollheim, On Pictorial Representation, p. 221.
[78] R. Wollheim, Art and its Objects, p. 142.
[79] R. Wollheim, Art and its Objects, p. 149.
[80] R. Wollheim, On Pictorial Representation, p. 221. See also, R. Wollheim, Art and its Objects, p. 142, and R. Wollheim, A Note on Mimesis as Make-Believe, p. 404. In his paper on seeing-in, Eldridge overlooks these characteristics of Wollheim's theory. He writes: 'Wollheim claimed that if one ceased to be aware of the image's twofoldness (i.e. its material medium and its exhibited object), then seeing-in becomes either a case of "straightforward perception" or a case of "visualizing […] in the mind's eye" (Wollheim 1987, 47). This seems to entail that seeing-in is composed of an act of perception and an act of phantasy with its reproduced flow of experience.' P. Eldridge, Depicting and seeing-in, p. 564.

from an unusual viewpoint, such as while sitting on the floor of a gallery, the object seen undergoes a minimal variation in perspective. This is especially noticeable when the same positional changes occur in the perception of a regular non-pictorial object. According to Wollheim, there is no distortion of perspective or deformation of the object seen in a pictorial representation when the spectators changes their position since 'the spectator is, and remains, visually aware not only of what is represented but also of the surface qualities of the representation'.[81] At the same time, this property makes possible aesthetic appreciation, understood as the contemplation of the technical virtues of artists, by means of the awareness of the 'material features' that renders the visual awareness of the object of the representation.[82]

Wollheim claimed that with twofoldness, we reach an explanatory limit: the examination of the 'phenomenology' of the experience of pictorial representations does not deliver any further analysable condition of these two aspects.[83] However, some of the contemporary discussion about pictorial representations attempts to reach a more detailed characterisation of the aspects involved in seeing-in, debating whether it is twofoldness or threefoldness, what better characterises it, and how the components of these multifolded experiences should be defined.[84] In this framework, Bence Nanay has importantly pointed out that Wollheim mixed two different senses of the seen-in object: (1) as the three dimensional object visually encoded on the flat surface, and (2), as the three dimensional existent depicted object. According to Nanay, Wollheim seems to sometimes assert that the first one is seen in the medium and sometimes suggests that it is the second.[85] This critique calls for further detail.

2.4 On the ambiguity of the 'thing represented'

In his distinction of the folds of picture perception, Nanay assumes an ontological perspective. He does not refer to aspects of the experience, as Wollheim did, but to 'entities': 'A: the two dimensional picture surface [,] B: the three dimensional object the picture surface visually encodes, [and] C: the three dimensional depicted object'.[86] Thus, his criterion for this distinction is existential, a difference in the 'ontological status' between B and C:

> B only exists because the picture exists: all the features of B are determined by A and A alone: by the marks on the two-dimensional surface. This is not true of C: in the case of a photograph of my grandmother, C is my grandmother and her features are not determined by A. B is a virtual object: it is fully determined by the marks on the picture surface given the rules of optics and it has only perceptible properties […].[87]

The difference between B and C could be significant in determining the sense of Wollheim's perceptual condition: that the 'object' and 'medium' must both be visually aware. However,

[81] R. Wollheim, Art and its Objects, p. 144.
[82] R. Wollheim, Art and its Objects, p. 144.
[83] R. Wollheim, Imagination and Pictorial Understanding, p. 47.
[84] B. Nanay, Threefoldness, p. 170. L. Wiesing, Artificial Presence, p. 21.
[85] B. Nanay, Threefoldness, p. 171. Brough considers that for Wollheim only the first of these objects, 'a figure', is seen on the surface or on the physical support (Something that is Nothing but can be Anything, p. 551), and Eldridge seems to follow Brough's interpretation of Wollheim (Depicting and seeing-in, p. 557). Regina-Nino Mion has complemented this view, arguing that Wollheim's image theory is actually threefold when applied to figurative paintings if one considers his difference between a representational and a figurative content (despite threefoldness not being thematized as such in most of Wollheim's writings about seeing-in). R-N. Mion, Seeing-in as Three-fold Experience, p. 22. In the third section of this paper, I propose a different interpretation.
[86] B. Nanay, Threefoldness, p. 170.
[87] B. Nanay, Threefoldness, p. 170.

beyond Nanay's own thesis, the difference of criteria when defining either the 'aspects' or the 'entities' of the multi-folded experience cannot be overlooked.

One way to understand this difference is by reference to the nature of seeing-in. For Wollheim, it was clear that seeing-in cannot be conflated with seeing face-to-face. In the previous subsections we argued that Wollheim defended the visuality of pictorial representation and this translates into a two-fold visual awareness of a 'medium' or 'marked surface' and an 'object' or 'represented thing'. However, this does not mean for him that the visuality of the represented thing is restricted to the possibilities of the visuality of a thing seen face-to-face. Seeing-in allows for more than regular perception: 'it allows us to have perceptual experiences of things that are not present to the senses: that is to say, both of things that are absent and also of things that are non-existent.'[88] It has thus a broader extension of objects than those we can see face-to-face:

> what I see in a surface is subject to precisely the same cross-classification as what a painting represents: objects versus events, and particular objects-or-events versus objects-or-events that are merely of a particular kind. And, even if the first part of this classification also applies to what I see face-to-face, it is significant that the second part doesn't.[89]

If one assumes the perspective of a regular perception, according to which it must be possible to see the represented thing face-to-face, then seeing something non-existent, something absent, or something that is merely of a particular kind (and which has no further determination as a particular thing[90]) is impossible *a priori*. Thus, from the ontological criterion of Nanay it would have to follow that, when Wollheim claims that something non-existent is seen-in, he is actually claiming that a three dimensional appearance (B) is seen in the marked surface, but there is no depicted object (C). However, this overlooks the fact that, for Wollheim, 'Representation does not have to limit itself to what can be seen face-to-face: What it has to limit itself to is what can be seen in a marked surface.'[91]

In other words, once the depicted object has been defined as a necessarily independent existent object, there is no comeback to pictorial perception to guarantee the visual awareness of the depicted object, as Wollheim pretended.[92] But this starting point undermines the whole enterprise of Wollheim's theory: it is not the ontological criterion that determines the kind of experience we have in front of a picture; the kind of experience we have in front of a picture is the basic ground for the determination of the aspects involved in such experience.

Thus, Nanay's definition of the depicted object applies only to representations that refer to something that could also be seen face-to-face; in other words, when it is taken as a sign or a copy of something else. But this perspective is foreign to the minimal requirements of pictorial representation. I have already mentioned Wollheim's critique of the semiotic

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[88] R. Wollheim, Art and its Objects, p. 145.
[89] R. Wollheim, Painting as an Art, p. 71.
[90] R. Wollheim, Painting as an Art, p. 69.
[91] R. Wollheim, On Pictorial Representation, p. 223.
[92] I do not mean to claim that Nanay does not distinguish between 'picture seeing' and 'seeing face-to-face'. On the contrary, his purpose is to distinguish them. However, since he identifies the depicted object with an entity independent from the picture, he concludes that it can only be 'quasi-perceptually' aware or 'recognized' with the assistance of mental imagery in the depiction. Moreover, while the depiction is a necessary condition for picture seeing, the depicted object is not (B. Nanay, Threefoldness, p. 177). I consider that this conclusion, which stems from the ontological criterion that Nanay follows for defining the 'folds' of the experience, is incompatible with the phenomenological approach of Husserl and the psychological approach of Wollheim.

treatment of pictures. The conception of the image as a copy, on the other hand, was frequently criticised by Wollheim too. Following Wittgenstein, Wollheim claimed that two possibilities were plausible for a case of resemblance: when two objects, equally present, are observed as resembling each other (as when, in the parking lot, I compare two similar automobiles I see at that moment) or when only one of these is present and its resemblance to the absent object is observed (as when I compare the automobile I see with the similar but absent automobile of my friend). The image as a copy of something else would render an experience of the second sort. Wollheim rejected both possibilities arguing that only the first sort of experienced resemblance would satisfy the minimal requirements of his 'phenomenological' principle (i.e. that we are visually aware of the represented thing), but only the second sort of experienced resemblance is in accordance with the concept of representation.[93]

Thus, as per Wollheim's perspective, the ontological criterion cannot ground an argument against the possibility of seeing the represented thing in an appearing configuration. As a manner of conclusion, I will sketch an alternative interpretation of seeing-in, further determining the folds involved through a mutual reinforcement of Wollheim's and Husserl's insights.

3. In defence of (threefold) seeing-in

In this section, I aim to present some elements for a better understanding of seeing-in, inspired by both Husserl and Wollheim. I consider this dialogue pertinent not only because of a common interest in a phenomenon (seeing-in) but, most of all, because of a methodological compatibility. Wollheim's psychological account and Husserl's intentional analysis have this in common: they assume the description of the experience that one has in front of pictures to be the starting point for the study of pictorial representation. From this common methodological ground rises their further coincidence in describing the mediated character of this experience as composed by simultaneous co-dependent visual 'aspects' or 'intentions'.

Along this line of thought, as I previously showed, instead of the ontological criterion, the analysis of Wollheim's twofoldness must proceed from the experience of seeing-in; in other words, assuming that each of the 'folds' is an aspect of the experience instead of an entity. I do not pretend to deny that Wollheim sometimes explains these aspects as the awareness of two different 'objects', a marked surface and a thing represented, as the texts quoted above have abundantly showed. However, in order to determine what these 'objects' could actually be, the adequate thing to do is to turn to the experience that brings them forward. My claim is that the concepts of 'configurational aspect' and 'recognitional aspect', which Wollheim uses to describe the interaction of the two folds,[94] can deliver a better account of seeing-in than the one presented by Nanay. By redefining the characteristics of the configurational aspect, I present another alternative to dissolve the ambiguity regarding the concept of 'represented thing'.

Twofoldness entails that seeing-in is the result of the interplay of two experiential aspects: the configurational and the recognitional. I propose to understand the first aspect as the appearance of a configuration. This appearance is not that of a common object, like any other

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[93] R. Wollheim, On Pictorial Representation, p. 221.
[94] See R. Wollheim, On Pictorial Representation, p. 221 and Painting as an Art, p. 73.

regularly perceived thing. A configuration is a shape appearing on a surface. Seeing a stained wall, we are not always aware of a configuration, contrary to when we see-in a fresco. This is not because the stained wall lacks the material properties that the fresco has; there could actually be a total coincidence. Take, for instance, the experience of a non-deliberately made image, as when someone discovers the face of their dog in a humid, dirty wall. The difference in this experience from the experience of someone seeing the same wall unaware of the hidden shape proves that seeing this configuration is already more than just seeing a randomly marked wall. Something similar takes place when contemplating double images: the same material properties give rise to different shapes. Wollheim's 'marked surface' has to be already something different from any perceptual object; the configuration is not reducible to those material properties that make the stained wall a regular thing of the world; the configuration is a 'purely' visible 'object'.[95]

On the other hand, to recognise the thing represented means for Wollheim to see an object or an event (either particular or 'merely of some particular kind'[96]) in that shape or appearance. By underlining that without one of the two interdependent aspects there would be no pictorial representation, Wollheim noticed that there cannot be a configuration if nothing is recognised in it. If nothing is seen in the fresco, then I merely have a stained wall, i.e. a regular physical object and not a configuration. A shape is the shape of something, irrespective of how indeterminate that something is. Without ordering the sensuous elements that are present on a determinate surface, following a recognised pattern, no fixed shape would appear, and the physical marks will be seen as the characteristics of a worldly object. If I deliberately perform the exercise of seeing-in, then my regard will ramble, trying to guess a shape by means of the simultaneous recognition of a represented thing. The sketches of some artist can explain this process well. My gaze may stumble upon an Edgar Degas sketch without being sure whether what I see is the part of a body or a mistaken stroke, a representation of movement or an unintentional charcoal stain. As the represented thing that I recognise gains in determination ('it is the drawing of something, it is a human body, it has a dress, it is a ballerina'), I can also better tell what the configuration is, what belongs to the shape and what is a random spot. This is a relevant output of the interdependence of the configurational and the representational aspects.

This rather free interpretation of Wollheim's twofoldness is inspired by Husserl's distinction between the intentions to the image-thing and the image-object. In my view, the configurational aspect corresponds to the intention towards the image-object since it is not a mere worldly object but a virtual one, what Husserl called 'a nothing' and Wiesing an 'artificial presence'.[97] Thus, I claim that the problem with Wollheim's twofoldness theory is not that sometimes he conflated the represented thing with the virtual image-object, as Nanay argues,[98] but that he overlooked the difference between the awareness of a regular thing of the perceptual world and the awareness of a pictorial configuration. Since he *lacked* an appropriate concept for the virtual image-object, one can say that the role of the image-object is hidden (alternatively) behind the configurational and the recognitional aspects. The absence of distortion, for example, is due to the foundation of the intention to the image-object on the

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[95] L. Wiesing, Artificial Presence, p. 20.

[96] R. Wollheim, Painting as an Art, p. 67. Regarding the importance of *merely* being of a particular kind see R. Wollheim, Painting as an Art, p. 69.

[97] L. Wiesing, Artificial Presence, p. 51.

[98] B. Nanay, Threefoldness, p. 171.

intention to the image-thing. In other words, it is because of our awareness of the characteristics of the image as a physical thing that a change of position does not involve a distortion in the appearance of the image-object.[99] Once the function of the image-object is identified, it becomes useful to move into a threefold account of pictorial representation that draws from Husserl's analyses.

Now, it is worthwhile recalling that while Husserl is motivated in his research by epistemological concerns, Wollheim's theory is originally an aesthetic enterprise. I do not mean by this that their theories are reduced to their service within epistemology or art history, respectively. In the long run, Wollheim's insights are general psychological claims, and the generality of Husserl's analyses is grounded in his own phenomenological method. However, recognising the different motivations enables a subtler understanding of the arguments of both thinkers. Of special importance here is the problem of the 'thing represented'.

One of the most relevant differences that the disparity in Husserl's and Wollheim's perspective brings forward is the latter's emphasis on the artist's intention. For Wollheim, the intention of the artist or producer of the pictorial representation determines what can and should be seen-in, 'the experience [of the beholder] must be attuned to the intention of the artist'.[100] This means that when different objects can be reached by a seeing-in experience, the intention of the artist always sets the standard of correctness.[101] Without this recourse to the artist's intention, Wollheim's determination of the depicted object would lack distinction. By maintaining it, on the other hand, the interdependence between pictorial representation and seeing-in is strengthened.[102] Ultimately, this entails that the represented thing is determined, for Wollheim, by the way it is represented:

> The artist […] is concerned to do justice not only to the *what*, but also to the *how*, of representation: he will try to set down how what he represents is likely to strike its viewer. But this is not a good way of putting the point. For, in producing an ever more refined image of how the represented thing looks, the artist is in effect representing an ever more specific kind of thing. There is within the representational task no line worth drawing between the what and the how: each fresh how that is captured generates a new what.[103]

Once more, the ontological criterion does not suit this demand, for Wollheim's 'thing represented' is not existentially independent of its depiction. But does it match Husserl's image-subject? Wollheim maintained a detailed classification of the kinds of represented things, and the differences between mere seeing-in (without intention of the artist/standard of correction), photographs (with causal determination besides artistic intention), and pictorial representation properly (further, with a difference between representational and non-representational figurative and abstract paintings).[104] Husserl, on the other hand, was not very

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[99] This is how I understand the fact that 'we are perceptually aware of the orientation of the picture [as a physical thing] and this awareness compensates for the oblique view [of the image-object]'. B. Nanay, Threefoldness, p. 173.

[100] R. Wollheim, Painting as an Art, p. 44.

[101] R. Wollheim, Painting as an Art, p. 52.

[102] Notice that seeing-in does not take place with pictorial representations *only*. For Wollheim, seeing-in precedes representations logically and historically; for example, the clouds are not pictorial representations, though I can *see* something *in* them. We can thus call 'representational seeing-in' the experience that we have in front of representations (deliberately made artifacts). R. Wollheim, Painting as an Art, pp. 47f, 54 and 59.

[103] R. Wollheim, Painting as an Art, p. 52.

[104] Regarding the role of the intention of the artist, see R. Wollheim, Painting as an Art, p. 48ff. Differently from paintings, causation determines the standard of correctness in photographs, see R. Wollheim, Art and its Objects,

subtle in this respect, oddly equating sculptures, Renaissance allegories, engravings, photographs, stereoscopic images, and museum catalogues, among others. Thus, Husserl's account could be enriched by Wollheim's classification of kinds of representation, gaining in differentiation. Assuming that the intertwinement of configurational and representational aspects is compatible with Husserl's idea of 'living in the image', the image-subject is better defined as Wollheim's 'thing represented' than by any ontological criterion.[105]

One could finally object that while Husserl regarded image-consciousness as a case of perceptive phantasy and, as such, fundamentally different from perception, Wollheim defined seeing-in as a kind of seeing. Moreover, Wollheim clearly opposed the idea of a mixture between phantasy or imagination and seeing-in;[106] thus, an argument could be made that the parallel between the two authors is misguided.

I consider that despite the first impression, there is not an insurmountable incompatibility between the two perspectives. Moreover, Husserl's position gives a fuller account of the phenomenology of seeing-in, by his proposed difference between illusions and fictions. In the first place, Wollheim considered that the 'appropriate experience' of pictorial representation is perceptual. But, as shown, he did not mean that seeing-in is similar to any regular seeing. In addition to the difference in structure, seeing-in has a broader range of possible objects. Second, Wollheim argued against supplementing perception with imagination as two different simultaneous or alternative mental acts. When addressing the theory of Kendall Walton, for example, he considered that the intervention of phantasy entails a poorly argued mixture of two mental acts (the act of imagining and the act of seeing) that does not deliver a satisfactory description of the experience one has in front of pictorial representations.[107] However, Wollheim thought only of phantasy or imagining as a specific mental act. He never considered phantasy as a mode of performing the acts. Husserl's construal of phantasy as a change of attitude actually enriches the analysis of image-consciousness and completes the account of pictorial representation by offering a sufficient phenomenological account of seeing-in as a threefold perceptual phantasy. The 'analytical' perspective (in the sense that it describes the inner structure of the act) is deepened by a 'synthetic' view, which demands taking into consideration the relationship of image-consciousness with the world of regular experience. This reveals that the image does not 'fit' with reality as a regular object would, but it does not mean that seeing-in is a composition of two experiences of different kinds.

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p. 138f. Regarding differences between abstract and figurative paintings, see R. Wollheim, Painting as an Art, p. 62.

[105] 'The original of which Husserl speaks does not enjoy a separate form of existence from its "being-pictured" in an image; in other words, the bond of resemblance that both separates and relates the image and its pictured subject has the form of intentionality, the distinctive trait of which is to render present that which does not actually appear in actual appearance.' N. De Warren, Tamino's Eyes, Pamina's Gaze, p. 316. I do not claim that this was *always* Husserl's position about the image-subject. Sometimes—particularly in what has been called his '*Abbildung*' theory—he actually defended that the image-subject is the real independent existing thing. I will not discuss the exegesis here. Broadly stated, I agree with Rozzoni that 'From the moment where Husserl states that *seeing-in* pertains to the essence of image, he actually goes far beyond its own intentions [sic].' C. Rozzoni, From Abbild to Bild?, p. 122.

[106] R. Wollheim, A Note on 'Mimesis as Make-Believe', p. 404. See also R. Wollheim, On Pictorial Representation, p. 224, and R. Wollheim, Imagination and Pictorial Understanding, p. 46.

[107] R. Wollheim & R. Hopkins, What Makes Representational Painting Truly Visual? – Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volumes 2003, vol. 77, pp. 131–147, p. 146.