
The Productive Character of Daydreaming: A Phenomenological Study¹

O caráter produtivo dos devaneios: um estudo fenomenológico

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ABSTRACT

This article seeks to discuss what one can understand about the productive character of consciousness from a phenomenological point of view, a topic that will be explored in relation to presentifications. First, I will reconstruct two models Husserl used in his attempts to capture what is specific to presentification (the pictorial model and the reproduction of impressions model). Then, I will broaden the results obtained through the second model by systematizing three associative forms which link presentified contents in the daydreaming experience (resemblance, contiguity, and evocativeness).

Keywords: Husserl. Phenomenology. Association. Daydream.

RESUMO

O artigo busca problematizar o que se pode entender, de um ponto de vista fenomenológico, por produtividade da consciência, tema que será explorado em relação às presentificações. De início, reconstruímos dois modelos por meio dos quais Husserl tenta capturar a especificidade das presentificações (modelos pictorial e de reprodução de impressões). Em seguida, propomos ampliar os resultados obtidos pelo segundo

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modelo pela sistematização de três formas associativas por meio das quais os conteúdos presentificados se concatenam na experiência de devaneios (semelhança, contiguidade e evocatividade).

Palavras-chave: Husserl. Fenomenologia. Associação. Devaneio.

Introduction

What does it mean to say that consciousness can be *productive*? This is obviously a broad notion that can refer to many different aspects. To circumscribe this topic, it may be helpful to start by drawing a very generic conceptual contrast. It seems reasonable to admit that the basic experiential modality through which we situate ourselves in our worldly environment is *receptive*. Through *perceptual presentations*, we attest to the presence of objects and of the environment in which we find ourselves. Conscious activity is, in normal conditions, constrained by sensible stimuli, which, so to speak, force us to inspect the objectual poles that surround us. It would be too simplistic to carelessly assert that there is nothing productive in such receptive operations. As Husserl describes it in *Experience and Judgment*, we usually exercise an “inspecting perception”³ (HUSSERL, 1954, § 22, p.112/p.103)⁴ that actively explores the objects and that recognizes there a broad range of senses that refer to the different capacities in operation in the perceptual process (aspects related to memory, affects, culture, etc.). Nonetheless, while it is possible to admit complex intentional operations as *integrated* into the sensory stimulation – such as when, for instance, we react in a highly emotive way to a weak sensorial stimulus to which is associated deep personal and cultural meaning –, it is undeniable that the richness of the inspecting perception *depends* on the core of sensible reception that sustains such a living complex as, precisely, *perceptual*.⁵

In contrast, I would like to highlight the occasions in which consciousness act *without* responding to a current sensory stimulation. In other words, the absence of sensible data does not block the organization of certain kinds of lived experiences. One ascribes, in this way, a more precise meaning to the notion of “production”:

³ The English translator rendered “*betrachtende*” as “contemplative”, a word that lacks the active character suggested by the German expression.

⁴ References to Husserl’s works will be done by first giving the pagination of the German text and then of the English translation. For the editions used, see the bibliography.

⁵ For an excellent analysis of the productive aspects of consciousness in the sensible receptivity, cf. Geniusas 2020.

consciousness *does not depend* on the current sensible reception to organize certain lived experiences. Many of those are spontaneously generated (and can even be deliberately developed) and are sustained through acts that, so to speak, operate centrifugally. Here, we recognize the thematic field that Husserl sought to systematize under the name of *presentification* [*Vergegenwärtigung*], a family of acts that are not sustained, in their development, by current sensory stimuli. Among those, one can highlight, for example, rememorations, expectations, counterfactual imaginings, etc. My task here will be to carefully investigate how the presentifications achieve conscious productivity. To do so, I will, first, restrict myself to the components of a single presentifying modality, phantasy. We will initially see the models of consciousness that Husserl proposed to capture the specificity of the free play of phantasy. Following that, I will conceptually elaborate on the notion of *daydreaming*, showing, by means of this specific presentifying experience, which fundamental associative nexuses shape the productivity of consciousness.

I – The Husserlian analysis of phantasy

a) The pictorial model of phantasy

It is well-known that, in his initial writings, Husserl conceives of phantasy as a kind of *imagination*, understood here as a lived experience that *indirectly* targets its objects through *images*. As Husserl himself explains in a famous example

If I present the palace in Berlin to myself in phantasy, the phantasy image is a genuine appearance. But if, with this image before my eyes, I nevertheless do not mean the image in my act of presenting but the palace itself, then a second object is indeed given intentionally in the complex act, but not given in the form of a second appearance. (...) [I]n this case the object that is ultimately intended and that does not appear is indirectly apprehended; namely, by means of the object that is apprehended first and that does appear (HUSSERL, 1980, p.116/p.126).

Besides its *indirect character*, an element that allows us to characterize phantasy is the particular kind of content over which such apprehension operates. Husserl names this type of content *phantasm*, defining it in the following way: “the presenting sensuous content, the interpreting apprehension of which makes the image appear” (1980, p. 117/p. 128). Let us see the limits of the notion of phantasy as conceived by these conceptual resources.

One should note that, in these initial writings, the model of intentionality built under the scheme content of apprehension / apprehension is still in force. According to this scheme, in each intentional act, there would be a piece of content with the role of representing the intended object, and this content would be apprehended and animated by the corresponding act character. According to the sixth Logical Investigation, this representing content can be signitive, intuitive, or mixed. In the signitive acts, the content has the role of semiotic support for the signification; the relation between this content and the signification conveyed by such an act is “contingent, external” (HUSSERL, 1984b, § 26, p.622/ p.243). On the other hand, the intuitive acts institute a relation between matter and representing content that is “essential, internal” (*Id.*, p.622-3/p.243). The intuitive contents must bear resemblance relations with the represented objects, and cannot, therefore, be arbitrarily chosen. Thus, apprehension would animate the representing content while respecting the resemblance relations that are there somehow already prefigured.

Before we turn to evaluate some of the consequences of this conception, we can already note that these restrictions on the intuitive contents are valid to the *different sub-types* from this class, namely, the sensations and the phantasms. Sensations are the representing content animated by acts of perception, whereas the phantasms are animated, as we have already mentioned, by acts of phantasy. In the *Logical Investigations*, Husserl criticizes the empiricist interpretation of the notion of phantasm as a weakened copy of sensations, something that would turn the experiences of phantasy into mere simulacra of perceptual experiences. In § 33 of the second *Logical investigation*, for example, Husserl keeps his distance from the Humean-inspired psychology, which wants to reduce the complexity of conscious life to sensations and the associative connections among ideas derived from sensations, ideas that are conceived as “images [*Phantasmen*], the enfeebled shadows of impressions” (HUSSERL, 1984a, p.192/p.291). This empiricist de-codification of the conscious life completely ignores the specificity of the different *act characters* employed by consciousness to establish its many modes of relation to the objects.

On the other hand, one should not renounce the notion of phantasm because of the flawed empiricist interpretations. Instead, one should recognize its relative autonomy as a sub-type of intuitive content. In a formulation from the first edition of

the *Logical investigations*, Husserl clearly announced that “in the sphere of experiences as such all sense-contents, all sensations [A: and phantasms], also belong” (1984b, p.771/p.347). Phantasms are “the complex of representing contents of phantasy [*die Komplexion der repräsentierenden Inhalte der Phantasiebildlichkeit*]” (*Id.*, p.526/p.174, translation modified), and they have their own changes in liveness, constancy, intensity. A phantasm is not, therefore, a mere epiphenomenon of sensation, but a *modality of intuitive representing content* which fulfills a unique role, namely, to be the ground of the presentifying apprehensions. And since, as we have seen, the intuitive representating contents are those that are distinguishable by their resemblance to the represented objectual aspects, there is a repetition, at the level of phantasy, of the descriptive limitations whose origins lie in the emphasis on primary contents as the basis of consciousness. Let us discuss this point by initially considering perception. Husserl, by taking *sensations* as representing content of objectual qualities, presents, as a lived element – as subjective data supposedly revealed by phenomenological description – aspects that, at bottom, are part of the objects. As Husserl himself comments in an important passage of the *Logical Investigations*:

While the seen colour [...], certainly does not exist as an experience, there is a real part [*reelles Bestandstück*] of our experience, of this appearing to perception, which corresponds to it. Our colour-sensation corresponds to it, that qualitatively determinate phenomenological colour-aspect, which receives an ‘objectifying interpretation’ in perception, or in an intrinsic aspect of such perception (the ‘appearance of the object’s colouring’). [...] Here it is enough to point to the readily grasped difference between the red of this ball, objectively seen as uniform, and the indubitable, unavoidable projective differences among the subjective colour-sensations in our percept, a difference repeated in *all* sorts of objective properties and the sensational complexes which correspond to them.” (HUSSERL, 1984a, V, § 2, pp.358-9/p.83).

As one can see, all the object’s features are reproduced, so to speak, inside consciousness. They are reproduced not as real properties, but as immanent data, parts of lived experiences. It is, nevertheless, questionable whether the warning that sensations are not real properties is indeed enough to avoid furnishing consciousness with aspects and relations that, at bottom, are part of the world and not of the lived experience. As Merleau-Ponty keenly remarked, the notion of sensation leads one to ignore the characteristics proper to the perceptual experience in favor of features proper to the perceived object: “what we know to be in things themselves we immediately take

as being in our consciousness of them. We make perception out of things perceived.” (MERLEAU-PONTY, 2005, p.5). By employing the repetition of the object’s features – now modified into ethereal immanent data – to characterize the being conscious, one thus runs the risk of losing sight of the very specificity of living experiences.

Husserl conceives perception as grounded in a representing content that must incorporate, in an identical way, the objectual relations, which then becomes appearing themes once the intentional acts animate the immanent sensorial data. This scheme seeks to guarantee the faithfulness of sensible experience relative to the objectual reference; perception directly presents us with its object, since the content that grounds the intentional acts transports to immanence all the objectual properties that are supposed to appear, precisely, as the result of perception. It is important to note that this model *is also applied to the appearances of phantasy*, a topic that I should now discuss.

The phantasms, as a modality of intuitive representing content, are not arbitrary, but bear essential, internal relations to the objects which they represent. The phantasmatic content must point to objects at least in *similar* terms, in such a way that this content, in being animated by the act of phantasy, guarantees the appearance of an *image*, that is, an intermediary objectivity that allows an indirect reference to the phantasized object, which is absent or can even be non-existent. According to this model, the phantasmatic content delimits the reach of phantasy as being intrinsically *pictorial*. Such content is *present*, though it is not derived from any sensory stimulation; this content points to objectual features according to different degrees of resemblance, allowing an *imagetic relation* to the objectual pole of the act. The apprehensions of phantasy seem, therefore, to operate with a very restricted notion of *productivity*. The phantasizing is limited to the *reproduction* of images that evoke a mediated reference to the intended object. According to this model, phantasy is reproductive in the sense that it can only reach its objectual poles *pictorially* (through more or less similar images).

b) Phantasizing as the reproduction of originary impressions

In an important 1909 text, Husserl admits the difficulties with using the scheme apprehension / content of apprehension to correctly describe the lived experiences of phantasy (and of the presentifications in general). The peaceful distinction between two types of intuitive representing contents that are just waiting for the two corresponding

types of apprehension (types that would explain the difference between perceiving and phantasizing) seems to have no phenomenological grounding. After all, these contents, which are prior to the intentional character of experience, cannot be effectively found in the lived experiences. Husserl then admits that “‘consciousness’ consists of consciousness through and through, and the sensation as well as the phantasm is already ‘consciousness’” (1980, p.265/p.323). It is, therefore, necessary to reformulate the notion of lived content. There is no experiential moment in which the contents are neutral in relation to the conscious attribution of sense; in truth, the contents always take part in conscious lived experiences and, thus, already bear an intrinsic sense. That does not mean that every content is already immediately intentional. Husserl still affirms the non-intentional character of the sensible contents as parts of intentional aiming.⁶ Nevertheless, Husserl refuses the notion of primary content as data prior to any type of conscious elaboration, and tries to formulate a more phenomenologically convincing conception of sensations and phantasms.

An important step in the direction of this new conception was the development, throughout the analysis of immanent temporality, of the notion of *internal consciousness*. Sensory contents and acts are constituted as temporal unities in the immanent stream of consciousness. Sensory content is never an isolated block waiting for an external animation; it is already shaped by the temporal stages of internal consciousness. Whatever is lived is subject to an unceasing modifying flow, being thus constituted as an enduring immanent unity. For example, the present content is changed into a has-already-been content and the protended contents (still-to-be) change into new present contents, in a continuous process. Every unity constituted in the unceasing synthesis of the temporal stages, be they primary contents or even acts, is already ordered according to the internal consciousness of this temporal flow. As Husserl puts it, “every experience is ‘sensed’, is immanently perceived (internal consciousness), although naturally not posited, not meant.” (1980, p.307/p.369). Although intuitive contents are not yet complete intentional acts, they are conscious while they take part in the self-manifesting flow of immanent temporality.⁷

⁶ This can be verified, for example, in § 85 of *Ideas I*.

⁷ “What is sensation? Sensation is nothing other than the internal consciousness of the content of sensation” (HUSSERL, 1980, p. 309/p. 371).

Let us explore a fundamental notion to understand this new model of the description of experience, namely, the notion of *impression*. Husserl defines “*impressions* in the wider sense as experiences in which an originary present, an originary now, becomes constituted” (1980, p.315/p.381). Thus, an impression characterizes the present experiential moment. As Husserl puts it in another manuscript, “an experience, of course, is an actual experience; it is an experience experienced, conscious” (1980, p.320/p.389). The notion of impression, hence, seeks to capture the being conscious of what one presently lives through. It is, therefore, the source-point of the temporal modifications: one lives something in the impressional now and this lived experience will be retained and continuously modified insofar as new impressions are actualized. One should note that “impression” can refer to the *sensation*, that is, it can designate the present ordering of a sensorial intuitive content. Every sensory datum must be a temporal impression and must take part in the flow of consciousness starting from the now. As we have seen, Husserl refuses here the idea of an inert primary content, a content that would lie waiting for apprehension to give it some lived sense. Every sensory element is already ordered by the temporal character of the lived experiences. Indeed, this sensible givenness occurs in the perceptual experience; there, what is marked as the experience of the now involves the verification of the presence of something that is sensorially manifested. On the other hand, not every temporal impression necessarily involves sensible givenness. In the *presentifying experience* (phantasy, but also memory, expectation) there is certainly the ordering of the lived experience as immanent objectuality; the presentification also has its temporal impression, and it also unfolds from the lived now; there is no sensory impression, however, no manifestation of something that is verified in its actual presence.

These analyses allow us to revisit the reproductive character of the presentifications. As we have seen, according to Husserl’s first model of consciousness, phantasy was characterized as a reproductive act, since the animation of phantasmatic contents generates images similar to the intended objects. In the work currently under analysis, however, Husserl proposes a very different notion of reproduction, developed in contrast to the impressional character of the present lived experiences. All impressions, be they already occurred or merely possible ones, can be so modified as to appear in the mode of the “as if”, that is, can occur not as lived experiences that

originarily present their object, but as, so to speak, “simulated” lived experiences. Each impressional experience lets itself be reproduced, in the sense that it can be represented as an experiential focus modified by presentification acts (memory, expectation, and phantasy acts). In the case of memory, past impressional experiences occur “as if” they were lived again; in the case of expectation, lived experiences are anticipated “as if” they had already been lived; in the case of phantasies, merely possible impressional lived experiences are created “as if” they were actual.

According to this new conception, it is not necessary to presuppose isolated phantasmatic contents that would be animated to constitute psychic images. In the same manuscript in which he refuses the notion of an inert and isolated sensation, Husserl reaffirms these same theses specifically about the phantasy acts:

If I analyze phantasy consciousness (a phantasm), I do not find color or anything else of that kind; on the contrary, I again find phantasy consciousness. Just as I find perceptual consciousness over and over again when I analyze perceptual consciousness. *Phantasy is precisely modification through and through, and it can contain nothing but modification. This modification, as modification, is an experience, something that can be perceived*; and the perception of this experience then itself has its modification in turn (HUSSERL, 1980, p. 268/p. 326).

In phantasy, one does not need to suppose present intuitive contents (phantasms) waiting for an apprehension that would animate them as an image to indirectly aim at objects. Phantasizing, as a kind of presentifying act, is a modifying act from beginning to end, in the sense that a possible impressional focus is represented in it; it is not, therefore, a matter of constituting a present image to aim at something absent. In phantasizing, an originary impressional givenness (for example, a perceptual act in which an object is manifested in such and such a way) is reproduced in the mode of the “as if”, that is, not as lived as the original mode of consciousness, but as a simulation of the perceptual act. On the other hand, it is worth emphasizing that the presentification acts also unfold in the present impressional moment. In phantasy, merely possible perceptual foci are represented; but to experience phantasy is something present, an impression that, as such, can also be reproduced in other presentification acts – I can imagine a certain scene X (in a temporal impression) and, afterward, remember (in a new impressional moment) having imagined X (reproducing the impression of that

initial imagination).⁸ In summary, every presentification is an impression in the internal consciousness of time (they are lived starting from now); but they are not sensory, they do not have a sensory content that would announce a presence; they are reproductive modifications from beginning to end.

II – Daydreaming as a phenomenological theme

a) Intuitive unities

Husserl's proposed change in the model of consciousness offers some rich material for us to analyze the productivity of presentifications. According to the initial model, the productive capacity was mainly analyzed as pictorialization. It presupposed the presence of ethereal sensible contents that would allow one to mirror the intended situations or objects, which would then be only indirectly accessed. In this model, the possibilities of *imagetic imitation* are what appeared as productive. On the other hand, with the development of the model of reproduction of impressional consciousness, Husserl breaks with the idea that to phantasize is to forge a phantasmatic intermediary which would ground an indirect intentional relation. The presentification act is a *reproductive modification* from beginning to end; according to this perspective, the manifestation of a modified intentional focus that refers to the phantasized themes in the mode of the “as if” *directly intends* these themes in their absence. The reach of consciousness' productivity is thereby extended, since it is not limited anymore to phantasmatic images, being now open to diverse *simulations* of impressional episodes. It is important to highlight here that the impression that is reproduced in the presentification acts may never have occurred, that is, it can be a possibility created in the phantasy acts. It is therefore clear, in this sense, that the *reproductive* character of presentification *does not mean a mere repetition* of a previous experience, since even situations that were never lived before can also be simulated.

While this “simulation” model allows one to recognize the productivity of consciousness relative to fictitious scenarios, it still seems possible to reveal much more

⁸ “To have an impression, then, means the same as *to have an experience*. The opposite is to have a *reproduction*. A reproduction is itself an experience in which an experience is ‘represented’ reproductively. Here we come to the distinction between experiences and reproductions of experiences” (HUSSERL, 1980, p. 321/p. 391).

about the productive potential intrinsic to the presentifying acts. To do so, we must change the focus of the intentional analysis, having recourse here to some other conceptual resources also offered by Husserl himself. The pictorial and the reproductive models seek to clarify how the presentifying consciousness refers to its objectual poles and each, in its particular way, seeks to establish that to phantasize, for example, is not an enfeebled effect of perceiving, but an intentional modality with its proper intentional features. These phenomenological descriptions allow us to understand which are the distinctive components of the presentifying intentional act, for example, the *intuitive* character of reference *without there being an originary givenness* of the intended object or situation. This analysis of presentification as a relatively autonomous intentional modality already allows us to emphasize one important sense of productivity, according to which, as we have seen, consciousness is not bound to actual objects and situations, but can create merely possible situations, reproducing the impressional focus in which such a situation *would be* lived. It is now a matter of considering the presentifying acts not merely as they refer point-by-point to objectual poles, but while they are *intertwined* according to very specific nexuses. We will therefore move from an *intra-intentional* analysis of each type of presentification to an *inter-intentional* analysis, one which seeks to capture the complex syntheses among the acts in extended lived experiences. Obviously, as we have seen, the analysis of the intentional features intrinsic to the acts already takes into account this temporal unfolding of the lived experience. Nonetheless, what I am targeting here is not just the fundamental constitution of some act as an immanent unity according to the formal modifications inherent to conscious temporalization. Indeed, any act or lived content is subject to the same rules of temporal ordering, and, therefore, is constituted as an immanent object. However, as Husserl comments in different texts, one must investigate, beyond the analysis of the universal form of temporalization, the principles that synthesize the lived experiences in terms of their “*material*” aspect, that is, in terms of the concreteness of the articulated *contents*.⁹

⁹ In *On the phenomenology of the consciousness of internal time (1893-1917)*, Husserl says: “a determinate flow runs its course again and again; the actually present now sinks away and passes over into a new now, and so on. Even if there may be a necessity of an *a priori* kind involved here, an ‘association’ nevertheless conditions it; that is, the nexus of the past is determined by experience, and it is further determined by experience ‘that something or other will come’” (1969, p. 106/p. 111). In his course on passive synthesis, Husserl is even more explicit: “what gives unity to the particular object with respect to content, what makes up the differences between each of them with respect to content, [...] what makes division possible and the relation between parts in consciousness, and so forth – the analysis of time alone

Husserl considerably develops the grounds for this type of investigation in *Analysis Concerning Passive Synthesis* and in *Experience and Judgment*. It is particularly useful to take up again the notion of *intuitive unities* from the latter work. Husserl arrives at this theme when discussing the different forms of perceptual exploration of the objects. Far from being there considered as the inert assimilation of neutral objective stimuli, perception is there presented as a complex intentional modality, in which the many exploratory interests guide our capacity for apprehension. At its most basic level, this perceiving – that already sets in motion an exploratory interest – is directed to the object in its entirety, apprehending it without detaching its parts or relations. Following this, *explication* is a higher degree of perceptual exploration of objects. In Husserl's own words, "explication is penetration of the internal horizon of the object by the direction of perceptual interest" (1954, § 22, p.115/p.105). What is manifested in each moment as the intuitive core of an object does not exhaust all its determinations, and one seeks, by means of the explicative perceptions, to successively bring to the originary givenness the characteristics that are implied in the current apprehension but that are not immediately encompassed by it (for example, the back of something seen from the front, its interior, its bottom, etc.). Finally, Husserl also mentions another level of perceptual operation: the exploration of relational determinations, that is, of features that have their origins in the relations of the object with other objects from its environment. Here, we have the *relating perception*, which explores the external horizon of determinations of the object in question. At this point, Husserl highlights the forms of "intuitive unity" (HUSSERL, 1954, § 33, p.173/p.151) between a perceived object, taken as a substrate, and various relational determinations, which initially referred to the immediate sensible environment, but which can also refer to *past or anticipated experiences* – in such a way as to establish links between what is currently perceived and what was or will be perceived – and even *merely possible experiences*, allowing us to study the connections between the perceived and merely imagined objectivities. One foresees here the different ways of *synthesizing imaginative acts among themselves* and also with current perceptual givenness.

cannot tell us, for it abstracts precisely from content. Thus, it does not give us any idea of the necessary synthetic structures of the streaming present and of the unitary stream of the presents – which in some way concerns the particularity of content" (HUSSERL, 1966, p. 128/p. 174).

In any case, one should note that, in his initial approach to relating perceptions, Husserl leaves to the side this phenomenon of inter-connectivity intrinsic to the presentifications, since he seeks to characterize the forms of progressive syntheses by means of which we aim at an objective and unitary world, and the figurations or appearances of phantasy do not necessarily contribute to this task. In the context of the analysis of relating perception, in the third chapter of *Experience and Judgment*, Husserl announces, in § 38, that he will momentarily abstract from a very general kind of connection among intuitive contents to give a detailed treatment of the objectifying connections. This point is presented in the following way: one leaves to the side “the connection, to be considered later, that everything perceived ‘reminds’ one of something past that is similar or like even though temporally separated – a connection which is therefore a relation of likeness and similitude” (HUSSERL, 1954, p.188/p.162). Here, the central forms of connection intrinsic to phantasy are mentioned: the associative relations by resemblance (likeness and similitude). This topic, however, will only be dealt with at the end of the third chapter, in § 41. In returning to this subject, Husserl recognizes that merely presenting phantasy as the reproduction of effective relations in the mode of “as if” does not exhaust the complexity of this intentional modality and not even its interest to the phenomenological investigation. In fact, the study of phantasy leads us to the

“*broadest concept of the unity of intuition (...) and to the most inclusive kind of relations, namely, the relations of likeness and similarity, which are possible between all objectivities capable of being united in such a unity of intuition, whether they are objects of perception or of imagination*” (*Id.*, § 41, p.204/p.174).

Husserl is here pointing to a path to study the presentifying lived experiences not only in relation to their structural features in reference to objects; the lived experiences can be studied as they are unified in intuitive unities, that is, as *experiential concatenations* constituted by specific associative nexuses.

b) Ways of studying daydreaming

It is important to ask what, exactly, these intuitive unities are, unities in which concatenations of different intentional experiences are lived, such as perceptions and

presentifications, or even sequences of various kinds of presentifications (phantasies, memories, expectations). In this text, I will limit myself to the latter case (concatenations of various presentifications). The notion of *daydreaming* can help us to more clearly determine the reach of this type of phenomenon, as well as open the door for a phenomenological reflection about very common ordinary situations. By daydreaming, I understand episodes of variable duration in which, while awake, we momentarily disengage ourselves from our sensible surroundings (while they still functions as a background rooting us in the present moment), being overtaken by a flood of presentified manifestations, often composed by apparently random thematic fragments. In Portuguese, the word for daydreaming, “*devaneio*”, is etymologically connected to the Latin adjective “*vanus*”, meaning “vain” or “empty”, as in the expression “in vain”. It seems that there is a certain evaluation of daydream significance or utility registered in the word itself. Indeed, one often construes ordinary daydreaming as a kind of flight from important tasks or, at best, as a moment of rest in which unimportant lived connections flow with no discernible objective while we regain our strength for more useful actions. Nonetheless, if we abandon this moral atmosphere that feeds a theoretical contempt for this phenomenon, we can find in daydreaming a much richer experiential source for the study of the productive potential of consciousness. As Husserl remarked in *Experience and Judgment*, it is true that in these episodes of unification of various presentifying acts, consciousness normally does not act by aiming at the progressive determination of things and events recognized as part of the objective world. Hence, the living flux is not guided by the harmonious exploratory progression of an objectual pole that is gradually unfolded. That does not mean, however, that there is no ordering principle in the daydreaming experience. In fact, as we will see, the unification of daydreaming follows *specific associative rules*, rules that do not merely determine objective worldly poles. In daydreaming, under the overshadowing of the perceived world, under the uninterest in advancing the exploration of presently given objects, one highlights the chaining of lived experiences by certain nexuses that allow forms of ordering that find no parallel in the presenting lived experiences (perceptions). It is thus important to recognize that the productivity of presentifications is not limited to the reproduction of possible impressional foci (for example, simulating scenarios that

have never occurred and that will never occur); already in the *forms of concatenation* one can emphasize a type of productivity intrinsic to the presentifying intentionality.

Let us, therefore, take a step further into the study of daydreaming. It is, of course, possible to recognize that daydreaming is a type of lived experience and then seek to describe its components, a kind of analysis that Husserl called *static*. In that case, one seeks to capture the experience *as a whole*, stressing the structural features that allow one to recognize empirical cases precisely as instances of a determinate kind of experiential form. By applying this analysis, we could point to at least the following elements:

- *Intuitivity*: aspects that allow one to properly and directly figure how the targeted objects are manifested,
- *Voluntariness*: if the episode was passively ordered or if it involved degrees of deliberation,
- *Affective valence*: if the episode is lived as pleasant or unpleasant,
- *Specific forms of reproducibility*: how the impressional focus is reproduced, if it is from the perspective of the person herself who is daydreaming, or if from another's perspective,
- *Discursivity*: how language is manifested in the daydreaming.

One should note that, besides this study of the structural characteristics that delimit what, in general, composes a daydreaming experience, it is possible to investigate how such an experience is *dynamically* ordered, in such a way as to clarify how different presentifying intentional acts (for example, a memory, followed by some phantasies, followed by a memory again, etc.) are connected to form a *lived unity*. It is a matter here, as was already announced, of an *inter-intentional* analysis. Of course, daydreaming is a kind of lived experience in which we can find many different forms, according to whether certain structural features prevail against others (for example, there may be highly positive or negative daydreams in regards to the affective valence and directed to close intuitive aspects; optimistic or pessimistic simulations about the future; there can daydreams that automatically repeat themselves, or complex forms conducted with some purpose). My interest here is, beyond a taxonomy of the kinds of daydreams, to research the associative micro-principles which unify the contents of

daydreams. Can we recognize types of fundamental nexuses that can be instantiated in different kinds of daydreams? Can we order these types of nexuses by complexity degrees, in such a way as to anticipate that, in a certain kind of daydream, there will be specific modes of connection among the contents? To seek answers to these questions, I will here develop my analyses under much simplified conditions. I will not here suppose the full complexity of the daydreaming experience, that is, I will not suppose all those structural components as acting in different kinds of lived experiences. I will rather travel the opposite path: starting from lived experiences in which we highlight only *one* structural aspect, I will make explicit what are the fundamental nexuses among contents relative to that one aspect. Based on this, one can point to ways of making the concatenations more complex, as soon as other structural elements are added.

c) Three basic associative forms

I shall now point out the associative principles as subject of this phenomenological study, something that is far from evident. *Association* has been a research theme for psychology since the beginning of this discipline, often understood as a mechanism capable of *causally explaining* the workings of the mind. It should be obvious that I will not here employ the concept in this sense. In his studies concerning the passive syntheses of consciousness, Husserl revisits and reformulates the conceptual reach of the notion of association in light of the methodological principles of the phenomenological investigation. According to Husserl, the “term ‘association’ denotes in this context a form belonging essentially to consciousness in general, a form of the regularity of immanent consciousness” (HUSSERL, 1954, § 16, p. 78/p. 74). A bit further, he claims that we “can catch sight of this phenomenon only in the concrete” (*Ibid.*, p. 78/p. 75). In other words, association should not be taken as a subpersonal mechanism that would produce the organization of thought; rather, association is phenomenologically revealed, that is, it is manifested as such *as a phenomenon*. For example, thought manifests itself as already (at least in normal conditions) ordered; it manifests itself as already composed of associative nexuses. To phenomenologically investigate association is, thus, to seek to describe the *associative forms* whereby psychic phenomena reveal themselves. The lived episodes are not (at least ideally speaking) chaotic; they appear as already rule-governed. From a phenomenological

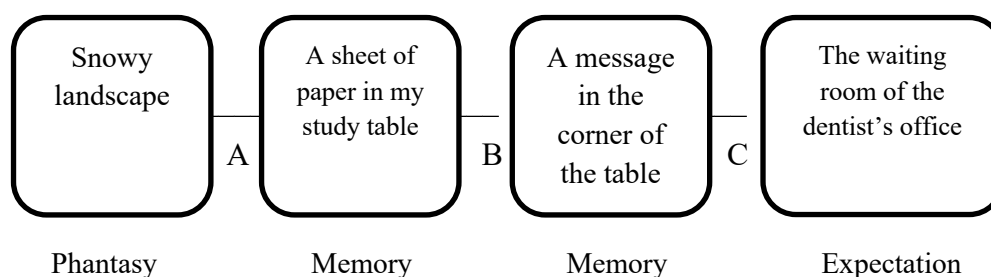
point of view, it makes no sense to appeal to hidden mechanisms to understand this organization. Rather, it is a matter of investigating how this lived organization is manifested, that is, which forms of syntheses intrinsically organize the lived experiences.

This phenomenological perspective is especially interesting for the study of daydreaming. After all, as has already been mentioned, daydreaming is often conceived of stereotypically, as a disordered flood, as a fragmentary succession of random content. It seems, then, that not even the rule-governed character of the manifestations of this phenomenon is established. My approach seeks to apply the phenomenological notion of association to daydreaming. Husserl himself recognizes this question when he distinguishes between two kinds of associative syntheses. The first kind is the unification of sensorial data in relatively autonomous sensible fields (visual, auditory, tactile, etc.) and the prominence of salient contents perceived as the focal theme inside these fields. Here, one emphasizes the associative forms of *homogeneity* and *contrast*. The second kind is presented in the following way: “Another mode of unification, different from either of these, is the unification of the present and the not present” (*Id.*, p.79/p.75). Husserl refers here to the concatenation of presentified contents motivated by sensible data. I perceive X and this X *reminds me* of situation Y; in its turn, Y *awakens in me* the expectation W, and from it, there *follows* phantasy R, etc. As one can see, in this case, association concerns the ordering of acts that exceed the verification of actual objects. I would like then to go further in the exploration of this type of phenomenon, trying to circumscribe which are the associative forms whereby the intuitive unities among presentifications manifest themselves.

Our goal can be, now, described in very modest terms. Starting from the daydreaming phenomenon, I will analyze the associative rules that are in play in its manifestation. I do not intend to exhaust the nexuses that form the concatenations of presentifications, and I do not even claim that every daydream should ultimately be ruled by these nexuses. One should seriously study the experiences classified as pathological to develop a far-reaching analysis of the eventual manifestation of daydreams that may not be strictly subject to the parameters that I will here describe.¹⁰ I

¹⁰ E. Bleuler, for instance, at the beginning of the 20th century, developed an important analysis of schizophrenia in which he proposes, as a striking symptom of this pathology, the *associative relaxation*, that is, the loss of the usual interconnections among thought contents and the intrusion of contents with a

will not undertake such a study in this article. Instead, I will limit myself to exploring simplified versions of the lived unities among presentifications, my goal being merely to show that the *intuitive aspects* of presentifications are subject, in an orderly manifestation, to some fundamental associative forms, which act independently of the kind of presentifying act in question. This means that memories, phantasies, and expectations can be connected by many associative micro-forms, something that helps us to understand the richness of the daydreaming concatenations, in contrast, for example, with perceptual exploration, in which only the synthesis of the partial aspects intuited each time can act. Let us begin with an example personally collected, a short *involuntary* daydream, in which four presentified manifestations succeed each other. I will not here discuss the important methodological questions concerning how to faithfully capture daydreams. In any case, as it is characteristic of the phenomenological investigation, I will leave open the possibility of starting with merely fictional examples of daydreams, something that helps in the exhibition of certain constitutive aspects of the phenomenon in question. Let us register each presentified scene as a discrete content and let us exhibit the associative nexuses as a trace connecting them. This is obviously a schematic simplification, a spatialization of a unified duration, in which there is no addition of an external factor each time a content is manifested to explain the generation of the succeeding content. I only seek to make graphically visible the associative form that impregnates the contents, detaching it in an abstract way (as the trace uniting the separate contents). We can thus more easily recognize the connection by means of which the contents succeed each other.¹¹ Here is the example:



strong emotive load. It is an open question to what extent the nexuses among the contents that will be explored here are modified under such a pathological condition.

¹¹ For a detailed analysis of these various themes only broached here in a superficial manner, cf. my book SACRINI, 2022.

We can classify each block of content according to its general intentional kind: phantasy, memory, expectation. In a static intentional analysis, we would describe the general characteristics that make each act there registered as an instance of its kind: in phantasy, a generic landscape is envisaged, without any pretension that it corresponds to something real. Afterward, a *past* lived sequence is remembered; the study table and the materials over it are posited as something that *has-already-been*. Finally, the expectation circumscribes something that has not yet occurred, and the figuration seeks to *anticipate* a sequence of events that will become actual. This is, of course, a correct approach, but it does not exhaust the specificity of the phenomena in question. There was no experience of an isolated phantasy, and then isolated memories, and then an isolated expectation. There was an *unfolding of the contents by internal connection*, in such a way that the different intentional acts composed a unified lived experience. What are the ordering principles that rule this unfolding? To answer this question, one should isolate the *associative forms* that allow us to understand the sequence of the daydream as ordered.

The productive nexus A, between the first two contents, is *resemblance*. Indeed, Husserl himself had already pointed to resemblance as a basic form of associative connection. In the case of the constitution of the sensory fields, resemblance is lived especially as the constant homogenization of the data from the same sense in a relatively autonomous sensible domain (visual, auditory, tactile, etc.). In the case of the succession of presentified contents, relations of resemblance take place among the aspects of each figured content. It is important to consider that these relations encompass different degrees of achievement. There are *similar* aspects, that is, aspects that share common elements without appearing as identical – in this case, there always simultaneously occur the givenness of *dissimilarities* that block the total identification. On the other hand, the extreme limit of resemblance is *likeness* or *uniformity*, when one recognizes the *same* aspect as instantiated in various contents. One can then speak of the *repetition* of the phenomenal features of a content (even if there is an obvious distinction concerning the *temporal* dimension of its phenomenalization: aspect A appeared first in content 1 and *afterward* in content 2). Moreover, it is worth noting that the relations of resemblance can take place concerning the general configuration of the scene (for example, I phantasize about a woman with red curly hair painting watercolor

in a room and, in the sequence, I phantasize about another woman, with long brown and gray hair, painting a picture in a studio) or concerning any of its phenomenal aspects. That was the case with the associative nexus A in the above example. Only the white color, which was prominent in the first content, resonates in the second content, recontextualized as the color of the sheet of paper on the study table. Globally, the scenes are disconnected (a generic snow landscape and the table in the study room); nevertheless, an associative link between the parts of the content motivates the configuration of the second scene based on the manifestation of the first. This seems to be the most basic kind of interconnection among presentified contents: partial intuitive aspects in a scene motivate the configuration of a new scene, in which those aspects are still in force, now recontextualized in a new whole. The restrictions on the associative passage between contents are minimal: it is enough to have the intuitiveness of a highlighted aspect for the manifestation of another scene with a similar intuitive aspect.

New associative forms are stratified over this fundamental (and always latent) possibility of interconnection among presentified contents. The *function* of these new forms remains the same, namely, to unify successive contents; still, the feature of the initial content that motivates the later content involves a *thematic complexification*. This is revealed in the greater restrictive demands for the effecting of such superior nexuses. To revisit the above example, from the appearance of the paper on the table to the appearance of a message (in a small piece of paper) on the corner of the table there was not just a highlighting of intuitive elements in a random context. The movement was not from the appearance of the center of the table to the appearance of a corner of any other table; in other words, the connection did not take place just because of a general similarity between the shape of tables in general. Rather, one moved from part of the extension of the table to another part of the extension of the *same* table. Here, the spatial *continuity* of the intended object is presupposed and gradually explored in its partial aspects in two successive figurations or appearances. The associative form which unifies these two contents (nexus B) is, then, *contiguity*. The resemblance syntheses are still active, in the sense that the aspects of the table figured in the two contents are of a homogeneous intuitive kind. Nevertheless, beyond the unification of similar data, the *exploratory continuity* between the contents is also in force; one moves from a perspective of the table, in which the white paper is still emphasized, to another

perspective of the same table, in which a message becomes the main theme. When the highlighted element in a content motivates not only the figuration of a generic similar element – regardless of its contextualization in the subsequent scene –, but of a similar element which *continues* the manifestation of the previous one, be it in its spatial or temporal surrounding (when we then have the appearance of the phases of a gesture or even of an event, configuring the grounds of *narrativity*), the unification is stabilized by nexuses of *contiguity*.¹²

Finally, it is worth pointing out an associative form that can be divided into different kinds. It is a nexus that, in very general terms, refers to the resemblance syntheses and, in some cases, to the contiguity restrictions, even though its operation presupposes a considerable thematic complexification concerning these two types of associativity nexuses. Let us call this general form *evocativity*. Husserl had remarked very early in his career on the efficacy of this kind of associative nexus. Already at the beginning of the *Logical Investigations*, in treating the *indicative sign*, Husserl pointed to the centrality of the associative phenomenon to understand the organization of the lived experiences. In the case of indication, as presented in that work, the givenness of an object or of a state of affairs motivates the belief in the existence of another object or state of affairs.¹³ Indeed, it seems that the nexus C in our example was constituted in this way: the figuration of the message motivates the figuration of the appointment there noted (the dentist appointment). The message is a mnemonic sign that refers to the future situation registered there. It is not necessary, however, that this general associative form takes place among actual states of affairs. This phenomenon can occur even in relation to fictional elements (I figure a sword and, afterward, I figure the character X, who is the owner of the sword, etc.). One should, therefore, consider the evocative association in terms broader than its function of an index for a belief in actual states of affairs.

¹² In his *Analysis concerning passive and active synthesis*, Husserl comments on how the similarity nexuses can awaken contiguity relations: “the association of similarity, however, is indissoluble from the ‘association of contiguity’. Association is awakening. Awakening is not only awakening through resonance. The resonating element awakens its entire nexus of its coexistence and succession according to the measure of its immediacy and mediacy. The awakened element necessarily awakens its surroundings and what is or was awakened in them gets privileged” (1966, p. 408/p. 508).

¹³ As Husserl himself puts it, in the indicative relation, “certain objects or states of affairs *of whose reality someone has actual knowledge* indicate to him *the reality of certain other objects or states of affairs*, in the sense that *his belief in the reality of the one is experienced as motivating* (though not as an evident motive) *a belief or surmise in the reality of the other*” (HUSSERL, 1984a, I, § 2, p.32/p.184, trans. modif.).

I intend to analyze evocativity just in the limited terms in which the daydreaming experience is here considered: immediate nexuses based on the intuitive content of each figured scene. In the passage from the figuration of the message to the figuration of the waiting room of the dentist's office, no *explicit* semantic aspect, and no additional emotive load is in action. Based only on the manifested intuitive elements, the associative form fulfilled its function: to connect successive contents. Nevertheless, the connection here in question is different from those we have seen until now. Even though there is no appeal to explicit linguistic formulations, the intuitive aspects that ground the nexus (the appearance of the message) are not closed in themselves. It is not the colors or the shape of the message that motivate the figuration of the dentist's office. There is an *informational complexity* embedded in the phenomenalization of these particular intuitive aspects. The content is loaded with sense relations that are codified, so to speak, in the intuitive aspects. These latter do not operate only in their immediate manifestation, but also as *signs* of a more complex state of affairs. Here one finds revealed the core of evocativity: in the figure content, it is not merely the intuitive aspects, on their own, that are highlighted as associative motivators, but also the conceptual relations or the propositional knowledge *lodged* in them. While the associative form operates with the same simplicity in the previously studied nexuses, in evocativity the intuitive appearance involves a much more complex informational input since the associative form acts beyond the thin intuitive exhibition layer. In other words, there are pieces of information from various kinds of operation (memory, beliefs, goal setting, etc.) active in what appears, and these pieces of information, in themselves, are not simple associative forms. Regardless of the genesis of the figured relations, it is important to emphasize that many kinds of relations can be codified in intuitive aspects and evocatively triggered in immediate associative nexuses: historical knowledge, general causal knowledge, moral valuations, symbols, not to mention personal mnemonic resources used to register occasional obligations and goals, as in the above example. The existence of this immediate activation of connections that are often derived from a long and even implicit learning process is something studied in many philosophical and scientific fields.¹⁴ Here, I am only interested in recognizing the efficacy of this relation in the articulation of the contents presentified in daydreams.

¹⁴ For example, it is a very serious ethico-social problem that people who are exposed to negative racial

Conclusion

We explored the lived experience of daydreaming, trying to make visible some of the associative forms that organize the manifestations of this phenomenon. As we have seen, there is no preoccupation, while daydreaming, with progressively exploring the current environment to verify the presence of objects (understood here in a very general sense). Detached from the sensible surrounding, daydreaming, at least as an involuntary episode, unfolds as a lived unity articulated by very particular forms of passive motivation among the configured contents. I stressed three associative forms that can organize the lived unities – considered in their intuitive aspects. A type of productivity inherent to presentifying consciousness is thus revealed in the way that the succession of lived contents may privilege – without there being necessarily a connection with the sensible surrounding – resemblance, contiguity, or evocativity nexuses. For example, under the simplified conditions of our analysis, the three aforementioned types of nexuses could compose a lived unity without there being a strict order among them: the contents could be united by evocativity, and then by resemblance and contiguity or vice-versa; in summary, there is room for very rich combinatorial possibilities, with no parallel in perceptual experience. Obviously, as soon as we take into account other constitutive factors of the daydreaming experience, such as emotivity, linguistic signification, purpose, etc., the combinatorial possibilities of the basic nexuses would be limited by more complex associative forms. In any case, it is important to highlight here, as a result of this study, that, by investigating the concatenation of the presentifying modalities, we were able to enlarge the meaning of the notion of consciousness productivity, understood in contrast to sensible receptivity (but not, by any means, in a dichotomous relation to it) and beyond the idea of reproduction or simulation of impressions. By daydreaming, we do not merely simulate non-actual impressional foci; we also connect contents in a relatively autonomous way, at least in comparison with the usual forms of sensible receptivity.

stereotypes – reinforced in numerous interactive situations – involuntary reproduce such valuations when in contact with people from the discriminated ethnicity.

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