

## *Presentation*

# Phantasy-Ego, Image Consciousness and Aesthetic Experience : Phenomenological Approaches

Claudio Rozzoni

*IFILNOVA – New University of Lisbon*

claudiorozzoni@fcs.unl.pt

Luís de Sousa

*IFILNOVA – New University of Lisbon*

lfsousa@fcs.unl.pt



This 2019 issue of *Phainomenon – Journal of Phenomenological Philosophy*, entitled “Phantasy-Ego, Image Consciousness and Aesthetic Experience: Phenomenological approaches”, has its origins in a two-day workshop that took place in Lisbon, at the Faculty for Social Sciences and Humanities of Universidade Nova de Lisboa, on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of May 2018. The workshop was co-organized by the editors of this issue on behalf of two of the three research groups that constitute the “Culture and Value Laboratory” (CultureLab) at the Nova Institute of Philosophy (IFILNOVA): “Art, Critique and Aesthetic Experience” and “Questions of Subjectivity” (now “Art of Living Research Group”). The common aim of this collaboration was to cut across and bring into dialogue three different and yet often interrelated research interests: the phenomenology of “phantasy Ego”, of “image” and of “aesthetic experience”.

We would especially like to thank Eduard Marbach for accepting our invitation to come to Lisbon and participate in the workshop. The presence of one of the seminal scholars of Husserl’s phenomenology of image and phantasy (suffice it to recall, he is the editor of *Husserliana XXIII*, i.e., the volume comprising most of Husserl’s unpublished works on Phantasy, Image

Consciousness and Memory)<sup>1</sup> represented a unique opportunity for all of the participants – including one of the most relevant Husserlian scholars in the Portuguese-speaking world, Pedro Alves – to survey the three critical domains mentioned above and to seek to draw new connections among them (with special emphasis on Edmund Husserl’s analyses but also with attention to their unfolding in the thought of other phenomenologists such as Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, and contemporary analytical authors such as Walton and Wollheim).

Given the promising outcomes of the workshop, Pedro Alves, as director of *Phainomenon*, proposed that we publish these contributions in this 2019 issue. We gladly accepted his invitation, and we would like to thank him for this. We would also like to extend our thanks to the editorial team of *Phainomenon*, which was in charge of the journal’s peer-review process and oversaw all editorial and production tasks.

Together with Pedro Alves, and in accordance with the journal’s policy, we thought it beneficial to publish this issue of *Phainomenon* in both English and Portuguese, not least because this would allow us to make a Marbach text available in Portuguese for the first time.

Marbach’s text opens the issue. It is an elaborated version—expressly prepared for this occasion—of his introduction to the 2006 selection of texts from *Husserliana* XXIII that he had edited for the publishing house *Felix Meiner*.<sup>2</sup> This new version appears here in Portuguese with the title “Sobre a elaboração progressiva dos pensamentos de Husserl acerca da fantasia e da consciência de imagem através da escrita”. The translation from German was written by one of the editors, Luís Aguiar de Sousa, who benefited from discussions with both Claudio Rozzoni and the editorial board of *Phainomenon*.

In this text, Marbach shows how Husserl progressively came to differentiate between phantasy, on the one hand, and image consciousness, on the other, after an initial period in which he had been inclined to treat them as identical in the

---

<sup>1</sup> Edmund Husserl, *Phantasie, Bildbewusstsein, Erinnerung. Zur Phänomenologie der anschaulichen Vergegenwärtigungen. Texte aus dem Nachlass (1898-1925)*, hrsg. von E. Marbach, Den Haag: Nijhoff, 1980. English translation: *Phantasy, Image Consciousness, and Memory (1898–1925)*. Dordrecht: Springer, 2005. Hereafter *Hua* XXIII.

<sup>2</sup> Eduard Marbach, «Einleitung des Herausgebers», in E. Husserl, *Phantasie und Bildbewusstsein, Text nach Husserliana, Band XXIII*, hrsg. von E. Marbach, Meiner, Hamburg, 2006, pp. XV–XLVI.

sense that “phantasy consciousness” was thought of as consciousness necessarily mediated by an image, as a form of “pictorialization [*Verbildlichung*]”.<sup>3</sup> Along these lines, Marbach brings to light how Husserl came to characterize phantasy consciousness as a modification of perception that does not require the intervention of an iconic *medium*. Rather, what phantasy consciousness necessarily implies is the production of a phantasy-Ego that differentiates itself from the real one.

Against this backdrop, Pedro Alves’ contribution delves into the structure of the peculiar form of subjectivity implied in fictional experience, discussing in particular the cases of “free phantasy in daydream” and “fictional stories”—insofar as both entail a “scission of our egoic life” between an “actual” and a “fictional” world. Alves’ analysis is not limited to underscoring this egological split but also endeavors to shed light on how these two distinct dimensions can communicate and influence each other. More specifically, he goes so far as to stress the way in which the phantasized and the real Egos can be unified in a “synthesis of sameness” according to which each Ego produced by phantasy can be thought of as a *variation* of the real self—with the caveat that the phantasy worlds we experience through phantasy must not be considered coincident with possible ones: “fictional worlds are not posited as possible”. Instead, they are quasi-worlds in which any existential claims (either affirmative or negative) are neutralized and in which our beliefs, expectations, and feelings appear to be modified: *quasi*-beliefs, *quasi*-expectations, and *quasi*-feelings.

Marco Cavallaro focuses precisely on this last point, delving into the *vexata quaestio* concerning the nature of fictional emotions. To put it roughly: how are emotions elicited by phantasy worlds to be understood and to be distinguished from the ordinary emotions aroused by existing things? To elucidate this slippery matter, Cavallaro develops a phenomenological approach to fictional emotions that, taking up the aforementioned phenomenon of the Ego-splitting, aims to clarify the intentional structure that underlies them. In so doing, Cavallaro also tries to lay bare how such a phenomenological approach to *quasi*-emotions can offer a profitable way to overcome some of the most challenging aporias implied by the well-known “paradox of fiction” that threatens fictional emotions with the mark of “irrationality”.

---

<sup>3</sup> See Hua XXIII, § 8.

Focusing on the first three parts of the famous four-part lecture course on “Phenomenology and Theory of Knowledge”, which Husserl gave at Göttingen in the Winter Semester of 1904–1905, Andrea Scanziani outlines a phenomenological account of the distinction between phantasy and image consciousness from the point of view of Husserl’s intentional theory of attention. In particular, he seeks to clarify the role played by attention in intentional acts pertaining to these two types of consciousness, thereby bringing to light a definition of attention articulated through the notion of meaning or intending [*Meinen*] and interest. In addition, Scanziani highlights how such an inquiry concerning the role that attention plays in the Husserlian description of image consciousness might bear on our understanding of the phenomenological structure of aesthetic experience.

In this regard, a closer reading of the aesthetic attitude is offered by Claudio Rozzoni’s text, which points out how, according to Husserl, when it comes to aesthetic consciousness of phenomena, our “interest” is directed not towards the existence of the object under consideration but rather towards the object’s way of appearing, a position that evidently echoes the necessary connection that Kant established between aesthetic judgment and disinterestedness. Nonetheless, Rozzoni makes clear that this is not equivalent to claiming that the aesthetic experience entails disinterestedness *tout court*. Rather, he argues that it is more profitable to view it as implying a change of interest, a shift from an existential interest towards “a valuing interest”, an “interest of the heart” that is intimately connected to the way in which phenomena appear.

Finally, the importance of our pathic encounter with images is also to be found in Alexandra do Carmo’s text, which, going beyond the prevalent Husserlian scope of the other contributions, deals with the relation between image and art in the thought of Henri Maldiney. Carmo’s article builds on aspects of Maldiney’s critique of Heidegger’s thought on art. In particular, she stresses that when it comes to the most primordial structure of existence, we must put into question what Heidegger has characterized as its “projective” side in favor of its “pathic” dimension, that is, that which concerns our affectivity. It is precisely to this pre-predicative and non-intentional dimension that we must turn, according to Carmo’s interpretation of Maldiney, if we want to gain a foothold on a more reliable inquiry into the origin of art.