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HORIZONS IN HUSSERL'S CARTESIAN MEDITATIONS:
EXPOSITION, ANALYSIS, AND INDICATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

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In his late work, *Cartesian Meditations* (1929-31),[1] Husserl provides a description of the

core structures of consciousness. Among these core structures is the horizon. In this paper, I

would like to take a closer look at Husserl's description of horizons. This will help to uncover

what Husserl has done, to make it more accessible, as well as to establish a starting place for

future projects that seek to build on Husserl's work on horizons.

As will be shown, Husserl integrates horizons into consciousness at every level. He begins

by introducing the concept of horizons generally, and then prepares the way for a

phenomenological description by establishing the building blocks that he will need.

Exposition

Husserl first introduces the horizon, as it would be noticed from the pre-philosophical

perspective, in §9 of the first meditation.

> A. But at any particular time this experience offers only a core that is experienced "with strict adequacy", namely the ego's living present . . . . while, beyond that, only an indeterminately general presumptive horizon extends, comprising what is strictly non-experienced but necessarily also meant.[2]

Here, Husserl gives a description of the horizon as it would be detected from the natural attitude.

It is the horizon that occurs just beyond the living present. This is what the Ego can think about

and pursue, the possibilities according to both ability and inclination. This horizon contains what

is not perceived, that which is presumed and which can be pursued as a future experience. In

addition to this, at a deeper level within the "I am," there is an openness and an

indeterminateness, an inner horizon.[3]

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[1] Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*, trans. Dorian Cairns (Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer, 1950). The book is based on lectures given in 1929, subsequently published 1931. Hereafter, CM.
[2] CM, 22-3. I will be labeling texts A-K.
[3] Ibid., 23.

A more robust introduction to the horizon will not be given until §19, in the second meditation, but starting as early as §6, Husserl begins discussing the conceptual precursors of horizons. Here, Husserl tells us that affair complexes are always incomplete and imperfect.

> B. With reference to [evidences] *imperfection*, as a rule, signifies *incompleteness*, a one-sidedness and at the same time a relative obscurity in indistinctness that qualify the givenness of the affairs themselves or the affair-complexes themselves: I.e., an infectedness of the "experience" with *unfulfilled components*, with expectant and *attendant meanings*.[4]

Husserl is preparing the way for horizon with a discussion of the inherent incompleteness in the way that states of affairs are given. Even before delving deeper into the structures of the ego, we see an absence within presence. This comes in the form of the immediate perception that more can be perceived.

Then, in §17 of the second meditation, having already begun to work within the philosophical attitude, Husserl introduces synthesis, another building block for horizons.

> C. The sort of combination uniting consciousness with consciousness can be characterized as *synthesis*, a mode of combination exclusively peculiar to consciousness. . . . I see in pure reflection that "this" die is given continuously as an objective unity in a multiform and changeable multiplicity of manners of appearing . . . . [These manners of appearing] flow away in the unity of synthesis, such that in them "one and the same" is intended as appearing. . . . Thus the near-thing, as "the same", appears now from this "side", now from that; . . . Always we find the feature in question as a unity belonging to a passing flow of "multiplicities".[5]

Husserl defines synthesis as the establishment of a unity from a multiplicity. The multiplicity is made up of rudimentary consciousnesses. The combination of these is synthesis. Thus, any such multiplicity is subject to synthesis, or an attempt at synthesis. Groups of rudimentary consciousnesses can be linked together as appearances of the same object.

Synthesis is described further in §18, and a fundamental form of synthesis, identification, is revealed.

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[4] Ibid., 15. Italics in original; this will also be the case for all subsequent quotations.
[5] Ibid., 39-40.

> D. If we consider the *fundamental form of synthesis*, namely *identification*, we encounter it first of all as an all-ruling, *passively* flowing synthesis, in the form of the *continuous consciousness of internal time*. Every subjective process has its internal temporality.[6]

Identification is the *most* fundamental form of synthesis possible. No synthesis can be a precondition to this form of synthesis; it is the original act of unification. This most fundamental synthesis, however, possesses some special features. It is passive, which indicates that it is not a task that is actively performed, as would be the case with discursive thought. It is also flowing, which suggests a continuous motion or change. It is "all-ruling," which means that it determines something about everything that comes after it (and nothing comes before it). Most importantly, it takes the form of internal time consciousness. This most basic form of synthesis is the origin of subjective time. No subjective process exists without this form of temporality.

At this point, we do not have enough support for this last claim. Husserl has not yet made the connection between identification and time consciousness clear. To achieve this clarity, Husserl will now introduce a flock of new concepts. In §19, Husserl introduces the robust description of horizons and shows how it connects with several of these new concepts, most notably, potentialities.

> E. . . . [E]*very actuality involves its potentialities*, which are not empty possibilities, but rather possibilities intentionally in respect of content—namely, in the actual subjective process itself—and, in addition, having the character of possibilities *actualizable by the Ego*.
> With that, another fundamental trait of intentionality is indicated. Every subjective process has a process 'horizon', which changes with the alteration of the nexus of consciousness to which the process belongs and with the alteration of the process itself from phase to phase of its flow—an intentional *horizon of reference* to potentialities of consciousness that belong to the process itself. There belongs to every external perception its reference from the "genuinely perceived" sides of the object of perception to the sides "also meant"—not yet perceived, but only anticipated and, at first, with a nonintuitional emptiness (as the sides that are "coming" now perceptually): a continuous *protention*, which, with each phase of the perception, has a new sense. Furthermore, the perception has horizons made up of other possibilities of perception, as perceptions that we could have.[7]

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[6] Ibid., 41.
[7] Ibid., 44.

There is much happening in this passage. I note first that we are being given a definition by means of two examples, two kinds of horizons. To understand the definition, therefore, these kinds must be distinguished. Thus, at the higher level, perception, the horizon is the possibilities that are anticipated. These possibilities are implicit potentialities found in every actuality. In every perception there is an absence, the also-meant, the anticipated, the immediate perception of what is expected "around the corner." Horizons are the intentional reference to absence.

At the deeper level, however, there is more to be described. Here the horizon is a protention. This indicates that Husserl is talking about internal time consciousness, an underlying structure that accounts for temporal consciousness. This is the original horizon of what is coming next. It is to be distinguished from the horizons at the higher level that anticipate new perceptions. Even if nothing is coming as a new object of perception, at minimum, new consciousnesses of the fact that nothing new is coming can be the content of protentions. Protentions are thus similar to anticipations in function, but are more fundamental. The important insight with this introduction to horizons, therefore, is that they operate at this deepest level. At both levels, horizons "belong to" subjective processes. Subjective processes are thus tied inextricably to horizons as the form of their origin and as an aspect of their objects.

Husserl then discusses the distinction between the horizons according to these levels. First, two distinct types of horizon are revealed at the higher levels: possibilities of new perceptions, and possibilities of recollection.

> F. Furthermore, the perception has horizons made up of other possibilities of perception, as perceptions that we *could* have, if we *actively directed* the course of perception otherwise.[8]

> G. . . . [T]o every perception there always belongs a horizon of the past, as a potentiality of awakenable recollections.[9]

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[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid.

These are anticipation and memory, and they correlate with protention and retention. Thus, anticipation is distinct from protention and recollection is distinct from retention. The horizons involved with all four are distinct.

The horizons found in internal time consciousness are fixed. This stability of structure accounts for the perception of change. As one protention is being fulfilled, a new protention is arising to take its place. This most fundamental horizon is thus "predelineated."

> H. The horizons are "predelineated" potentialities. We say also: We can *ask any horizon what* "*lies in it*", we can *explicate* or unfold it, and "*uncover*" the potentialities of conscious life at a particular time. Precisely thereby we uncover the objective sense *meant implicitly* in the actual cogito, though never with more than a certain degree of foreshadowing. This sense, the *cogitatum qua cogitatum*, is never present to actual consciousness [*vorstellig*] as a finished datum; it becomes "clarified" only through explication of the given horizon and the new horizons continuously awakened . . . . The predelineation itself, to be sure, is at all times imperfect; yet, with its *indeterminateness*, it has a *determinate structure*. . . . This leaving open, prior to further determinings (which perhaps never take place), is a moment included in the given consciousness itself; it is precisely what makes up the "horizon". As contrasted with mere clarification by means of anticipative "imagining", there takes place, by means of an actually continuing perception, a *fulfilling* further determination (and perhaps determination as otherwise)—but with new horizons of openness.[10]

By uncovering the horizon, the Ego has the protention filled and obtains the objective sense, but this never occurs to the point of completion. As a protention is filled, it is replaced by another protention. Just as a treadmill continuously produces new ground to walk, or an escalator puts up new steps to climb, the horizon contains new absences to fill. Despite this motion, the structure is itself "determinate." This fundamental horizon, therefore, is a stable change involving the fulfilling of protentions. Even if the content that fills the protentions does not change, identifying it as the same content is a process. This innermost horizon, therefore, is a ceaseless sameness, ceaseless with regard to filling, sameness with regard to structure.

Later, in the fourth meditation, §30, Husserl describes the essential character of these stable structures.

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[10] Ibid., 45.

I. It is thus an essential property of the ego, constantly to have systems of intentionality—among them, harmonious ones—partly as going on within him <actually>, partly as fixed potentialities, which, thanks to predelineating horizons, are available for uncovering.[11]

The phrase "systems of intentionality" refers to the horizons that are both in flux in one sense, and determinate structures in another. In this context, however, he is emphasizing the second sense. He gives two additional phrases emphasizing that such horizons are stable. In addition to being "systems" they are also "fixed potentialities" and "predelineating horizons." Husserl is going to great lengths to tell us that the essential property of this fundamental horizon is its fixity.

Next, Husserl will tell us why this property is essential. In the sentences just prior to this last quotation, he claimed that this conclusion, that horizons are essential and stable, can only be reached by means of a constitutional investigation.[12] In §§ 31-32, he provides this investigation.

J. The ego is himself *existent for himself* in continuous evidence; thus, in himself, he is *continuously constituting himself as existing*.[13]

K. By his *own active generating*, the Ego constitutes himself as *identical substrate of Ego-properties*, he constitutes himself also as a "fixed and abiding" *personal* Ego.[14]

Changing focus to what is being intended when the ego is aware of the flow of time, Husserl tells us that this process actually produces, or constitutes, the Ego. Therefore, horizons are part of the process of ego constitution. This is why they are essential. In other words, in order to be aware of time, the Ego must be continuously presented with protentions being filled. Moreover, this being aware of time is the most fundamental aspect of self-awareness. So, this most fundamental kind of horizon is the precondition for the constitution of the Ego, so it is essential to the Ego. In another text, written just before *Cartesian Meditations*, Husserl gives an appropriate and succinct summary of this necessity:

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[11] Ibid., 65.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid., 66.
[14] Ibid., 67.

L. Die Zeit ist für die Wesensgegenstände eine Gegebenheitsform. [fn: Gegebenheitsform meint hier eine Form ursprünglicher Gegebenheit.] Sie ist für sie notwendig, sofern eben kein Gegenstand gegeben und überhaupt bewusst sein kann, ohne dass er noematisch irgendeine Dauer aufwiese und für mehrere Gegenstände eine Gleichzeitigkeit und Folge.[15]

In *Cartesian Meditations*, therefore, Husserl is clarifying what "some duration noematically" means. Objects are never given in stable, unchanging presence; they always contain horizons because they are made up of intentions that are inherently acts of synthesis. Even while seeing the same thing over and over without change, the ego must continually re-identify it as the same. This is done, fundamentally, with the horizons at play within the deepest level, the formal structure of internal time consciousness.

A formal structure is essential if it: accounts for a phenomenon as one of its preconditions, and if altering the formal structure leads to an impossibility or in some way obliterates the phenomenon. Therefore, horizons account for certain phenomena and altering the formal structure of horizons leads to an impossibility. Specifically, altering what horizons are, or how horizons function, would lead to the obliteration of consciousness. According to Husserl, therefore, consciousness cannot be imagined without horizons. Thus, everything that depends on consciousness would be impossible without horizons.[16]

Kinds of Horizon

Based on the text of *Cartesian Meditations*, a late and well-developed work, I conclude that a horizon is the way that absences are intended. Horizons include, if applicable, a transition

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[15] Edmund Husserl, *Die Bernauer Manuskripte Über Das Zeitbewusstsein (1917/18)*, eds. Rudolf Bernet and Dieter Lohmar, Husserliana Band XXXIII (Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer, 2001), 316. My translation, "Time is the formal condition of the essence of objects [fn. Formal condition means here a formal and primordial condition.]. It is necessary for [objects]; no object can be given and no awareness [can be had] at all, without (the fact) that it has some duration noematically, and, for many objects, [that there be] a simultaneity and succession."

[16] The deep structures of internal time consciousness have been called "the spring for all formal structures, such as those found in logic, mathematics, syntax, and the various modes of presentation." by Robert Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 144; Sokolowski also says, "The issues of internal time consciousness underlie the issues of truth and disclosure, and they are related to the classical study of being as being, the inquiry into how things manifest themselves." Ibid., 145.

between presence and absence. Thus, it is a series with a gradient. The simplest form of the

horizon is then a series of just two values, a present and an absent. However, larger numbers of

steps may lie between them showing a gradual change from present to absent. This is all given

immediately as part of the intention itself. All intentions have horizons; horizons are essential

ingredients of intentions. Horizons are that without which no transition or movement in

consciousness could be had. Given Husserl's other commitments, horizons are therefore essential

to consciousness unconditionally.

Time-Constituting Horizons

The innermost horizons involve protentions and retentions. These are the horizons that make

up the formal structure of internal time consciousness and which constitute time-consciousness,

that is, these horizons constitute consciousness as time-consciousness. Based on these concepts, a

distinction can be made between time-constituting horizons and non-time-constituting horizons.

The former horizons involve protentions and retentions, the latter group includes all other kinds of

horizon. Time-constituting horizons are found only in the structure of internal time consciousness,

which Husserl describes elsewhere at great length.[17] In summary, the structure of internal time

consciousness can be understood in the following way. At this deepest level, we find the stable

coming-into-presence, the protentional horizon, and the stable going-out-of-presence, the

retentional horizon. Between these horizons lies the primal impression, which could be called the

"most present" part of the axis between the two horizons, the part of the axis enjoying maximum

evidenz.[18] This entire axis, including both horizons and the primal impression, is one living

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[17] Edmund Husserl, *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time (1893-1917)*, trans. John Barnett Brough (Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer, 1991), see especially sections 34-45; Husserl, *Bernauer Manuskripte*, see, especially text number 2, section 5; and for a comparison and development of the writings of Husserl's career on this subject see Toine Kortooms, *Phenomenology of Time: Edmund Husserl's Analysis of Time-Consciousness* (Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer, 2002), chs. 1-4.

[18] Since this is a somewhat controversial aspect of the structure, I will point out that the notion of degrees

present. There are several, parallel living presents and each has its own complete axis. Each living

present can be thought of like a moment of time, even though it is not yet a moment. Living

presents are the precondition for moments. Retentions each contain past living presents, thus each

"moment" contains a remnant of the past "moment". These "moments" build up and trail off.

<div align="center">Non-time-constituting Horizons</div>

Horizons at the higher level of subjective time are not involved with temporal constitution.

They are, therefore, non-time-constituting. Husserl has given us some examples of this kind of

horizon. He mentions the horizons at work within anticipation in text F, within memory in text G,

and with spatial perception of the die in text C. These horizons are not essentially temporal; they

are temporal derivatively. They presuppose the constitution of temporal consciousness.

<div align="center">**What Horizons Do**</div>

Focusing on what horizons are capable of doing, the distinguishing question is this: do

horizons draw or drag consciousness into synthesizing? If the answer is yes, then either in the

sense of "draw" or in the sense of "drag," tempt or compel, horizons become the engine of

synthesis. As such, they would be the cause of consciousness, of conscious processes. This

conclusion, however, is not fitting for a phenomenological analysis. Because this is a

phenomenological analysis, Husserl reasons backward from the phenomena to its preconditions.

He does not answer how or why consciousness moves—that would be a very different kind of

analysis with its own rules and domain—but knowing that consciousness moves, he describes

what must be the case to account for that movement.

Furthermore, Husserl describes the fundamental process constituting consciousness as

passive (see text D). Thus, it is not something that consciousness wills. And, this must be the case

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of evidenz, or filling, for protentions and retentions, can be found in Husserl, *Die Bernauer Manuskripte*, 34-8.

since this process constitutes consciousness. The innermost horizons are not actively pursued, yet the protentional horizon is always being pursued is the precondition of consciousness.

With these last few points, we see that horizons exist for two reasons. First, horizons provide something of a goal for synthesis or a way for synthesizing to proceed. Second, horizons are a precondition for time-consciousness. This leads to another important question: Is this enough to account for all phenomena? Even while being aware of the nature of phenomenological exploration, I wonder if it is proper to define consciousness in terms of a process and then to call the process essential because it is the precondition of consciousness. Husserl, presumably, breaks out of this vicious circle by depending upon the method of free variation. Consciousness simply cannot be imagined any other way than as a process. As the only option for consciousness, therefore, any preconditions would clearly be essential. This move depends, therefore, on Husserl's ability to rule out alternatives to consciousness-as-synthesis.

Alternatives to Time-Consciousness

If consciousness *can* take other forms, if these other forms *can* be found to occur in human experience, then the necessity of horizons, at every level, would be called into question. Clearly, however, a heavy burden of proof would lie with these new proposals.

Seeking to investigate the possibility of such alternative forms of consciousness, preliminarily, it seems that the necessity of time-constituting horizons can be analyzed separately from the necessity of non-time-constituting horizons. It also seems that time-constituting horizons would not be necessary to account for non-temporal consciousness.

Both kinds of horizon, however, as Husserl has defined them, are inseparable from processes. They are what consciousness *does* and what constitutes consciousness as the *doing* of

acts. Thus, within a description of these other forms of non-active consciousness, horizons can be retained only if they can be successfully re-described as products.

The Process-Product Distinction

Husserl, in many of the quotations given above, tells us that synthesis is the form of consciousness. Even though he does not distinguish between synthesis and synthesiz-ing, etc., Husserl implies strongly that it is the process that he has in mind, not the product of the process. If asked specifically, without doubt, Husserl would tell us that he is focused upon the process even if some of his sentences, taken out of context, can be understood as referencing the product. Usually, since Husserl often uses the noun form to discuss intention (the act), we might mistakenly think that he is writing about a state of being based upon the root verb. Beyond this, he would likely tell us that the product *is* the process, or that there is no product *per se*.

If there are other possibilities for consciousness, however, the process-product distinction becomes legitimate. To avoid conflation, this distinction must be clarified and the consequences explored. Overlooking the possibility of the product, however, invites the conflation and covers over the possibility of alternatives to temporal consciousness before they are analyzed. If consciousness can take other forms, besides the one described in great detail by Husserl, then this distinction becomes the way to explore these alternative forms.

Three Anticipated Concerns

At this point, however, the exploration of alternatives to temporal consciousness begins to encounter certain objections. The reader may be thinking that a project like this would threaten Husserl's accomplishments, or that static consciousness is the only alternative to time-consciousness and such a notion is self-contradictory, or that the field of exploration being opened

up is fictitious so it is not phenomenology. Despite the seriousness of each of these three concerns, I think that each of them can be answered sufficiently to warrant moving forward.

Beginning with the first concern, I happily acknowledge the great value of Husserl's work in describing time-consciousness. Horizons provide the smooth transition necessary not only to see connections between objects at different moments, but to maintain the subject of the seeing. Horizons are an ingenious solution to a long-standing problem. How do objects stay the same from moment to moment? How does the subject? One of Husserl's main goals was to avoid the movie-projector model of consciousness, and his model does this very well. He provides a structure that seems to successfully provide connected moments within a continuum, distinct points and a continuous transition between them. His structure for internal time consciousness, in my opinion, successfully ties these opposites together in a way that adequately explains temporal consciousness.

The alternative that I have begun to introduce, the alternative to time-consciousness, does not threaten to undo Husserl's achievement in this regard. It is not a return to the movie-projector model. Admittedly, if consciousness must move, then it moves in the way that Husserl has described, minor adjustments notwithstanding. The question that I am asking is, must it move at all? There is no threat of a loss of continuity if consciousness does not change. Moreover, even if consciousness can possibly remain standing in some way, this does not then exclude the possibility of consciousness moving. Neither state of consciousness rules out the possibility of the other. Husserl, therefore, does two things: he describes one form of consciousness, and he rules out the possibility of others. In challenging the latter, I am not also necessarily challenging the former.

That is not to say that alternatives to time-consciousness have no other challenges. For

millennia, each time that non-temporal consciousness is proposed, it is accused of bringing death

along with it. The major threat to such a view is that we naturally, almost reflexively, infer death

from changelessness. This is the second concern mentioned above. This concern, being based on

natural inferences, is more the domain of the poet than the philosopher. For example, T. S. Eliot,

in his poem *Burnt Norton*, tells us that something essential to life would be lost without the flow

of time:

> Where past and future are gathered. Neither movement from nor towards, / Neither ascent nor
> decline. Except for the point, the still point, / There would be no dance, and there is only the
> dance. I can only say, *there* we have been: but I cannot say where. / I cannot say, how long, for
> that is to place it in time.[19]

> Words move, music moves / Only in time; . . . . The detail of the pattern is movement, ...
> Desire itself is movement . . . . Love is itself unmoving, / Only the cause and end of movement
> / Timeless, and undesiring / Except in the aspect of time / Caught in the form of limitation /
> Between un-being and being.[20]

These few lines highlight what the poem works to express as a whole. Imagining a timeless

state, Eliot laments the loss of possibility, movement, and change. The reason he expects to lose

these things is that they are prerequisites for music, dance, and love. He even expects the loss of

words, which is unthinkable for a poet. Interestingly, he makes the same distinction that I had

mentioned above: process vs. product. He expects to lose danc-ing even while retaining dance.

This is what he means when he writes, "There would be no dance, and there is only the dance."

Movement is reduced to extended coordinates. The expressive, emotional liveliness of dance

becomes a mere picture of dance, and pictures do not move, except in the mind. Eliot also

includes "the detail of the pattern," which seems to indicate that time is needed even for our

mental appreciation of intricate images. Thus, even in viewing still images, our mind is in motion.

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[19] T. S. Eliot, *Burnt Norton* II, lns. 18-23.
[20] Ibid., V, lns. 1-2, 23-32.

Therefore, even mental activities that take on an "all-at-once" character, with regard to objects, possess an inner movement.

There is, for Husserl and Eliot, no alternative to time. Time and consciousness are necessarily linked. The only alternative to time-consciousness that either one expects is subjective death. The second concern, therefore, is based on two things: the instinctive or reflexive understanding that change is *necessary* for many aspects of conscious life, and the inability to find actual alternative states of consciousness upon which to base a phenomenological analysis. I can address both by providing examples of such states. The third concern, that such states are fictitious, would also be addressed by these examples.

A Future Project

What, then, is the alternative to time-consciousness? Can a way be found for it to avoid subjective death? What are these examples of non-temporal states of consciousness? The answer to these questions is a large and extensive project, one that I will now propose. Due to its size, I will only be able to introduce the project here by giving and organizing its major categories and pointing the way forward within each.

Examples of Altered States of Consciousness

There are two ways to engage in the phenomenology of dwelling. First, examples of relevant states of consciousness should be sought out. Such examples would be the centerpiece of such a project. Second, on the basis of such examples, formal structures need to be described as the preconditions for the examples. I have already identified three candidates for this analysis: confabulation, musical dissociation/trance, and musical absorption. These are examples of

unusual states of consciousness that seem to approach non-temporal consciousness. From these, I expect to be able to establish the properties of the limit toward which the examples point.

Briefly, chronological confabulation is the reconstruction of the chronological order of memories after-the-fact.[21] It involves a traumatized subject being delayed in constructing inner time.[22] The result is that moments have piled up and are suddenly presented as if they had occurred simultaneously. This can be understood as a kind of hyper-retention, retention without the normal fading.[23] Such a state alters the way that time is experienced; it alters the consciousness of time.

Musical dissociation can result from an unusually large number of listening episodes or from listening to repetitive music for too long. This state is a cutting off or withdrawal from consciousness. At the extreme limit, dissociation becomes a trance in which consciousness is lost.[24] Presumably, this state is reached when protentions are filled by imagination of coming sounds, in advance, so that the subject knows what is coming next. This state also involves an altered sense of time. Degrees of dissociation are possible, leading all the way to full trance. Temporal consciousness is altered to a greater and greater degree as trance is approached. As Husserl would anticipate, the end-state of this transition, trance, destroys consciousness. This might be understood as a kind of pseudo-hyper-protention, replacing or overshadowing protentions by anticipations and imagination. While anticipations and protentions are normally

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[21] Lisa Bortolotti, Rochelle E. Cox, "'Faultless' Ignorance: Strengths and Limitations of Epistemic Definitions of Confabulation," *Consciousness and Cognition* 18 (2009): 954.

[22] Gianfranco Dalla Barba, "Temporal Consciousness and Confabulation: Escape From Unconscious Explanatory Idols," in *Confabulation: Views From Neuroscience, Psychiatry, Psychology, and Philosophy*, ed. William Hirstein (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2009), 224-6.

[23] For more information on Confabulation, see William Hirstein, *Brain Fiction: Self-Deception and the Riddle of Confabulation* (Cambridge, MA: Bradford, 2005) and the remainder of the articles in William Hirstein, ed., *Confabulation: Views From Neuroscience, Psychiatry, Psychology, and Philosophy* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2009.

[24] Ruth Herbert, *Everyday Music Listening: Absorption, Dissociation and Trancing* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011), 62-66, 92, 93, 100. See also, L. D. Butler and O. Palesh "Spellbound: Dissociation In The Movies," *Journal of Trauma and Dissociation* 5:2 (2004): 66, 93.

distinguished, they may need to be seen more as points on a continuum in order to account for dissociation and trance.

Another form of hyper-protention can be seen with cases of musical absorption. Absorption is different from dissociation. It occurs with increased rather than decreased focus. Subjects experience fascination, immersion, balance, pleasant dreaminess, and of course, absorption.[25] There is a heightening of imaginative involvement with the object of perception. This is sharply contrasted with dissociation. Rather than resulting in hypoactive states approaching non-consciousness, absorption involves hyperactivity. Rather than dissolving into the music, in absorption, the listener lords over the experience as if they are in control of what is happening, of what is coming next.[26] Absorption produces temporal compression, which is realized only after the fact. Like confabulation, therefore, experiences take on an all-at-once character, but without approaching a non-conscious state.

Two Limits And Their Formal Structures

Absorption and dissociation establish trends that point toward limits. They each begin their respective trends by heading in opposite directions. Dissociation heads toward reduced mental activity, but absorption heads toward increased, or hyper, mental activity. On this basis I expect the limit of absorption to be hyper-cognition rather than cognitive death.

Dissociation seems to approach the results that Husserl expects, but absorption seems to approach results that he does not expect. Thus, absorption is a key to opening up the new field of exploration. That is, absorption establishes a trend that points toward a limit, this limit would be an alternative to consciousness-as-process.

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[25] Herbert, 100.
[26] Ibid., 66.

With the phenomena thus described, as the limit of absorption, it will then become possible to determine the underlying formal structures. I anticipate that this will involve the filling of protentions in advance and a widening of the primal impression. This structure could then be brought back to the higher level and used to explain the phenomena further. Thus, this underlying structure would account for the loss of chronological order seen in temporal compression (a symptom of absorption). Because the widened primal impression would not account for an immediate experience of chronological order, the subject experiences time in an unusual way. Upon entering back into time-consciousness, the subject would either remember the events as simultaneous or would confabulate an order based on logical relationships.

Without protentions, the protentional horizon would be replaced by the extension of the primal impression. Whatever is dwelled upon would enjoy full *evidenz*, and whatever is not dwelled upon would not exist for consciousness at all. Being even less than an absence, whatever is not dwelled upon would not appear in any form, present or absent. Just as we are completely unaware of our blind spots, making these zones of vision into something less than darkness, lacking the protentional horizon would remove the ability to think about anything other than what is being dwelled upon. This underlying structure would account for the fading and loss of background awareness (another symptom of absorption).

<div align="center">Lingering Doubts about Changeless Consciousness</div>

The limit of absorption, even with an accounting of its underlying formal structure, may still seem impossible. One will still wonder how changeless consciousness could be considered consciousness at all. Thus, despite the examples of such states, the third concern may resurface, that the field of exploration being opened up is fictitious so it is not phenomenology.

An argument will need to be presented to address this concern directly. I expect that the following argument, which makes the consequences of these examples explicit, might be sufficient to make the case:

If filling protentions in advance was not possible, if absorption was merely an over-charged version of anticipation, then the effect would not be sufficient to alter consciousness of time. But, absorption does alter consciousness of time. This state cannot be accounted for by the formal structure of internal time consciousness as Husserl has proposed it.

Thus, precisely because of the necessity of the link between time-consciousness and internal time consciousness, alterations in the former necessitate alterations in the latter. We have cases of alternatives to time-consciousness, thus we require a phenomenology of the structures that account for these cases. In other words, the conveyor belt of internal time consciousness, which is supposed to be always the same, always moving, never changing in rate or structure, as proposed by Husserl, cannot account for absorption. Absorption is a change in rate, a hyperactive mental state that compresses the subject's sense of inner time, not only his sense of world time.

On the other end of the continuum, Husserl can account for trance, since this is nothing more than the discontinuance of consciousness all together. Yet, he cannot account for any transition that leads to this end state. That is, the formal structure of internal time consciousness cannot account for dissociation since it involves all of the states between normal time-consciousness and subjective death.

This means that an accounting of absorption and dissociation, and the transitions between them, is currently lacking. The phenomenology of dwelling, therefore, will enhance Husserl's descriptions without threatening what he has already accomplished.

Conclusions

This concludes the proposal for a future study. It would be an analysis of the phenomenology of dwelling, as an extreme state, and any transitional states between dwelling and normal time-consciousness.

Husserl's provides the means of this new study even while rejecting its possibility: Husserl provides the means to analyze dwelling in the most effective way, taking us well beyond the intuitions of the Neoplatonists, but he also rejects the very possibility of dwelling. He sees it as an absurdity that he has already whittled away to establish the necessity of the formal structures of internal time consciousness.

The goal of the future study, therefore, would be to make consciousness without time-constituting horizons, dwelling, seem acceptable to phenomenologists like Husserl. This paper has been an attempt to take first steps toward that goal.

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